

CAT PRINTS



Wildcat Audubon Society - Serving the Nebraska Panhandle

Officers 2015

Co-Presidents

Dr. Don Gentry
Meredyth Gentry
308-436-2495
drdon21@embarqmail.com

Co-Vice Presidents

Donna Davey
308-632-5767
donna@cddavey.com

Secretary –Field Trips

Alice Kenitz
308-436-2959
akenitz@prairieweb.com

Treasurer–Editor

Field Trips

Kathy De Lara
308-632-3047
renosmom@charter.net

Board of Directors

Chuck Davey
308-632-5767

Ann Duey
Field Trips
308-632-3544
dduey@actcom.net

Ruben Siegfried
308-436-7859
rubens69341@yahoo.com

Rod & Marie Smith
308-632-1973
mlou_smith@yahoo.com

Alie Mayes
308-783-1019
alexandra.mayes@rmba.org

Kim Meidena
308-630-6236
kim.miedema@riverside
discoverycenter.org

Kenitz Corner

By Alice Kenitz

We have a few interesting birds so far this winter. There are a few Evening Grosbeaks that have been seen at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center. Cassin's Finches have also been seen at the Nature Center and at a few other feeders in the area.

There has been a Mountain Chickadee east of Scottsbluff and lots of American Coots at the Scottsbluff Sewage Lagoons. A Black Rosy-Finch has been reported at Scotts Bluff National Monument in with a flock of Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches..

We did the Scottsbluff Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 20. We lucked out on the weather with a very pleasant calm and relatively warm day that was sandwiched between a couple of snow storms. We only had 7 birders in the field so our number of parties was down from recent years. We had 57 species with 6 during count week and 11002 individuals. Count week is the three days before and the three days after the count day. Numbers of Canada Geese were way down from the last few years.

Continued on page 3



By Kathy DeLara

Cassin's Finch at the Nature Center January 17, 2015

International Migratory Bird Day

Mountain Plover Festival May 9th 2015

May is International Migratory Bird Day-Month! Migratory birds travel thousands of miles every year so they deserve more than just one day, help us celebrate all month long, starting with our first annual Mountain Plover Festival located in Gotte Park in Kimball on May 9th, 2015, hosted by the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. This FREE event will include games, crafts, and scheduled-guided tours to see these amazing birds by Kimball's own Larry Snyder.

Contact Alexandra Mayes at alexandra.mayes@rmbo.org or Angela Dwyer at angela.dwyer@rmbo.org or (970)-482-1707 ext. 17 to learn more.

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Watchable Wildlife Tours in Kimball County, Nebraska

Weekly tours will be held late March through Mid May depending on weather and migration time of the birds.

This will include Mountain Plover Tours, Rapor Tours and Longspur Tours.

Tours will leave from the High Point Welcome Center (I-80, Exit 20) Kimball NE, weather permitting.
For reservations, call 308-241-0573

For more information and updates go to www.kimballne.org and click on the calendar tab or on the Residents tab, then Things to Do, then Birding

GREEN TIP

REHEAT OR KEEP WARM? By Ann Duey

Sometimes it seems like my furnace just slaves away to warm the house in the morning after I've set the thermostat down for the night. Wouldn't it be smarter just to maintain a constant temperature because reheating requires more energy?

Well, not according to Mr. Green @ si-errclub.org. He claims that because heat is constantly being lost mainly through windows and doors, the warmer it stays inside, the more heat escapes. So it takes less energy to reheat a house than to keep it warm all the time.

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy estimates a 2% savings on heating bills for each degree you lower the thermostat for eight hours at a time. A daytime temperature of 68 degrees is recommended; reduce the temperature to 65 if you are going to be gone for several hours; 62 is the recommended nighttime temperature.

Interesting Sightings

Evening Grosbeaks were seen at the Nature Center on January 9th and 12th

Mountain Chickadee has been seen east of Scotts-bluff in December and January

Cassin's Finches were at the feeders at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center January 17-18

Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks seem to be more numerous at local feeders this year

Gray-crowned and Black Rosy-finches were seen at the Scotts Bluff National Monument on January 19th

3 White-winged Doves have been seen in Gering daily the past couple of month

Kenitz Corner

(continued from page 1)

Here is the list of species and numbers from the Scottsbluff CBC;

Greater White-fronted Goose 2, Cackling Goose 48, Canada Goose 4028, Gadwall 24, American Wigeon 84, Mallard 2369, Northern Shoveler 16, Northern Pintail 16, Canvasback 7 (high), Red-head 12, Ring-necked Duck 52, Lesser Scaup 2, Bufflehead 1, Common Goldeneye 144, Hooded Merganser 1, Ring-necked Pheasant 11, Wild Turkey 45, Great Blue Heron 1, Bald Eagle (high) Adult 13 Immature 12, Northern Harrier 2, Cooper's Hawk count week, Red-tailed Hawk 23, Ferruginous Hawk 1, Rough-legged hawk 9, Buteo species 2, American Kestrel 27, Prairie Falcon 1 American Coot 210 (high), Killdeer 1, Rock Pigeon 428, Eurasian Collared-Dove 670 (high), White-winged Dove 3 (high), Belted Kingfisher 3, Red-bellied Woodpecker count week, Downy Woodpecker 4, Hairy Woodpecker count week, Northern Flicker 20 (Yellow 2, Orange 2, unknown 16), Northern Shrike 1, Blue Jay 67, Black-billed Magpie 7, American Crow 4, Horned Lark 191, Black-capped Chickadee 14, Mountain Chickadee 1, Red-breasted Nuthatch 8, White-breasted Nuthatch 1, Pygmy Nuthatch 4, Townsend's Solitaire 1, American Robin 313, European Starling 932, Cedar Waxwing 13, American Tree Sparrow 59, Song Sparrow 4, Harris's Sparrow count week, White-crowned Sparrow 254 (high), Dark-eyed Junco 324 (Oregon 38, Pink-sided 6, Slate-colored 62, Gray-headed 1, unknown 217), Red-winged Blackbird 69, meadowlark species 29, Common Grackle count week, Purple Finch count week, House Finch 106, Pine Siskin 30, American Goldfinch 51, House Sparrow 226.

Crawford and Harrison CBC

Due to poor weather and road conditions, Donna and I were unable to get to Crawford and Harrison for this season's CBC. However, Michael Willison from Lincoln was making the trip to western Nebraska for some winter birding and agreed to conduct the Crawford count on his own.

The temperature range from 7 degrees to 24 degrees with about 6 inches of snow on the ground.

The weather was clear and sunny. Total individuals was below average with a total of 30 species seen. New for the count were the Golden-crowned Kinglets!

The Harrison count was not done this year.

Below is the tally of Michael's count:

Mallard 4, Bald Eagle, Adults 1, Northern Harrier 1, Red-tailed Hawk 3, Rough-legged Hawk 6, American Kestrel 1, Ring-necked Pheasant 19, Sharp-tailed Grouse 8, Wild Turkey 55, Rock Pigeon 35, Eurasian Collared-Dove 85, Downy Woodpecker 3, Hairy Woodpecker 3, Northern (Red-shafted) Flicker 2, Horned Lark 340, Blue Jay 2, American Crow 14, Black-capped Chickadee 9, White-breasted Nuthatch 2, Golden-crowned Kinglet 2, American Robin 20, Northern Shrike 1, European Starling 80, American Tree Sparrow 65, Song Sparrow 3, Dark-eyed Junco – Form 25, Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco 3, Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco 25, Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco 2, Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco 8, Western Meadowlark 3, House Finch 2, American Goldfinch 6, House Sparrow 40

Total Individuals 878, Total Species 30
Bruce and Donna Walgren, Casper, WY

<http://www.wyoneb.net/-delara/WildcatAudubon.htm>
www.facebook.com/WildcatAudubon

Wildcat Weekends at the WCH Nature Center

The Wildcat Hills Nature Center is pleased to offer Wildcat Weekends! A variety of programs will be offered at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center on the second Saturday of the month (*unless otherwise noted) from May through December 2015. **A valid 2015 Nebraska State Park permit is required.**

For more information about these events or to register (when applicable), contact the Nature Center at 308-436-3777 or ngpc.wildcat.hills@nebraska.gov

***May 16, 2015**

Wildcat Hills Wildlands Day/Free Park Entry Day

Take part in several great activities going on throughout this day-long celebration! Join us for an 8K fun run, bird hike, wildflower walk, bighorn sheep tour, kids crafts and much more!
Park permits are not required for this event!

***June 6, 2015 at 5:30-8:30pm MDT**

A Photographer's workshop-

Getting the Shot: NEBRASKAland style

Advanced and amateur photographers alike are invited to bring a camera and learn tips and techniques of nature photography with NEBRASKAland photographer Justin Haag.

Please register at (308) 436-3777 by June 1, 2015. Space is limited to 30 participants.

July 11, 2015 at 9:00am MDT

Bighorn Sheep Hike

Let's find the mysterious and secretive creature of the Wildcat Hills, the bighorn Sheep. Come along and learn about their amazing adaptations and research being conducted.

We will hike to find these sneaky critters and depending on their location, this may be a long and hot hike. Please bring water and hiking shoes.

August 8, 2015 at 9:00am MDT

Dutch Oven Cooking

Explore the art of Dutch Oven cooking! Come help prepare a wonderful brunch, learn about Dutch Oven cooking and best of all, eating. Cost is \$5/ person to cover the cost of supplies.

Please pre-register by July 31, 2015 for this event at 308-436-3777. We are looking for a minimum number of 10 guest to conduct this pro-gram. Please let us know of any special dietary needs when registering.

September 12, 2015 at 9:00am MDT

Feathered Friends

Uncover the birds that call the Wildcat Hills home! We will learn about research being done in the area, common migratory birds and even take a short hike.

Bring your hiking shoes and be prepared to take flight!

October 10, 2015 at 7:00 pm MDT

Howl in the Hills Night Hike

Experience the Wildcat Hills like never before, at night! Discover all the creatures that go bump in the night during our hike! It is sure to be a 'howling' good time!

Please bring along a flashlight, hiking shoes and a sense of adventure.

Please pre-register by October 2, 2015 for this event.

***November 7, 2015 at 9:00am MST**

Oh Deer

Bound on over to explore our deer friends that call the Wildcat Hills home.

Discover the different species, habitat needs and cool adaptations of these majestic creatures!

December 12, 2015 at 9:00am MST

Nature's Gifts: Decorations from the Great Outdoors

Come along and help us create garland feeders, bird feeders and fun nature ornaments that will dress up the Nature Center and your own homes for our winter season!

This fun program is complete with hot chocolate and cookies.

Please pre-register by December 4, 2015 for this event at 308-436-3777.

Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival

Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival Set for March 2015

by Deb Hauswald, Audubon Nebraska

Audubon Nebraska is pleased to announce its 45th annual celebration of the sandhill crane migration, Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival (formerly known as the Rivers and Wildlife Celebration). The Festival will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Center in Kearney, March 19-22, and features a variety of birding excursions including guided half- and full-day trips to local birding hot-spots, sunrise and sunset trips to crane viewing blinds along the Platte River at Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary, and an overnight outing to see prairie grouse.

Main speakers include naturalist and author Scott Wiedensaul, who was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his book *Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere With Migratory Birds*; and Joseph Ryan, Vice President for Climate Change and Strategic Initiatives for the National Audubon Society. Other presenters will give information on a variety of nature-related topics. A workshop on crane behavior will be presented, and the popular and family-oriented Wild Experience Room will return with hands-on activities for kids.

For registration and general festival information, visit nebraskacranefestival.org or call 402-797-2301. General crane viewing information can be found at rowe.audubon.org or by calling the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, 308-468-5282.

Nebraska is home to one of the most amazing and spectacular wildlife migration phenomena in the world – the sandhill crane migration. Over eighty percent of the world's population of lesser sandhill cranes (approximately 500,000-600,000) use the Platte River and adjacent fields to rest and refuel before continuing north to their nesting grounds in the northern U.S., Canada, and Siberia

Crane Cam

A Crane Cam is located on Rowe Sanctuary and is a great way to see the sandhill cranes on their river roost. Since the cranes leave the river to feed during the day, the best times to view are near sunrise and sunset.

View the Rowe Sanctuary Crane Cam, which is active from mid-February to early April at <http://rowe.audubon.org/crane-cam>

Other Crane Season activities at Rowe:

March 7 - Saturday

Family Crane Carnival 10am – 4pm

March 14 – Saturday

Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and the Platte River – Forty Years of Conservation, Education, and Celebration—10am
Habitat Tour – 1pm
Crane Behavior – 3:30pm

March 19-22

Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival
<http://nebraskacranefestival.org/>

March 28

Nebraska Bats – 10am
Habitat Tour – 1pm
Crane Behavior – 3:30pm

April 4

Platte Basin Time-lapse – Seeing a Watershed in Motion – 10am
Habitat Tour – 1pm
Crane Behavior – 3:30pm

April 11

Birdwatching Beyond Cranes – 10am
Habitat Tour – 1pm
Crane Behavior -- 3:30pm

Calendar of Events 2015

February 13-16, 2015

Great Backyard Bird Count

For information on participating in the GBBC in your own backyard or favorite birding area go to <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>

February 14, 2015

GBBC Field Trip, Meet at Arby's at 8:30am. We will count birds around the local area and should be back in town around 1:00

February 21, 2015

General Meeting and Program at the Regional West Medical Center South Plaza meeting room at 7:30 pm.

Wayne Mollhoff, Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas Project Coordinator, will have a program on the first documented nesting of Saw-whet Owls in Nebraska. Wayne put up Saw-whet Owl nest boxes in the Wildcat Hills and in the Pine Ridge area in 2012. While checking the boxes on April 17, 2014 Wayne found 5 eggs in one of the boxes in the Wildcat Hills. On May 10th, 2014 he was checking the boxes again and found 4 young Northern Saw-whet Owls in the box with an adult. This is an ongoing project and more boxes will be added to get a better idea of their breeding distribution in Nebraska.

March 14, 2015

Field Trip to the local lakes and ponds to look for migrating waterfowl.

Meet at Arby's at 8:00am. We should be back around 1:00.

March 19-22, 2015

Audubon Nebraska Crane Festival , Kearney NE (see article on page 5 for more information)

For meeting information contact Don & Meredyth Gentry drdon21@embarqmail.com 308-436-2495
If you would like to do a program for us contact Donny Davey at 308-632-5767

To report bird sightings or for field trip information:
Alice Kenitz akenitz@prairieweb.com 308-436-2959
Kathy DeLara renosmom@charter.net 308-631-2792

March 21, 2015

General Meeting and Program at the Regional West Medical Center South Plaza meeting room at 7:30 pm.

Jerry Lucas will be sharing an assortment of versions of the life of Hiram Scott.

“We know very little of the life and death of Hiram Scott yet his name has been linked to this area for over 170 years” says Lucas.

Presenter of the program will be dressed in period costume.

*****NOTE: The April Meeting has been moved to May 2**

April 15 to 18, 2015

Nebraska Naturalist Program, Wildcat Hills Nature Center

Get up close and personal with Nebraska's natural resources! Participants in the Nebraska Master Naturalist Program will engage in nearly 60 hours of in-depth training, led by experts in their fields. Learn about Nebraska's ecosystems, plants and animals, conservation biology, and so much more!

Explore Nebraska alongside scientists, faculty, and natural resource professionals. Contribute your time and expertise through exciting volunteer opportunities in habitat conservation, environmental education, citizen science, and more. Most importantly, connect with Nebraskans who share your passion for nature.

The Master Naturalist Program is open to any Nebraskan age 19 and up with the desire to explore Nebraska's natural resources. The first step in the process is the application.

The registration process is first-come, first-served, so get your applications in soon!

Registration fees begin at \$150 for the initial, basic training bloc, and help us defray the training costs in support of the program. They are currently accepting applications for the 2015 training sessions at

<http://snr.unl.edu/naturalist/>

Calendar of Events 2015

May 2, 2015

General Meeting and Program at the Regional West Medical Center South Plaza meeting room at 7:30 pm.

Andrew Pierson, Director of Conservation at Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary, will give a presentation highlighting the recent addition of 600 acres of critical habitat to the Sanctuary and how it changes the scale of the organization's approach to conservation implementation. For over 40 years Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary has been working to protect and improve the river and surrounding habitat for the cranes and other birds who depend on it to survive.

May 9, 2015

Mountain Plover Festival, Kimball NE, see article on page 2.

May 23, 2015

Spring Bird Count. Meet at RCI, 27th St and Ave I, Scottsbluff at 6:00am. We should be back in town around 1:00

May 27, 2015 (Wednesday)

Field Trip to Crow Valley in the Pawnee National Grassland in Colorado. Meet at Fresh Foods in Gering at 6:00. Bring a picnic lunch

June 6, 2015

Field Trip to Smith Lake. Meet at RCI, 27th and Ave I, Scottsbluff at 6am. Bring a sack lunch. This is a beautiful drive through the sandhills with lots of birding along the way. We will be home late

June 13, 2015

Field Trip to Wright's Gap and other locations. Meet at Fresh Foods in Gering at 6:00am. We should be back around 1:00

June 20, 2015

Field Trip to Kimball County, Exit One and Oliver Reservoir. Meet at Fresh Foods in Gering at 6:00am and bring a sack lunch.

August 2, 2015

WAS Annual Picnic. Don and Meredyth Gentry will host the picnic this year at 1445 Holly Drive, Gering at 5:00pm. Bring a covered dish, table service and a lawn chair.

September 5, 2015

Field Trip to Chadron State Park. Meet at RCI, 27th and Ave I, Scottsbluff at 6:00am. We will stop by the RMBO banding station and do some birding in the area.

September 12, 2015

Fall Bird Count, Meet at Arby's at 8:00 am

September 19, 2015

General Meeting and Program at the Regional West Medical Center South Plaza meeting room at 7:30 pm. Program TBA

October 17, 2015

General Meeting and Program at the Regional West Medical Center South Plaza meeting room at 7:30 pm. Program TBA

October 24, 2015

Waterfowl and Cranes Field Trip. Meet at Arby's at 8am. We will bird the lakes and ponds and should be back around 1pm

November 21, 2015

General Meeting and Program at the Regional West Medical Center South Plaza meeting room at 7:30 pm. Program TBA

December 19, 2015

Scotts Bluff County Christmas Bird Count. Meet at Arby's at 7:00am. Count sites will be assigned at this time. This is an all day count but help is appreciated for any amount of time. We will be back at Arby's around 1:00 for lunch then go back out in the afternoon. Feeder watchers within the count circle are also needed.

For more information contact Alice Kenitz at akenitz@prairieweb.com or 308-436-2959

Our meetings, field trips and events are free and open to the public

Join the Wildcat Audubon Society

Membership dues are only \$5.00 per year and due in January

Your dollars help pay for CatPrints newsletter, Public Education and other projects through out the year

If you would like to continue to receive the newsletter by mail please send in this form.

If you want to have it sent to you by email, send an email with "CatPrints Newsletter" in subject line to Kathy DeLara at renosmom@charter.net



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Wildcat Audubon Society
c/o Kathy DeLara
170188 Spring Creek Road
Mitchell, NE 69357-5319

