

THANK YOU
to Carla Bishop
for her years of service to the Northern
Flint Hills Audubon Society. She
has been our treasurer extraordinaire,
and coordinator for the Christmas Bird
Count Chili Supper!



She has shared her love of day lilies, made sure we paid our taxes, been host to board meetings, and coordinated field trips - to name just a few things she has done over the years.

Dear friend - we will miss your smile and laugh. We wish you the very best in your retirement and hope you make it back to Manhattan occasionally to visit us.

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



prairie falcon

Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society Newsletter

Vol. 47, No. 8 ~ April 2019

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Upcoming Events

Any warm day - consider walking Stagg Hill property and take a trash bag to help keep litter picked up.

- Apr 1- Board Meeting- (yes, on April Fool's Day)
6 p.m. Friend's Room,
Manhattan Public Library
- April 13- Sat. Morning Birding - 8 a.m. Sojourner Truth Park
Butterfly Garden Cleanup at 2:00 p.m.
- April 27-28- Birdathon
- May 5 - Alsop planning meeting see pg. 8
- May 11- Spring Migratory Bird Count Day



Skylight plus

Pete Cohen

It should not be hard, particularly for folks in the Wabaunsee County area of the Flint Hills, to separate in memory the beginning of 2018 from that of 2019. The former spent its youth dry and mild, and

grew into summer middle age as an adamant drouth, until a sudden week-long drenching in late August changed its attitude. As I write in March, the year 2019 hereabouts has been born chilly, and whenever the temperature creeps above freezing it turns soggy. Thus in contradistinction to our horned and antlered neighbors we are having our rutting season now. But their 'rut' derives from the Latin '*rugio*', meaning 'to roar'. And our 'ruts' are a variation of the French 'route', a road, and these are 'roads' with sunken bottoms and ridged edges composed of soil that often contains stray binding material so that they harden into the same sturdiness of building mud. If one has to move amongst them it helps to do so gently.

In dealing with them it can also help to recall that ruts are a quid pro quo of having certain water-retaining soils from which, either directly or indirectly, comes a lot of the food we need, and which in certain circumstance is food itself. Its consumption is called geophagia, and mention of its use by humans to improve virility, ease child-bearing, as an anti-diuretic, and just to quiet hunger, occurs in ancient writings up through the reports of early European explorers and missionaries, to labels on the shelves of certain modern day stores. Clays seem the preferred variety.

When we had horses it wasn't unusual to see them biting into an exposed clay bank, and I never could figure what they were getting that our pasture grass and feeds weren't providing. Other species also imbibe. It seems that among some Peruvian parrots the toxins in the seeds and unripe fruits they eat become positively charged in the birds' stomachs and then are harmlessly bound to negative charges in the clays they eat. World wide, I expect geophagia is something like picking the right mushrooms, for soils can contain poisonous ingredients, too.

More on this can be gleaned from Wikipedia and a list of forty sources for further reading. Be that as it may, I know of no peril in choosing what sky object you wish to find and/or marvel at, as long as you watch where you are, or going,

On the menu for visual, as distinct from victual, consumption in April are, so to speak, only light planetary salads. For about 40 minutes before sunrise the 1st and 2nd Mercury will be the least bright of a trio comprising also the Moon and Venus. Jupiter will rise a little earlier and so will be up higher as it fades into the daylight. On the 10th its upward motion will pause a while as its speed and the Earth's coincide briefly. Saturn will keep on going a little ahead of Jupiter, but with its rings at an angle that will keep its presence subdued.

Mars and the star Aldebaran in Taurus will provide the evening snack as the two reddish points go down adjacently, like the taillights of some celestial vehicle, disappearing below the western horizon during the hour before midnight.

The main show will be each evening's sparkling display of however much the clouds allow. Hercules with his crunched-square body and spidery arms and legs will be rising in the east, possibly best recognized by his following behind the quite recognizable backward 'C' of Corona Borealis (the Northern Crown) which will be following behind the bright shine of the star Arcturus. An imaginary line arcing back from the Big Dipper's handle, high overhead, will verify it's Arcturus, the highlight of the constellation, Boötes. Boötes is named to represent a plowman, or herder, nonetheless Arcturus is the base of weaker stars that describe a man-made kite.

Curving the imaginary arc southwestward will lead to Spica, which will seem quite lonely, though at the lower middle of a wide array of much dimmer stars considered as Virgo the Maiden. Looking on upward and westward, Leo the Lion's triangular haunch and backward question mark foreparts should be quite distinct, with the strong star Regulus at the bottom of the question mark. Further yet the dim stars of Cancer the Crab will allow mostly darkness before your eyes reach the neighboring glitters of Castor and Pollux, the twin stars at the head Gemini's long rectangle. Beyond that, with a low horizon, you might catch a glimpse of an edge of the Milky with the homeplate shape of Auriga the Charioteer setting behind the sparkles of Perseus, whose shape is a matter of various interpretations.

The Moon, having helped make the trio on the 1st, will visit with Aldebaran in Taurus the 8th and 9th, and will be seen near Regulus the 14th, Spica the 18th, Antares in Scorpio the 22nd, Jupiter the 23rd, both Jupiter and Saturn the 24th, and then just Saturn 25th. It will be new the 5th at 3a50 and full the 19th at 6a12.

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Smelling a Memory

Dru Clarke



The cow had not eaten her placenta as they usually do, but was attending to her newborn calf, an awkward auburn rug of curls struggling to get to her feet. The dogs were trying to grab the afterbirth, making the cow more anxious, so we forked it up into a bucket and took it near a salt lick where we had set up a trail camera. Checking the memory card a few days later, we saw a coyote warily looking about, then dragging the mass off to feed on it. Its sense of smell was rewarded.

Sometimes when I milk Iris, our Jersey, her manure and urine odors, initially off-putting, but blended with the sweetness of milk lactose, somehow primal, stimulate memories from long ago. One particularly rich one is of Ringling Bros.-Barnum and Bailey Circus in Madison Square Garden in New York City. My dad and my uncle planned for me and my cousin Patty a joint outing; first, to the circus, then to the Waldorf Astoria for an elegant lunch. Contrasting experiences assured, the first was an olfactory overload. The vast arena, dimly lit except for the rings where the acts happened, reeked of elephant waste, mixed with essence of horse, big cat, and popcorn. I remember the famous clown, Emmett Kelly, looked so sad. Lunch was a visual wonder, and while I don't remember what we ate, I do remember it was the first time I had seen and used a finger bowl, so something must have been buttered.

Smell is the sense most closely associated with emotions, tracked through time and space along a neural path to the amygdalae, two almond-shaped masses nestled in the temporal lobe of the brain, and thought to store that which we thought we had forgotten but somehow still possess. My friend's husband, comatose after surgery for an aneurysm, awoke shortly after she entered his hospital room. After his release, she asked what had brought him around: he said he smelled her personal scent, Beautiful. Every time my husband smells the bud burst of sycamores, he mindfully travels back to Rock Springs 4-H camp he attended in late middle child-



hood. Some of mine: My mother's skunk coat, still reminiscent of the origin but imbued now – 50 years later – with a whiff of musty mold, her sheer nightgown laced with the lavender soap she used to place in bureau drawers, my dad's beret that has a trace of his hair oil, his favorite brown cardigan of lanolin-slick old wool. This must be why widows and widowers often keep and hold a favorite article of clothing of their lost love, to remind themselves of warm and contented times they shared.

Birds aren't supposed to have a developed sense of smell, but experience tells me that vultures do, as they have led me, by their ever-tightening circles of flight, to a dead calf and have devoured-before we could find it- the afterbirth from a mare's foaling. The leftovers I put out for our resident possum are always gone by morning, and 'something' each night picks through the peelings the hens miss during the day. When vision fails, smell guides them.

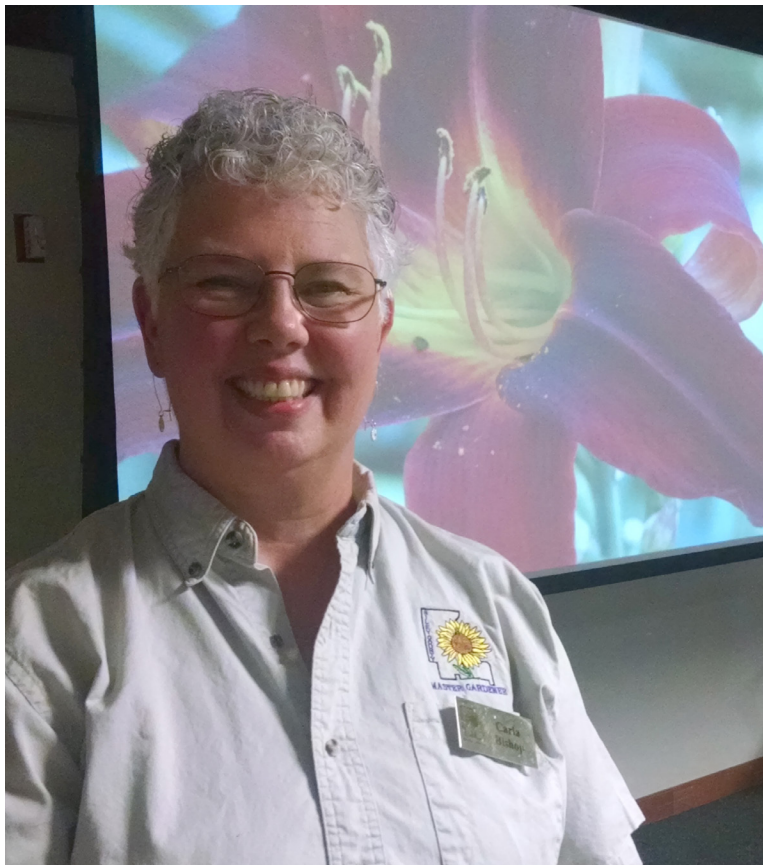
Odors designed to repel rodents – fox urine, cedar and balsam fir oil, garlic, cayenne pepper, to name some – haven't been effective against the pack rats who, after gnawing through its wiring, have created caches of range cubes in our old pickup. Their collective memories may associate the foul smell

with the presence of a source of food the providers choose to protect. It is a battle we are losing.

The next time a familiar molecule lingers and nudges a long-forgotten moment into your consciousness, may it be a pleasant and welcome one

THANK YOU

Carla Bishop



Thank you,

Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society!

I am writing to the organization to say thank you for all my adventures, knowledge I gained, and the wonderful people I have met & now call friends. I moved to Manhattan, KS in January 1988. One of my first acts in adapting to the new city was to join the local Audubon group. Wise move! Over the past thirty years I learned to identify birds, became more conscious of my impact on the environment, and been involved in entertaining programs & fun bird walks. It has been my honor to serve on the NFHAS board in many capacities, primarily treasurer. But, as with all things, my life is changing. I bought a house in Axtell, KS in 2016 but continued to work in Manhattan. During this three-year transition period I have continued as treasurer but my direct involvement with NFHAS activities has been limited.

Now I am preparing to retire from my position at K-State this June. With my retirement and permanent move to Axtell, it is now time to step down from the NFHAS board completely.

However, this isn't good-bye. I will continue as a member of Northern Flint Hills, since Axtell is part of the NFHAS region, as well as a member of National Audubon Society. My new life style will incorporate things I have learned through NFHAS, such as converting my yard into a wildlife friendly habitat. An orchard, vegetable garden, bees, & chickens are being considered, too. I hope to have time to take part in the programs & field trips that NFHAS and NAS offer. So, not good-bye, but see you later.

NFHAS has been good to me and for me. Anyone considering joining NFHAS, especially the board, I would say "go for it". You will learn a lot and meet some dedicated people. I want to give a special thanks to Patricia Yeager, Cindy Jeffrey, Kevin Fay, Susan Blackford, & Jacque Staats, who continue to keep the NFHAS flame burning (or should that be the NFHAS bird flying?).

Ta Ta For Now!

Carla Bishop

Sojourner Truth Butterfly Garden

Jacque Staats

Saturday April 13 at 2pm

Spring clean-up at the Sojourner Truth Butterfly Garden is scheduled for Saturday April 13 at 2pm. Come on out and join your neighbors in doing what we can to preserve habitat for our rapidly declining numbers of butterflies and native pollinators. No experience necessary!!!

Bring garden gloves and a hand nipper, if you have them, if not, we'll have extra. The garden is located at the corner of S 11th Street and Pottawatomie Ave/Riley Lane just south and west of Howie's Recycling. Rain date is Saturday April 20 @ 2pm.



2019 BIRDATHON

Clyde Ferguson

It's time for our annual major fund-raising event, the NFHAS Birdathon. This year's event will be held on:

Saturday, Apr. 27 - Sunday, Apr. 28, 2019

HOW DO YOU DO IT?

It's simple. Collect pledges from your friends, contacts, or enemies to pay so much for each bird species that you can count within the 24-hour period of April 28- Sunday, April 28, 2019. The pledges do not have to be large; dimes, quarters and dollars add up quickly when many participate. Encourage your sponsors to pledge 20 or 25 cents per species spotted and you'll be surprised how much money you can raise with five or ten sponsors. If your sponsors want to pledge a set amount, that works great also.

We encourage you to make this a family outing. Go out and bird for 24 hours beginning sometime on April 27th. It's OK, for example, to bird from 10:00 a.m. on April 27th until 10:00 a.m. on April 28th. Report your findings to your sponsor and collect your pledges (often the difficult part). Send the money, names and addresses to Clyde Ferguson, 2140 College Hts. Rd., Manhattan, KS 66502. You just might surprise yourself with how many species you can identify. If you do not want to go out alone, or don't feel you can ID birds well enough, call Jim Koelliker (785-776-4915) and we will put you with a group.

If you cannot join in the fun of going out yourself, you can still collect names and pledges and one of the members who will be going out can be your "designated counter." We call this a super-sponsor (not that any of our sponsors aren't super in our eyes). If you have a friend that is going out to count, ask him or her to be your eyes.

If you do not know anyone going out, contact Jim Koelliker at 785-776-4915, or any NFHAS board member (see the back page of your newsletter for contact information), or just send a note to: Birdathon NFHAS, PO Box 1932, Manhattan KS 66505, and we will find someone to count for you. We'll provide a list of the species counted and you can collect the pledges based on that list. On average, we see between 90 and 110 species on a good trip.

Don't forget you can be a sponsor yourself. Make your pledge to a friend or relative who is going to be a counter or super-sponsor. If none of our counters or super-sponsors contacts you, send a note or this form with your pledge and we will add you to our list of sponsors. If you prefer, send a lump sum donation c/o of the Birdathon to the address above. We're easy, we accept donations in almost any form.

Those donating \$15 or more may receive a one year's subscription to the Prairie Falcon (if requested on the form). Our normal subscription price is \$15 and the purpose of the Birdathon is to raise additional funds. Your donations and the donations of your sponsors are a tax-deductible contribution.

Please join us if you can and if you can't, please help us support and protect the wild things.

Clyde Ferguson,
Birdathon Chair

2019 BIRDATHON Pledge Form

Your name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Sponsor's Name & Address

Pledge/species

Total Pledge

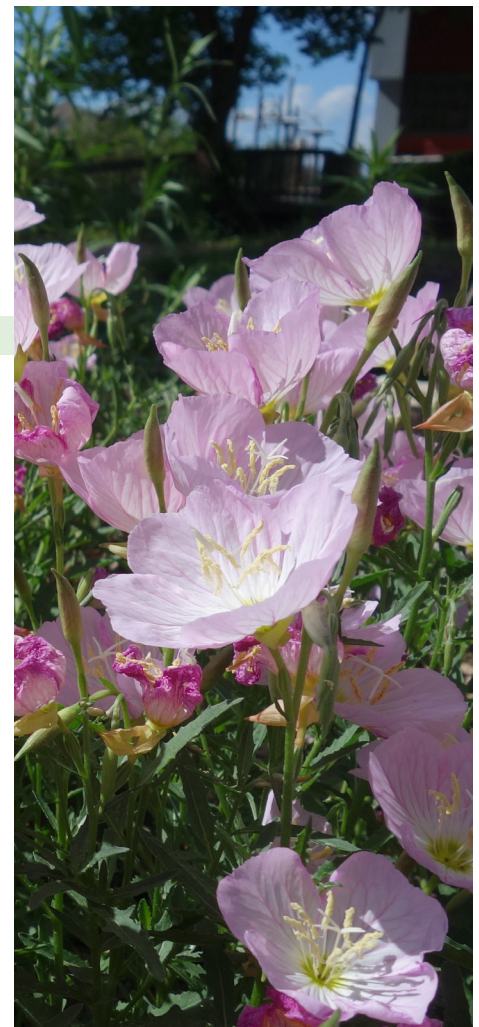
Newsletter

Alsop Bird Sanctuary

Sunday, May 5th at 4:30

Our first planning meeting will be Sunday April 5th at 4:30 at the Alsop property (corner of 17th and Laramie) We will try to meet monthly to go over what is needed. The crew will meet weekly during the growing season. All those interested in volunteering some time this spring and summer please come. We will discuss all the tasks and setup a schedule. You can choose what and when and how often you would like to do to help the Alsop Bird Sanctuary thrive.

Also, the last of the bricks have arrived!

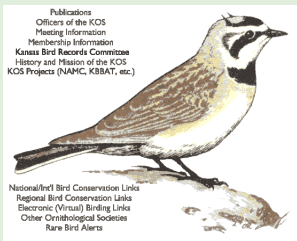




The Kansas Wetlands Education Center, along with The Nature Conservancy, Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks & Tourism, City of Great Bend, and the Kansas Birding Festival, Inc., hosts this 2-day birding festival every other year on odd numbered years.

Plans are under way for the 2019 Wings & Wetlands Birding Festival, to be held on May 3-4, 2019 in Great Bend, KS.

<http://wetlandscenter.fhsu.edu/wings-n-wetlands-birding-festival/>



Kansas Ornithological Society

KOS Spring Meeting, May 10 - 12, Fort Scott For more information go to <http://www.ksbirds.org/>

Audubon of Kansas <https://www.audubonofkansas.org>

Just published **YOUR LAND, YOUR LEGACY** by AOK. It details how AOK is working with landowners who want to have their land protected in perpetuity as a wildlife sanctuary. Donation of land for this purpose is not a choice for everyone, but this publication is for those who are interested in that possibility. It outlines how to contribute. It can be viewed online or downloaded from the AOK website, where it is listed under SANCTUARIES and also under GET INVOLVED

<https://www.audubonofkansas.org/yourland>



Wetlands and Streams in the Great Plains Threatened by Proposed Rule: Your Voice May Help Save Them

The EPA and Corps of Engineers recently held the one and only public hearing on a Proposed Rule that, if adopted, will redefine "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) in a way that will eliminate regulatory protection for most wetlands in the Great Plains and many thousands of miles of streams, including most tributaries that flow into larger streams and rivers.

If adopted by the agencies, isolated wetlands (not connected to major rivers), along with countless streams and sections of rivers that would be removed from WOTUS, will no longer be protected by the Clean Water Act of 1972. The wetlands and streams removed from recognition as WOTUS will not be protected from pollution by EPA or the Section 404 permit requirement for dredging, draining and/or filling administered by the Corps of Engineers.

Comments from the public and organizations will be accepted until April 15, 2019. For more information go to

<https://www.audubonofkansas.org/news>



When recycling at Howie's remember that if you are depositing aluminum cans, you can donate to the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society- but you must go into the office and tell them it is for NFHAS.



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Audubon Society
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Edited by Cindy Jeffrey, 15850 Galilee Rd., Olsburg, KS 66520. (cinraney@ksu.edu)
Also available online at nfhas.org

WE NEED YOU!

PLEASE consider joining our NFHAS Board.

The Board meets on the first Monday of each month. The meetings usually last about an hour.

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Board member at large:

Education Chair

Birdseed Chair

NFHAS Board

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Vice Pres.

Secretary:

Treasurer: Carla Bishop - carla.kay.bishop@gmail.com

COMMITTEE Chairs:

Membership:

Programs: Kevin Fay

Butterfly Garden:

Alsop Property: Patricia Yeager - pyeagerbirder@gmail.com
776-9593

Education:

Bird Seed Sales:

Newsletter: [Cindy Jeffrey](mailto:cinraney@ksu.edu) - cinraney@ksu.edu 565-3326

Fieldtrips: Patricia Yeager, Kevin Fay 776-9593

AOK Representative: Cindy Jeffrey

At-large: Susan Blackford

Contacts for Your Elected Representatives (anytime) Write, call or email: Governor: 2nd Floor, State Capital Bldg., Topeka , KS 66612. KS Senator or Representative: State Capital Bldg., Topeka, KS 66612. Ph# (during session only) Senate - 785-296-7300. House - 785-296-7500. U.S. Senator Roberts <Roberts@senate.gov> U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510. Jerry Moran U.S. Capital Switch-board 202-224-3121.