

So...

WHAT BIRDING ACTIVITIES INTEREST YOU?

WHAT PROGRAMS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

WHAT WOULD MAKE OUR MEMBERSHIP GROW AND BE MORE ACTIVE?

WHAT KINDS OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES CAN WE DO? (ESPECIALLY FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN?)

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

THESE ARE THE THINGS WE WILL BE DISCUSSING AT THE PLANNING MEETING, YOU CAN HELP! JOIN US OR CALL ONE OF THE BOARD-MEMBERS WITH YOUR IDEAS!

OUR ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING IS SUNDAY, JUNE 14TH, AT THE HOME OF PATRICIA YEAGER (AND HER HUSBAND), 5614 BAYERS RD., LAKE ELBO. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 4 P.M AND DINNER WILL BE AT 6 P.M. CONTACT ANY BOARD MEMBER FOR MORE INFORMATION AND/OR DIRECTIONS.

NORTHERN Flint Hills Audubon Society,  
P.O. Box 1972, MANHATTAN, KS 66505-1972



## PRAIRIE FALCON

NORTHERN FLINT HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 37, No. 10 ~ JUNE 2009

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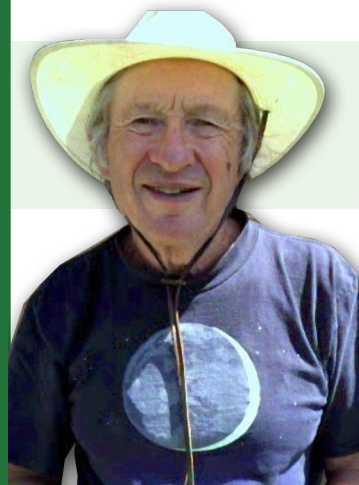
### Upcoming Events:

JUN 4 - BOARD MEETING 6 p.m.  
(TOM & MJ MORGAN HOME)

JUN 13 - MONTHLY BIRDING

JUN 14 - ANNUAL PLANNING MTG.  
HOME OF PATRICIA YEAGER,  
5614 BAYERS Rd., LAKE ELBO.  
MEET 4 p.m. - EAT 6 p.m.  
PLEASE COME.

July -



## SKYLIGHT PLUS

PETE COHEN

Summertime – and the eating can be special. For some of us, asparagus, etc., will have journeyed only a few feet from the garden. And to reach their full value all bites should receive the diner’s full attention. A friend recently recalled a report from years ago when manual typewriters were in vogue, that in a day’s work, a steady typist expended energy equivalent to lifting several tons. So I would think the pleasure of fresh vegetables can accumulate just as magnificently, if unlike the steady typist, the diner pays attention to each “stroke.”

This came to mind after randomly picking up a short historical novel about Jean-Baptiste de La Quintinie, who, I learned, was head gardener to France’s Louis XIV in the late 1600s. Somehow, on ten hectares (24.7 acres) at Versailles, he was able to provide all the fruits and vegetables for the King’s exuberant occasions, including one attended by 5000 people. He evidently was an expert at pruning and at establishing highly productive espaliers, those forcedly two-dimensional trees that are constrained against walls and made to resemble huge candelabras.

Devoted to what he could get plants to yield, his joy was truncated by the way the King’s cooks doused his produce in sauces and the guests wolfed things down, their mouths busier talking than eating. Besides that, having taught the peasants how to garden successfully, to fill their larders, he then had to watch, much to his disgust, as the peasants, enthralled by the aura of royalty, beggared themselves, emptying their larders in devotional offerings for the birth of the King’s grandson. Offerings the King did not deign to notice, and for a birth Quintinie regarded as no more laudable than that of any peasant’s child. Though he could affect and draw pleasure from the doings and results in his garden, he could do neither regarding the world outside its walls.

For food for thought, the book is “Gardener to the King,” by Frederic Richaud (Arcade, New York, 1999; translation from the French by Barbara Bray, 2000).

The special entrees for those who like to feast on the celestial garden will this month be available mainly for the early risers.

There’s a daily neighborhood party in the east as Earth’s two closest planets rise, Venus showing about a quarter to four early in the month and by about a quarter past three by month’s end, with Mars just about a quarter of an hour later, below to the left, as Venus gradually dims so as not to outshine Mars so greatly. Mercury comes along just delayed long enough to be hard to see in the dawn.

Saturn, high at nightfall keep carousing till a little past midnight, still with Leo’s crown, and lines up above Regulus, above the Moon, on the 25th. Brighter Jupiter shows up in the east just in time to wave him good-bye.

The Moon, cuddling with Antares in Scorpio at twilight on the 6th, moves apart as darkness makes him plainer. He passes above Jupiter at dawn on the 13th, joining in a line with Venus and Mars on the 19th. *StarDate* notes that that line can give a close idea of where the Sun’s been traveling through the sky lately, and that Mercury might be spied joining the low end of the line on the 20th.

The summer solstice occurs in our area at 12a46 on the 21st. The Moon is full the 7th (at 1p12), and new the 22nd (at 2p35)

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**E-NEWSLETTER:** If you wish to opt out of the “paper” Prairie Falcon newsletter and get it on-line as a pdf - send your name and email address to Jacque Staats - [staats@bri.ksu.edu](mailto:staats@bri.ksu.edu)

**INTERNATIONAL  
MIGRATORY BIRD DAY RESULTS  
JIM THRONE**

Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, turned out to be a beautiful day for the count. It was cool (49°) with a wind blowing early, but by noon it was too warm for all of our layers of clothes. Fortunately, the temperature only got to about 70°. The early coolness didn't interfere with birding. In fact, this was one of our best years. I think that the cool weather kept a lot of the migratory birds here a little longer than normal. Usually, many of the migratory warblers are gone before the count, which is held the second Saturday of May each year.

The highlight of the day came early for Janet and me, when we were birding an area along McDowell Creek and had one small tree with five species of warblers in it – orange-crowned, northern parula, two Blackburnians, yellow, and a chestnut-sided. This was the first time Janet and I have seen a chestnut-sided warbler in Kansas. And, right before we saw these warblers, we heard and saw a Louisiana waterthrush down by the creek.

Other warblers seen by the various groups during the count were American redstart, blackpoll, black-and-white, common yellowthroat, Kentucky, Nashville, magnolia, ovenbird, prairie, and yellow-rumped warblers. It was also exciting to see four American avocets in a large farm puddle; not exactly where we'd expect to see them.

Another highlight for the day was the number of sparrows seen by the various groups: 521 chipping, 47 clay-colored, 17 field, 70 lark, three savannah, eight grasshopper, one song, one Lincoln's, six white-throated, 18 white-crowned, and 213 Harris'. I was surprised that we only had nine Northern bobwhite this year. They seem to be on a downward trend, along with ring-necked pheasant – only four this year. Swainson's thrushes seemed to be all over the place, with a count of 28. We counted 11 wood thrushes, and it's always a joy to hear their beautiful song. Unfortunately, this was a good year for European starlings (216) and brown-headed cowbirds (446).

The total number of species counted was 139, with a total number of 6,341 birds. Both of these are highs for the three years that I've been compiling the count results. We had nine groups participating: Frank and Cheryl Arthur; Jim and Leslie Campbell; Michael Donnelly; Clyde and Maria Ferguson, Jim Koelliker, Barry Michie, and Mike Strobe; Loretta Johnson and Beth Montelone; Mark Hollingsworth and Jack Oviatt; Chris and Ann Smith; Jim and Janet Throne; Kevin Fay, Kathleen Jones, Nancy Miller, and Patricia Yeager. I want to thank everyone who participated this year, and please contact me if you'd like to participate in one of these groups or your own group next year.

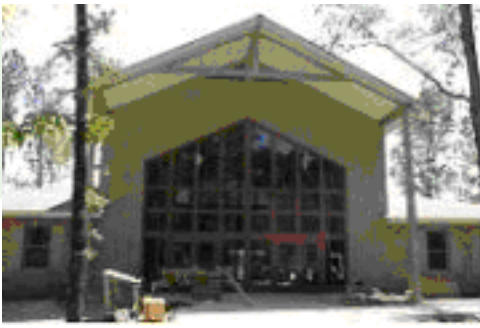
Jim Throne, [jim.throne@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jim.throne@sbcglobal.net)

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## WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU

**Got a good birding story/encounter? Please share it with us. Send me your stories, photos welcome and anything else you think our members would like to see in the newsletter -- e-mail [cinraney@ksu.edu](mailto:cinraney@ksu.edu), or mail them to me at 15850 Galilee Rd., Olsburg, KS 66520**





It's estimated that as many as 1 billion birds die each year in the United States due to collisions with windows. Daniel Klem, a biologist at Pennsylvania's Muhlenberg College, has been studying the problem for three decades and cites window strikes as a major cause of bird fatality. The primary danger stems from reflective glass. Birds see escape routes and possible safety zones mirrored in reflective glass and fly unaware into windows. The speed and force of the impact can cause instant death. Birds that seem stunned or do not die immediately may actually be fatally injured as well - suffering from a

brain hemorrhage or other internal bleeding. At the very least, stunned birds are temporarily less responsive and thus highly susceptible to predation. Transparent glass poses a similar threat as birds collide into unseen windows en route to some visible target on the other side

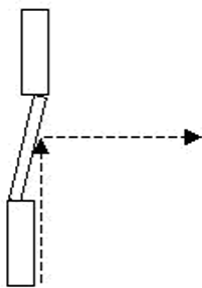
#### **Solutions:**

**Feeder Placement** - How can this help? Many birds strike windows after being startled off a feeder. Bird feeders placed within three feet of windows can reduce fatal collisions because birds do not have an adequate distance to reach high flight velocity. Placing the feeders more than 30 feet from a window will also reduce window collision risk because, at that distance, birds are more likely to recognize that the reflected image is part of a house and are less likely to fly toward it for safety. Practicality - HIGH: For homes with feeders, this is an easy and surefire way to reduce deadly window strikes.

**Window Shades, Drapes, etc.** - How can this help? White or light-colored window shades, blinds, or drapes, when drawn, eliminate much of the mirror effect or transparency of windows. Practicality — HIGH: Interior window treatments (such as drapery) already exist in many homes. The downside is that they block the view to the outside. Drawing curtains or blinds when leaving for work or vacation is good practice.

**Window Decals or Items Hung Outside the Window** - How can this help? Decals or objects placed on or in front of windows create an interference pattern that reduces the mirror effect of reflective windows and make transparent windows more visible. (For example, see “Wing Chimes” on the Fatal Light Awareness Program link below.) Practicality — MED: Although decals are easily affixed to windows and are available in a range of styles (it is not necessary to use a hawk silhouette), they must be spaced close to each other to be effective – at most 2 inches apart horizontally, and 4 inches apart vertically. Objects, such as ribbon draped on the exterior side of a window must also be spaced strategically to create density. This density causes too much visual obstruction for many people. Covering just a portion of a window is better than no coverage at all.

**Bird Netting**- How can this help? Fine mesh netting stretched tightly over an entire window causes birds to “bounce” away before crashing into window glass and does not obstruct the view. Practicality — MED: Works well but requires some do-it-yourself agility; poses entanglement risk if not properly installed. Netting must be taut and at the appropriate distance from the window. Adhere to instructions available with product or on the internet.



**Tilted Glass** - How can this help? Tilting the glass in a window causes the ground to be reflected rather than possible shelter and escape routes for fleeing birds. Practicality – MED: Not a foolproof solution but an easy way to address the problem during the construction or remodeling phase of a building. With supporting research, this practice might be commonplace in the future.

**Fritted Glass** -How can this help? Fritted glass has granules fused onto it to create a frost-like pattern that reduces its reflectivity and transparency. Practicality — LOW: Currently being tested on a college campus, it holds some promise for widespread use in commercial and residential applications. May be perceived as esthetically unappealing by the general public and obstructs open view to the outside.

**Window Films** - How can this help? An opaque sheet of plastic attached to windows gives them a solid appearance. Practicality — LOW: Films currently available to the general public severely limit visibility.

**Bug Screen** - How can this help? Bug screens or summer screens on the outside of exterior glass kept in place year-round will cut down on reflectivity and transparency while acting as barrier to birds and insect during warmer months. Practicality – HIGH: In newer construction, double paned windows can be shielded by screens. In older homes with storm windows, screens would need to be switched with exterior glass.

#### **Resources:**

FLAP: Fatal Light Awareness Program - Extensive information and resources on bird collision issues <http://www.flap.org>, and Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine, May 10, 2003, Fatal Reflections by Maryalice Yakutchik



## STATE OF THE BIRDS REPORT

Birds are a priceless part of our heritage. They are beautiful, they are economically important -- and birds reflect the health of our environment. They are also indicators of the integrity of the environments that provide us with clean air and water, fertile soils and abundant wildlife. In the past 40 years, major public, private and government initiatives have made strides for conservation.

Has it been enough?

Nearly half the world's 10,000 bird species depend on the forests, wetlands and grasslands of the Americas — from Canada to Argentina. But habitat loss is threatening their ability to survive. In wetland areas, bird populations have bounced back as the result of strategic land management and conservation work, including bird conservation work that conservancy supporters have made possible. However, other habitats are experiencing rapid declines in bird numbers, which indicate potential declines the health of their corresponding ecosystem.

To read more about these changing bird populations, read the “State of the Birds” report (<http://my.nature.org/birds/report/>) This easy-to-read and informative report gives us a solid, understandable view of some of the U.S.'s most rare and beautiful birds.

<http://my.nature.org/birds/>      <http://my.nature.org/birds/report/>



AT THE FEEDER



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**Subscription Information:** Introductory memberships - \$20/yr., then basic membership is \$35/yr. 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 newsletter. New membership applications may be sent to Treasurer, NFHAS, P.O. Box 1932, Manhattan, KS 66505-1932. Make checks payable to the National Audubon Society. Membership renewals are handled by the National Audubon Society and should not be sent to the NFHAS. Questions about membership? Call 1-800-274-4201 or email the National Audubon Society [join@audubon.org](mailto: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/yr. Make checks payable to the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society, and mail to: Treasurer, NFHAS, P.O. Box 1932, Manhattan, KS, 66502-1932.

**RARE BIRD HOTLINE:** For information on Kansas Birds, subscribe to the Kansas Bird Listserve. Send this message <subscribe KSBIRD-L> to <[list\\_serve@ksu.edu](mailto:list_serve@ksu.edu)> and join in the discussions.

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