

# October Program

## Birds and Beer

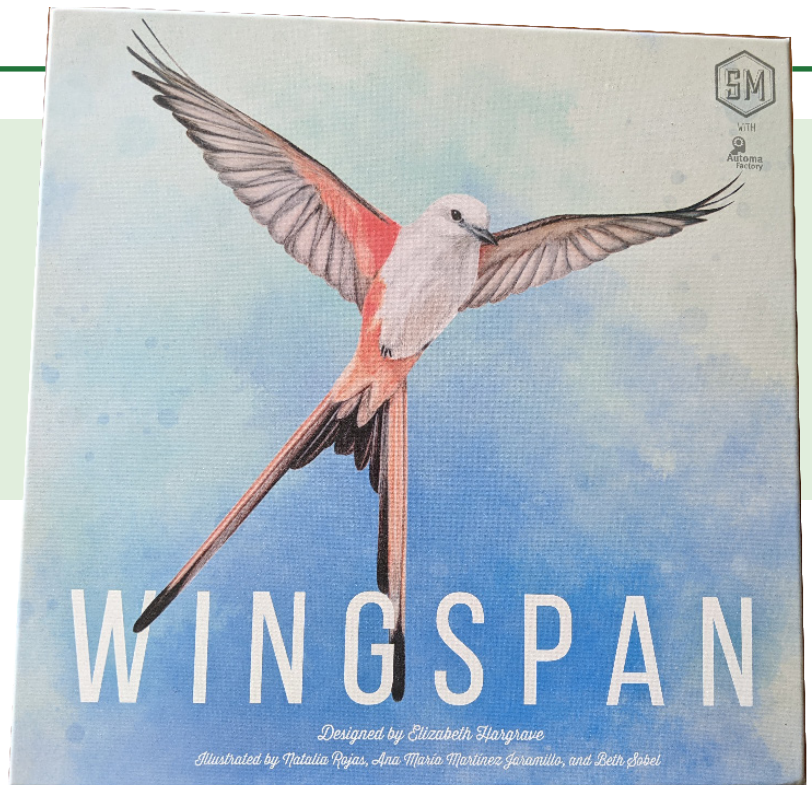
Join us for a fun evening playing  
"Wingspan," socializing and enjoy food and  
drink at Little Apple Brewery (LABCO.)  
1110 Westloop Pl, Manhattan, KS

**Oct. 20th - Party room, 4:30-8:30**  
**Playing the game will start at 6:30**  
**RSVP by Oct. 14 PLEASE**

If you have the game please bring it, and  
if you have played it before - that would  
be a great help. We are beginners!

You may also bring any other board or  
card game you would like to play,

**OR just come and have dinner  
and/or a drink with us.** (Everyone  
pays for themselves, we don't have the  
funds to buy your dinner!)



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



## prairie falcon

Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society Newsletter

Vol. 51, No. 2, October 2022

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### Upcoming Events

- Oct. 4 Board Meeting, 5:30 pm Manhattan Public Library  
PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING THE NFHAS BOARD
- Oct. 8 - Sat. morning birding  
8:00 Depart from Sojourner Truth Park
- Oct. 20 - Thursday - Birds and Beer (see above)
- BIRDSEED SALE:  
ORDER Deadline: NOV. 4TH  
PICKUP: NOV. 12, UFM PARKING LOT 8-12n
- SAVE THE DATE: Celebration of Cranes, Quivira NWR  
Nov. 4, 5, 6 -- Pre-register -- [audubonofkansas.org](https://audubonofkansas.org)



## Skylight plus

Pete Cohen

We left off last month drawing on an article in the latest spring/summer issue of *Columbian*, a publication of Columbia U.'s Alumni Center. The article was referring to recent research into understanding the ability of athletes, with the hope of not only improving our performances at work and play, but also our ability to make split-second decisions, and to find better treatments for mobility impairments due to accidents and diseases.

The article focuses on what particular factors were relevant to a specific situation: a baseball player sent to pinch-hit in a high-pressure moment in the 1991 World Series. To accomplish a certain hit would win the Series, to fail could be crucial to Series. Surrounded by 55,000 loud fans, in the view of millions on TV, he could face pitches arriving in .4 of a second. His brain required .2 of a second to message his muscles. He'd have .2 of a second to decide whether or not to swing, and if so, where to.

By his own account Gene Larkin approached home plate physically shaking-scared, but when he stepped into the familiar batter's box a sudden calm confidence encased him, and he succeeded. Many people have experienced, or achieved?, calm and effective motor control amid high stress. The article collates various offers to explain the process and how to enhance it.

The sudden calm state of consciousness was named "flow" in 1990 by an Hungarian-American psychologist, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Chik-sent-me-hai-ee) (1934-2021). The article states that "Research has shown that during the flow state, the prefrontal cortex—the part of the brain associated with complex planning and decision-making—shuts down.....you no longer have self-doubt, inhibition, or fear". At the same time the article elsewhere reports that findings by researchers in the Columbia lab of Professor Paul Sajda showed that "the motor areas that govern inhibition were more active in the ballplayers than in non-players." Ballplayers have to inhibit their brains' primal urge to move them out of the way of the speeding ball, and while being primed to swing, must hold back from unwanted pitches—the latter said to require more effort than swinging. And I interpret the article to say that suppressing the dodging urge is aided by the fusiform face area (FFA), a part of the brain that appears dedicated to face recognition (and bird recognition among bird-watchers). For ball players the speeding ball would become a familiar sight, and thus they would be aided in overcoming the "startle response...observed throughout the animal kingdom"; that is, the tendency to freeze upon receiving some kind of unknown sudden threat signal.

As those details are noted, some thoughts of the article's accredited sources on enhancing athletic performance appear, and some would say those thoughts apply not to just athletes. For overcoming the "freeze", one mentions a knack for predicting what will be required in potential emergency instances as one important factor. Knowing one's abilities is another, and equally vital: practicing them. Avoiding, especially in some specific situation, focusing on a goal, while instead giving attention on the means to achieve it, is one more input. Another adds in that withal it helps to be born with quick reflexes. Yet everything referred to, they agree, acts in the service of creating an essential self-confidence.

Similarly, Gene Larkin, now a financial planner, is reported as saying that there's an "X factor" in performance that can't be easily quantified using electrodes and vision tests. And as to the batter's box situation, he says: "You have to have an inner bravado at home plate and really believe that you can compete with the guy on the mound, no matter how good he is. If you don't your chance of success is almost zero".

Jupiter, Saturn, and Venus will be routinely, and one assumes, confidently, at work through October. The first will be a bright eye-in-the-sky moving east to west till setting a bit before dawn. Saturn, traveling a little ahead, will set in the wee hours. Venus silently, with a shy brilliance, will be a brief Morning Star the first part of the month, then bow out to return as a solitary Evening Star later on. Mercury will share the low early morning stage, being especially notable the 8th, then shine on alone for about a week after Venus exits. Mars could qualify as a special attraction, its reddish shine riding Taurus the Bull up into the arena starting mid-evening.

The Moon will be to the lower left of Saturn the 5th, and passes below Jupiter left to right the 7th and 8th. He'll be above Taurus' Aldebaran, rising with Mars, the 13th and be closer above Mars the 14th. Next: above Leo's Regulus in the dawnlight of the 20th, then he'll refrain from competing with whatever the Orionid meteor shower will offer at its best the 21st. The Moon will be full the 9th at 3p56, and new the 25th at 5a40.

## Mucking About

Dru Clarke



"Do you have rubber boots?" she queried after I mentioned that chiggers were a real deterrent to checking whorled milkweed for monarch larvae. You are kidding, right? We live on a farm: of course, we have rubber boots. But, that is just the beginning.

In digging through the porch bench where I store seldom used 'stuff' I found eleven pairs of mostly worn-out footgear (see picture). My favorite at one time were the Heels Down green leather boots I wore when I still rode my gelding Duke, and then, my mare Rocket. Duke and I 'gathered' (probably stole) watermelons from a remote patch on a neighbor's field. The slight heel on the boot kept my feet from sliding through the stirrups. These rides allowed me to get really close to wildlife and we startled many a bobwhite quail covey, perching hawk, and napping deer. Probably the most worn were my Uggs, shown held together with camo duct tape, that warmed my feet through many winters.

A decade ago I discovered Remonte Dorndorf, a German company that makes stylish but extremely comfortable leather boots. I've worn out probably four pairs of them (back row, on the left, is one old pair) and folks who notice them on my feet usually exclaim how attractive they are. And, oh so comfortable. They've traveled much of the Earth with me, but for the Georgia birding trip, the guides (Attila and Rafael – really!) advised a different kind of boot for extensive hiking and a cold environment (we ventured into a snowfield at around 10,000 ft.). They wore a brand that resembled my Remontes (I forget the name), but I purchased a pair of tough, durable OBoz, made by a company in Bozeman, Montana. I admit I was impressed with the background of the founders (seasoned trekkers who had experienced difficult terrain and weather) and the buy proved worthwhile (pictured sitting on top of the bootboxes). A former student teacher who works for the Wilderness Society has her office just down the street from OBoz and she enthusiastically endorsed my choice. They say they plant a tree for every pair bought, and that clinched the sale.

I like my Groundhogs, too, as they are kind of ugly: slouchy and boxy, and have cool looking gum soles. They should be worn when riding a Hog. (I saw a groundhog once up a tree: it was spring and may have just woken up when I startled it into climbing.) Or worn when you really don't have to impress anyone or achieve a particular task. They are good for a casual walk through dry, tall grass.

This winter I'll fall back on my grey quilted Columbia boots, so warm that I won't need socks. They do get wet though, so I may have to resort to trying my most expensive and storied boots, a pair of Lucchese I bought on sale probably fifteen years ago. (I'm not going to share what I paid for them but it was a bargain, considering they go for \$600 and up.) I wear them to exotic cattle auctions when I sell my Highland calves (they give me cred). The company, Lucchese Bros. Boots and Shoes, was begun by Salvatore Lucchese and his brother who emigrated from Sicily in 1883. After landing in Galveston, they moved to San Antonio, and headquarters today are in El Paso. Robert J. Kleberg Sr. (of King Ranch renown) bought a pair in the early 1900's, and since then, other dignitaries and celebrities have been fitted with their boots (the Kennedys, Lyndon Johnson, George H.W. Bush, Arnold Schwarzenegger). They once designed a unique boot for every state (there were 48 at the time). They are billed as 'comfy, water resistant, and run true to size.' They have soft cream cow linings and channeled leather insoles, and the Goodyear welt construction holds all the parts together. They are handmade. The only drawback to mine is that they are jet black, not a color I would normally choose. I've read that while they can get wet on the outside, your feet stay dry. So, I'll give them a try, but draw the line on true, daily mucking about. For that, my reliable rubber boots will collect the mud and chiggers. I never did find any monarch larvae on the whorled milkweed.



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# Birdseed SALE 2022

Northern Flint Hills



Audubon Society  
Manhattan, Kansas

## Support our Local Chapter

Our annual BirdSeed Sale is one of our fundraising activities. While the prices may be higher than at your local retail store, the proceeds go toward supporting educational and conservation projects for our chapter. And we do have to pay retail taxes.

## ORDER by Nov. 4, 2022

Send completed form and payment to:

NFHAS

P.O. Box 1932

Manhattan, KS 66505

## PICKUP: Saturday, Nov. 12, 2022 8 - 12n

Parking lot of UFM Community Learning Center  
1221 Thurston St, Manhattan, KS 66502

**CHEAP CHEEP MIX** is less expensive but still attractive to many species. It is 40 % cracked corn, 40 % white proso millet, and 20 % black oil sunflower (with no milo or fillers).

**BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED CHIPS** are high in energy and can be used in tube feeders. It is especially liked by pine Siskins. Hulled sunflower seed is consumed by a variety of birds, large- and small-beaked.

**FINCH MIX** consists of 50% sunflower chips and 50% thistle seed.

**FLINT HILLS FEAST** is the premium seed mix: 30% black oil sunflower seed, 20% striped sunflower seed, and 50% white proso millet (with no milo or fillers).

**MEDIUM CHOP** is chopped corn, a little finer and cleaned.

**PEANUT PICKOUTS** are chunks of peanut hearts and are very attractive to woodpeckers, nuthatches, chickadees, titmice, jays, wrens, and more.

**SAFFLOWER** is a favorite with Cardinals, and squirrels really do not like it.

**SUET CAKES**, in addition to having other nutritious ingredients, the main ingredient is high calorie beef fat. It helps birds maintain body heat in cold winter months. Bird seed, berries and peanut butter are mixed in with suet. Enjoy woodpeckers, wrens, nuthatches, and chickadees.

**BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEEDS** are the preferred seed of many small feeder birds and attractive to more species than are striped sunflower seeds. Black oil supplies more energy per pound than striped.

**STRIPED SUNFLOWER SEEDS** contain larger hearts than black oil sunflower seeds and are particularly suitable for larger songbirds.

**THISTLE SEED** is very attractive to Gold Finches and all other finches that are here over winter. It is excellent or tube feeders.

**WHITE MILLET** is a favorite of most small-beaked ground-feeding birds; Red millet is also readily eaten. Quail, doves, juncos, sparrows, towhees, cowbirds, and red-winged blackbirds are attracted to millet.

(Taken from Audubon At Home Bird Feeding Basics, <http://www.allaboutbirds.org/>)

# 2022 Order Form

Manhattan Flint Hills Audubon Fall 2022			
Black oil sunflower	OUR PRICE	Number of bags	Total
10	\$11.92		
25	\$26.32		
50	\$47.92		
striped sunflower			
10	\$16.52		
25	\$29.52		
50	\$54.32		
flint hills feast			
10	\$11.92		
25	\$25.52		
50	\$47.92		
cheap cheap mix			
10	\$9.52		
25	\$19.92		
50	\$36.72		
sunflower chips			
10	\$22.32		
25	\$47.92		
thistle			
10	\$26.32		
25	\$57.52		
finch mix			
10	\$24.72		
25	\$54.32		
safflower			
10	\$19.12		
25	\$41.52		
white millet			
10	\$10.32		
25	\$20.72		
50	\$38.32		
peanut pickouts (shelled peanuts)			
10	\$23.92		
25	\$50.32		
medium corn chop			
25	\$6.32		
50	\$14.32		
suet cake			
ea	\$2.00		
TOTAL			

Delivery service available within Manhattan City limits for additional \$5

COMPLETE and return with payment:

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

SUBTOTAL

DELIVERY

DONATION

TOTAL

Checks payable to:  
Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society  
Or NFHAS

## Saturday Morning Birding Report

Patricia Yeager

Saturday's weather (Sept. 10) was a bit dreary for birding but one never knows what you'll see. Three birders joined me for birding this wet day. We went to the Mitchel-Ross Preserve where, if it rained, we would have some cover. The three birders had never been to the preserve and found it a delightful oasis of trees and native plants. Alas, we only heard /saw a few birds (Blue jay, Carolina Wren, Robins, Crows, Northern Cardinal, Red-bellied woodpecker) but it was a good exercise in identifying bird calls.

We found the main trail free of trash and passable with a stick to clear the spider webs by the first in line. ( If any readers have been picking up trash along the trail I want to thank you. I know I have not been there for about six months and was very pleased to find it in good condition.)

When it started raining we decided to leave and take an auto tour of the other NFHAS properties and projects. By the time we got to Northeast Park the rain started letting up but the two wet Red-shouldered hawks perched on a soccer goal did not look happy as they spread their wings trying to dry out. They let us look at close range from our car spending no energy to fly away. We also heard a loud catbird but did not manage to see it. I hoped it had a nice dry spot in which to hide. A good time was had by all and I got to meet a good new birder who is only 11 yrs old named Emily and her father Mark. Join us next time. You never know what you'll see or who you'll meet.





# All About Birds

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/learn-how-to-id-these-5-confusing-streaked-sparrows/>

Check out this website for all sorts of tips to help birds and birding, here is just one of them:

## Learn how to ID 5 confusing streaked sparrows,

### Song Sparrow

Compared to other sparrows, the Song Sparrow is medium-sized and long-tailed. The brown streaks on its chest look painted on, and they usually come together in a big splotch in the center. This species also has two triangular brown stripes on either side of its throat, a whitish or grayish eyebrow, and a thin dark line behind the eye.



Song Sparrow by Ryan Schain/  
Macaulay Library.

### Fox Sparrow

Fox Sparrow breeds farther north, in the scrubby boreal forest, or in shrubby mountain habitats. Most birders see it on migration or in the winter, when it uses more varied habitats and sometimes shows up beneath bird feeders.

When feeding, the Fox Sparrow uses a “double-scratch” technique, hopping quickly forward and backward to uncover food among ground vegetation and leaf litter.



Fox Sparrow by Celine Bellemare/  
Macaulay Library.

### Savannah Sparrow

It's about the same size as a Song Sparrow, with a slightly shorter tail that's notched, not rounded. A close look at a Savannah Sparrow's face usually reveals a wash of yellow color in front of the eyes, and sometimes above and behind them as well—but the richness and extent of this marking is highly variable.

When a Savannah Sparrow is flushed, it tends to fly up to a perch and face its pursuer as it lands, distinguishing itself from LeConte's Sparrow and Grasshopper Sparrow, which tend to dive into the grass head-first.



Savannah Sparrow by Bryan Calk/  
Macaulay Library.

### Lincoln's Sparrow

If a Song Sparrow's markings are drawn on with a regular paintbrush, a Lincoln's are put on with a fine pencil. Everything is fine, sharp, and crisp. It's a subtly beautiful sparrow if you can get a good look at it. A contrasting buffy color on the chest and on the sides of the throat also set this sparrow apart from the other widespread, streaked sparrows.

Lincoln's Sparrow has one of the most musical songs of any sparrow, a rich, wren-like cascade of trills, gurgles, and buzzes.



Lincoln's Sparrow by Pierre Martin/  
Macaulay Library.

### Vesper Sparrow

As its name suggests, it often sings in the evening twilight (though it sings in the early morning as well). Its distinct song starts with two clear, downslurred notes followed by a series of musical trills and whistles.

Also distinctive is its complete white eyering—no other widespread, streak-breasted sparrow has this facial feature. In flight, look for a long tail with white outer tailfeathers (similar to a junco).

If you are looking in agricultural areas for this species, look for corn. This is one of the few sparrows that uses growing cornfields in the summer (not just the postharvest stubble in the fall).



Vesper Sparrow by Ryan Schain/  
Macaulay Library.



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

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Manhattan, KS 66502

The purpose of the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society is to teach people to enjoy and respect birds and their habitats. NFHAS advocates preservation of prairie ecosystems and urban green spaces thus saving the lives of birds and enriching the lives of people.

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Edited by Cindy Jeffrey, 15850 Galilee Rd., Olsburg, KS 66520. (cinraney@ksu.edu)  
Also available online at [nfhas.org](http://nfhas.org)

Membership Information: Introductory memberships - \$20/yr. then basic renewal membership is \$35/yr. When you join the National Audubon Society, you automatically become a member of the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society. You will receive the bimonthly Audubon magazine in addition to the Prairie Falcon newsletter. New membership applications should be sent to *National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 97194, Washington, D.C. 20090. Make checks payable to the National Audubon Society and include the code C4ZJ040Z.*

Questions about membership Call 1-800-274-4201 or email the National Audubon Society [join@audubon.org](mailto:join@audubon.org). Website is [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org).

NFHAS Subscription Information: If you do not want to receive the national magazine, but still want to be involved in NFHAS local activities, ***you may subscribe to the Prairie Falcon newsletter for \$20/yr.*** Make checks payable to the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society, and mail to: **Treasurer, NFHAS, P.O. Box 1932, Manhattan, KS, 66505-1932**

Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society website: [nfhas.org](http://nfhas.org)

**WE NEED YOU!** PLEASE consider joining our NFHAS Board.

#### NFHAS Board

President: [Patricia Yeager](mailto:pyeagerbirder@gmail.com) - pyeagerbirder@gmail.com 776-9593  
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#### COMMITTEE Chairs:

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