



the prairie falcon

**Vol. 33, No.10
JUNE 2005**

NORTHERN FLINT HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY, P.O. Box 1932, MANHATTAN, KS 66505-1932

AGRITOURISM in THE SUNFLOWER STATE **JANNA DUNBAR** **Wednesday, June 15, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.** **221 Ackert Hall, KSU**

After last month's bison ranch tour, what better way to wrap up the 2004-2005 program year than a presentation on the Kansas Agritourism Initiative and Kansas Agritourism Promotion Act. Ms. Dunbar will share photos of Kansas agritourism operators and discuss what the next steps and trends are for agricultural-related travel and tourism in Kansas.

Janna Dunbar grew up on a diversified farm near Richmond, Kansas. She graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in Animal Science & Industry. She previously worked for Cargill - Animal Nutrition before accepting her position with the Kansas Department of Commerce in August 2001. Janna is currently the Agritourism Program Manager for the Kansas Department of Commerce. She also works as the Foods & Feeds Program Manager in Value-Added Agriculture for the department.

Before each program, we invite our speakers to join us for an informal dinner and discussion. Feel free to join us this month at Happy Valley Chinese Restaurant, at Laramie St. Plaza in Aggieville at 5:45 p.m.. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public, so bring a friend.

Summer Birding

Our beginning birding activities this summer are in conjunction with Adventure Outback. Richard Pitts runs this camp and on June 11th, June 25th, July 9th, and July 23rd, Patricia Yeager and/or Judy Roe (and anyone else who is interested) will introduce these children to birding. Call Patricia (776-9593 or e-mail pyky@flinthills.com) and help with this great educational opportunity.

**AGRITOURISM
IN THE SUNFLOWER STATE**
JANNA DUNBAR

JUNE 15, 7:30 p.m.
221 ACKERT HALL
KSU

INSIDE

2 PROJECT WOLF
3 WOODPECKERS & WARBLERS
4 SKYLIGHT
7 TAKE NOTE

CONTRIBUTORS:

DRU CLARKE
PETE COHEN
THOMAS MORGAN

UPCOMING DATES:

JUN 11 Birding with Children
Adventure Outback
(PATRICIA YEAGER, 776-9593)

JUN 15 AGRITOURISM
DINNER: 5:30, PROGRAM: 7:30
221 ACKERT HALL (CORNER OF
CLAFLIN AND DENISON) KSU

JUN 25 Birding with Children
Adventure Outback
(PATRICIA YEAGER, 776-9593)

July 9 Birding with Children
Adventure Outback
(PATRICIA YEAGER, 776-9593)

**PRINTED BY
CLAFLIN BOOKS & COPIES
MANHATTAN, KS**



project WOLF

dru clarke

What is Project W.O.L.F.?

Project W.O.L.F. is a natural area adjacent to Manhattan High School and Sureset Zoo used by students and the community as an outdoor classroom and place for walking in and observation of a natural environment. While you won't find any wild wolves there, many native species of animals (or their signs) and prairie and woodland plants can be found in the three distinct habitats that make up Project W.O.L.F.: tall grass prairie, deciduous woodland, and a stream. This area provides a diverse ecosystem to observe, collect data from, or simply enjoy.



Parking is available at the Sureset Zoo parking lot. Walk through the grassland (above) to the sign (right) which is the entrance to the trails. Coordinates for the trailhead are: N 39° 33.209' W 96° 35.233'

For more information on Project W.O.L.F.

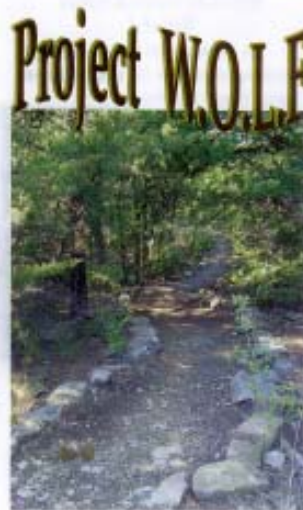
Please contact:

At MHS: Tish Simpson,
Wide Horizons teacher
tish@manhattan.k12.ks.us

At KSLH: Dru Clarke, College of Education
dclarke@ksu.edu

In the future, visit the **Project W.O.L.F. website** for trail maps and more information:
<http://mhs.usd383.org/>

This brochure's publication was supported by a grant from Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society



Wildcat Outdoor Laboratory Facility

...ion years ago. Terraces along the creek tell us that the stream bed was once much higher, filled with glacial melt water about 12,000 years ago. Native Americans probably used the stream to collect freshwater mussels. Project W.O.L.F. was also a favorite spot for early settlers to camp out. The grassland was a high point that readily caught the southwest wind and cooled the residents. Most of the 23 acres in the outdoor laboratory are currently owned by the city of Manhattan, and the agreement to use the site as an outdoor laboratory goes back to the 1960s.

...visit to identify tree species in the woodland and landscape architecture students gain ideas for natural landscaping. In the spring, Wide Horizons, a special class at MHS, takes elementary school children on interpretive walks through the three habitats. State officials from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment have monitored the water quality of Wildcat Creek, and geologists from the Kansas Geological Survey have collected data on changes in the watershed. Community members often walk the trails, enjoying a unique 'near-wilderness' experience with the urban landscape.

The Flint Hills Audubon Society helped fund the production of this brochure.

...ed today?

...grassland, you resembling a thermometer at and highest. On a second age. The data gathered and national data-age Arts, and floor lab to do serve phenol- as well as cing projects. late University

What will we see as we walk through Project W.O.L.F.?

Depending on the season, you might encounter a wide variety of blooming wild flowers or herbs in the grassland and in the herbaceous layer of the woodland. Some prairie favorites are gayfeather, purple poppy mallow, Echinacea (purple cone flower) and butterfly weed. Woodland species include phlox, Solomon's seal, wild garlic, stinging nettles, and the shrub American bladdernut. The prairie has the "Big Four" of tall grasses: big bluestem, little bluestem, switch grass, and Indian grass. Woodland trees are primarily chinquapin oak on the rocky slopes, hackberry, eastern cottonwood, mulberry, and American elm. Eastern red cedar, the only native evergreen, can be found where succession or a change in the habitat is occurring. Trails are



well established, but are not handicapped-accessible, and can be found from the trailhead in the grassland all the way to creek side. The woodland trail is steep but is equipped with switchbacks for relatively easy walking.

Michigan Tech News

www.admin.mtu.edu/urel/news/media_relations/388

"House cats are probably the number one cause of human-related bird mortality," says Associate Professor David Flaspohler (SFRES). "Between several hundred million to a billion birds die in the continental U.S. every year because of house cats, and that's completely controllable if the cats are kept indoors. "There are between 60 and 90 million cats in the U.S., and somewhere around half of all cat owners let their cats outside." Compared to other sources of bird mortality, such as window collisions, road kills and habitat destruction, death by house cat is both the largest and most preventable negative impact of humans on birds in the U.S.

But if your cat must be outside, you can reduce the number of bird kills by confining it during nesting season, when birds are building nests, laying eggs and taking care of their young, by simply keeping your cat in during the key reproductive period of June. Keeping your cat indoors is really a win-win for the cat and its feathered prey.

Besides keeping your cat safely behind closed doors, you can support the local avian population by making your yard more bird-friendly. Add some structural diversity, like shrubs and fruiting trees, Flaspohler says. "Unlike a golf course-style lawn, they provide cover and may reduce birds' chances of getting caught by cats or other predators, such as hawks.



My sweetie and I were listening to a gentle refrain of “sweet, sweet, sweet, ...” of a prothonotary warbler in Cache River State Natural Area in Illinois this May 3rd as we strolled along a boardwalk over Heron Pond. This bald cypress swamp was enlivened by a pair of yellow birds flitting between perches in the open shrubbery fifteen or twenty yards away. I focused my binoculars on the glorious, golden hues of a male, prothonotary warbler. The details of its feathers felt like my personal raiment. He flew behind a branch, depriving me of my golden orange hues. Then he flew toward me. When he perched one man’s length away, I could no longer focus on him with my paltry, artificial optical device. It was a religious moment. We peered at each other. Was I the first human he had examined? It seems unlikely. But he was the first of his species I had seen. Was he thinking of driving me off? Probably not. After all, I could hardly squeeze myself into his nesting cavity in the hollow branch of a tree. His curiosity ... a motivation which people share with many life forms ... may have been satisfied, and he flew on.

The prothonotary warbler is a miraculous being which was named for a Catholic official who wears a golden hood. My wife, MJ, is a Catholic and has told me how much she treasures natural beauty on Ascension Thursday, which falls this year on May 5th (the day she is scheduled to defend her dissertation for a doctorate degree in history). Now on May 3rd, I have no doubts about the success of her

scholastic endeavor and no need to wait for that day to experience Ascension. For at this moment, I am in a cathedral.

As we walk another boardwalk into a swamp, we see buttressed water tupelo (*Nyssa aquatica*) rising from the inky blackness of the water with a newly emerged canopy of round, lemon yellow leaves. I focus on the profusely blooming twigs with my binoculars and remember that bees make honey from these yellowish blossoms. Although I have written about tupelo honey in a previous column, I have never seen the nectar gathered from any species in this genus, and now I recognize the unmistakable silhouette of a honey bee sipping nectar. Glory, hallelujah.

A half hour before, we had walked back from Heron Pond, along the bank of Cache River, and flushed a large woodpecker from its mysterious rustling or scraping on the bank. What was this woodpecker, a large pileated woodpecker, doing on the soil? As it flew over us, I tried to measure its wingspan, and thrillingly, I seemed to glimpse long, white markings on its wings. Was it an ivory billed woodpecker? Such woodpeckers were last reported in Illinois more than a century ago, but I have read that it has been reliably documented in Arkansas this year. Could it exist this moment in the range of my vision? Maybe. I only know that the shadow of a nearly extinct bird flies on.

© 2005 Thomas Morgan

BUTTERFLY GARDEN

HURRAH for Susan Blackford!!! She has taken over the care and nourishing of the Butterfly Garden at Sojourner Park. Years of toil and love went into the Garden PRIMARILY by

Madonna Stallmann! So it is a great thing that it will continue to thrive and bring joy to all those in the surrounding neighborhood as well as those who find their way to it. THANK YOU Susan.



Checkered White





I wonder how it's been with anyone who took up my suggestion last month and tried to devise one's own handy, clear, inimitable terminology for grouping the clouds for study. The challenge, as mentioned, is as old as curiosity. The ancient Chinese, I've read, in attempting to comprehend the multi-faceted phenomenon of weather, regarded clouds and rain as the female ying interacting variously with the fiery male solar yang. Apparently Plato was bothered by the transitory nature of clouds and thought there should be somewhere an ideal unchanging arrangement of them, of which the ones witnessed were but imperfect samples. Aristotle contrarily was content to believe that the normal condition of everything below the heavens was to be in the midst of change. And Shakespeare (in Act 4, Scene XV of *Antony and Cleopatra*) wrote that there was little point in trying to pin down things that "mock our eyes with air."

Nonetheless in 1665, Robert Hooke, the first curator of experiments of the Royal Society of London, began trying to produce "a method of making a history of the weather" in order to plumb its causes and effects. He suggested, for starting, that clouds be described as "clear, checkered, hazy, thick, waved" and such, but though the Age of Enlightenment was blossoming out of the Renaissance, he could never get enough people to make diligent observations. He did, however, stir up other more metaphorical descriptions (e.g.: "rock-like"), and in the late 1700s the multi-faceted Jean Baptiste Lamarck announced a list of just five terms: "hazy, massed, dappled, broom-like, and grouped." But it seems that, for whatever reasons, almost every idea that Messieur Lamarck proposed throughout his life became a lightning rod for disdain.

The Age was much kinder toward the young English chemist I referred to last time, Luke Howard. It was a time when old wonders were daily receiving marvelous new explanations. It was soon to be shown that rocks did not beget rocks, but their odd distribution could be attributed to previous glaciers on the sunny heaths. It was learned that barnacle geese did not really hatch from barnacles, as the timing

when the newborns were seen seemed to indicate, but actually bred like other geese in far north areas where they hadn't been discovered before. Little groups and societies gathered regularly here and there to hear and witness demonstrations of more scientific wonders.

There was something for all tastes, of course, including technically clever ghoulish re-enactments of tragedies. But this was scarcely the atmosphere in the unremarkable lab-cum-lecture hall where Mr. Howard described how his three little words — *cirrus* (Latin: hair), *cumulus* (heap), and *stratus* (blanket)—would make the variety of cloud performances niftily describable and therefore comprehensible. (The term *nimbus* was later added to differentiate clouds, of whatever form, that produced rain.) His audience immediately recognized and lauded his insight and spread his praises.

Of course, not all. A close associate of his demurred, claiming Howard's terms were too confining, and that descriptions like "linear arc, mottled arc, shaded, piled, tufts, and flocks, etc." would be better. Few agreed. So the story of Luke Howard's naming the clouds is one of the pleasanter ones of history, and more details of much of what I've referred to above can be pleasantly found in *The Invention of Clouds* by Richard Hamblyn (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2001).

Above any clouds Jupiter is already high and bright in Virgo at dark, as low in the west Venus moves into Gemini. Furthermore, according to the combined wisdom of *The Old Farmers' Almanac* and *StarDate*: on June 8th at twilight the low reappearing Moon will be between Venus below and Saturn above. On the 18th low in the WNW Saturn (highest), Venus, and Mercury, will form a diagonal that shrinks evening by evening till Venus and Mercury seem to merge on the 26th. Meanwhile the Moon moves on to be near Jupiter on the 15th, with Spica between them on the 17th. Then the Moon can be seen above and right of Antares on the 19th, below and left on the 20th. Mars has a Moon visit on the 28th and 29th. The solstice occurs at 1a46 on the 21st. New Moon June 6th, 4p55; full 21st, 11p14.



MAY 14

WOW - WHAT A WEEKEND!

The weekend of May 14-15 was beautiful and busy! For those who graduated or knew someone graduating from K-State – for those who love Track and Field, for those who just love being outside in such beautiful weather – this was the weekend! BUT for those of us who love birding, it was also the Migratory Bird Count day, and was it wonderful! I don't recall seeing so many Indigo Buntings or Orchard Orioles! And the male Yellow Warbler with his red streaks was everywhere. Red-eyed Vireos sang for us, and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo flew right out of the woods in front of me. I also had another "flyby" at 11:15 a.m. when a Barred Owl flew past me (not more than 12 feet), then came back for a second look! I mean everyone was showing off their spring colors and enjoying the weather. I was also glad to see that the Eagles are on the nest again north of Olsburg. The marshes north of Olsburg had over 100 Eastern Kingbirds in one small area, nearly 600 Black Terns swooping over the water (the marsh was full) and three Great Egrets that acted like Sandhill Cranes - jumping up and flapping their wings. Dickcissels were their most spectacular vocal selves - their yellow eyebrows and breast and rufous shoulders at their brightest. I could go on and on about this weekend. **WHAT DID YOU SEE?** Please email me (cinraney@ksu.edu) or call (785-468-3587) and let me know the highlights of your birding.



Banding Eagles: Lake Perry, May 14, 2005, About 4 weeks old.
Courtesy of John Miesner (US Fish & Wildlife Service) & Brenda Wienck.

Birdathon 2005

Clyde Ferguson

Our 21st birdathon, a major fund-raising activity of our chapter, was carried out by at least one team on April 30-May 1, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. The point of the birdathon is to get pledges for the number of bird species identified in a 24 hour period, go out and have fun identifying birds, and then collect for the work you have done. It also involves a good deal of preparing reports, mailing them and getting your money into the hands of our esteemed treasurer. It is a valuable tool for raising funds that allow us to support our natural heritage through various projects such as Northeast Park and the Michel-Ross Nature Preserve. As of the 23rd of May, our pledgers have come through to the tune of \$936.40. More members of the chapter should be working for pledges and then having the fun of the chase.

Chuck Bussing, Michael Donnelly, and Clyde Ferguson started at the Ferguson backyard and

proceeded to the Pig Farm – Blue-winged Teal, Wilson's Phalaropes, Pectoral Sandpipers, and Spotted Sandpipers gloried in the smelly environs there of. Jim Koelliker joined the party at the River Pond, where we added Franklin's and Ring-Billed Gulls, a Ruby-Crowned Kinglet and Canada Geese. Rocky Ford produced the Loggerhead Shrike and the first Chimney Swift of the season. Other places visited included State Lake, Konza Prairie, Hunters' Island, Grandview Plaza (where we were checked by the police for looking at the sewage ponds), and the River Pond at Milford. We identified 93 species in all. The top "spot" was the Broad-Winged Hawk, not seen on the birdathon since the 1980s. I'm sorry everyone couldn't have enjoyed this outing, particularly the non-productive owling before dawn Sunday morning with the temperatures in the lower 40s.

Clyde Ferguson



Northern Flint Hills
Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1932
Manhattan, KS
66505-1932



Printed on 100% post-
consumer recycled
paper

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 662
Manhattan, KS 66502

Return Service Requested



Published monthly (except August) by the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society
Edited by Cindy Jeffrey, 15850 Galilee Rd., Olsburg, KS 66520 (cinrancy@ksu.edu)
Also available on the World Wide Web at the URL <http://www.ksu.edu/audubon/falcon.html>

Subscription Information:

Introductory memberships - \$20 per year; then basic membership is \$35 annually. When you join the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society, you automatically become a member of the National Audubon Society and receive the bimonthly Audubon magazine in addition to the *PRAIRIE FALCON*. New membership applications may be sent to NFHAS at the address below; make checks payable to the National Audubon Society. Membership Renewals are handled by the National Audubon Society and should not be sent to NFHAS. Questions about membership? Call toll-free, 1-800-274-4201, or email the National Audubon Society join@audubon.org.

If you do not want to receive the national magazine, but still want to be involved in our local activities, you may subscribe to the *PRAIRIE FALCON* newsletter for \$15 per year. Make checks payable to the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society, and mail to:

Treasurer, NFHAS, P.O. Box 1932, Manhattan KS 66505-1932.

RARE BIRD HOTLINE: For information on Kansas Birds, subscribe to the Kansas Bird Listserv. Send this message **<subscribe KSBIRD-L>** to this address **<listserv@ksu.edu>** and join in the discussions!

NFHAS Board

President:	Judy Roe	539-5519
Vice President:		
Secretary		
Treasurer:	Jan Garton	539-3004

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership:	Carla Bishop	539-5129
Program:		
Conservation:		
Northeast Park	Jacque Staats	
Education:	Madonna Stallmann	
	Richard Pitts	
Fieldtrips:	Patricia Yeager	776-9593
Land Preservation:	Jan Garton	539-3004
Public Outreach:	Dolly Gudder	537-4102
Newsletter:	Cindy Jeffrey	468-3587
At-Large Board Members:	John Tatarko, Ingrid Neitfeld, Paul Weidhaas	

Audubon of Kansas Trustee: Hoogy Hoogheem

Addresses & Phone numbers of Your Elected Representatives (anytime)

Write ✉ - or call ☎

Governor Kathleen Sebelius: 2nd Floor, State Capitol Bldg., Topeka KS 66612. Kansas Senator or Representative _____: State Capitol Bldg., Topeka KS 66612, Ph.# (during session only) - Senate: 785-296-7300, House: 785-296-7500. Senator Roberts <http://roberts.senate.gov> or Brownback: US Senate, Washington DC 20510. Representative _____: US House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515. U.S. Capitol Switchboard : 202-224-3121. President G.W. Bush, The White House, Washington DC 20500. Information about progress of a particular piece of legislation can be obtained by calling the following numbers: In Topeka - 800-432-3924; in Washington - 202-225-1772. Audubon Action Line - **800-659-2622**, or get the latest on WWW at <http://www.audubon.org/campaign/aa/> To find out who represents you go to: www.capitolconnect.com/audubon/mylegis