

CAT PRINTS



Wildcat Audubon Society - Serving the Nebraska Panhandle

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Kenitz Corner

By Alice Kenitz

We've had three great June field trips. Even though we haven't had nearly enough moisture this year, we've at least had more than last year and that has made the native grasses and wildflowers very happy. This made for some gorgeous scenery for our June travels. On June 1 we had a little different trip. Our main destination was Hudson-Meng Bison Site north of Crawford. This is a very interesting place where research is still going on as to why so many bison bones from about 10,000 years ago are still found. We had some really nice birding at Ft. Robinson so that we got to see such things as Western Tanagers, lots of Western Wood-Pewees, and a surprise Veery. One of the highlights of this trip was having lunch at the Cook Shack near Hudson-Meng.

On June 15 Luke Hamilton led us to some favorite birding places in Morrill County. This was a preview of the field trip he will lead at the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union (NOU) meeting in Bridgeport in September. Bridgeport Lakes SRA was a fun place to bird and we even got to hear several cardinals!!! Cassin's Sparrows by Court House and Jail House Rocks were a nice find. The real prize of the day, however, was a nice flock of Pinyon Jays that Kathy DeLara had heard about. This flock was southwest of Bridgeport and near the Cheyenne County line. One of the fun things on this trip was finding a pair of Eastern Bluebirds in a tree row near the golf course. There were a number of dead trees there that had some nice holes the birds could use for nesting. Also looking over those same holes were a pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers. The bluebirds didn't seem to like the woodpeckers in their territory, and we saw a lot of chasing.

For our June 22 field trip, we had planned to go to Crescent Lake NWR, but the threat of bad roads and severe thunder storms caused us to come up with Plan B. We needed to find a place that would be closer and mostly on paved roads. Chadron State Park filled the bill. We were interested to see the affects of some of the fires from last summer. Since the native grasses and wildflowers were growing so well, the fire damage did not seem as bad as we had expected. I'm sure it won't look so good later when the burned trees begin to fall and when the grasses are brown.

We enjoyed seeing both Pygmy and White-breasted Nuthatches. Another highlight was seeing Violet-green Swallows using a bluebird nesting box.

Before we know it, it will be fall and our summer feathered friends will be gone. As I mentioned earlier, the NOU will meet in Bridgeport on September 20-22. Thanks to Kathy DeLara for making all of the arrangements. NOU is an organization for anyone who is interested in birds whether they be a beginning birdwatcher or a professional ornithologist. All Wildcat Audubon members are encouraged to attend. Contact Kathy for more information. There will be some field trips to Scotts Bluff County, and anyone is invited to attend these trips. We will make arrangements to meet you if you will let us know who is wanting to go.

Wildcat Weekends at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center

July 13, 2013- 9:00am - 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 10, 2013 at 8:30pm - The Night Sky

Bring a blanket and lay beneath the stars! Come and discover the night sky with rangers from the National Park Service! Explore constellations, mythology and much more! This is a great opportunity to watch the Perseids meteor shower, one of the best meteor showers of the year!!

September 14, 2012 at 9:00am - 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 26, 2013 at 7:30 pm - 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 preregister by Oct 18, 2013 for this event.

For more information see **Wildcat Hills State Recreation Area & Nature Center** facebook page or contact the Nature Center at 308-436-3777!

Wild About Bats



Are you WILD about Bats?? Would you like to learn more about these mysterious creatures of the night? Come along with us for a WILD about Bat workshop, slated for July 30 and 31 at Chadron State Park.

The cost of the workshop is free with lodging and food included, however, a \$25 check is required to reserve your spot for this workshop (check will be returned at the end of the second day).

As with many events at the park, participants will need to have a State Park sticker (daily can be purchased at the park for \$5) See **Wildcat Hills State Recreation Area & Nature Center** facebook page for more information or contact the Nature Center at 308-436-3777 .

GREEN TIP

It's hot. You've been outside and are stinky and sweaty. Nothing sounds better than a shower. Before you turn on the faucet, here are some facts to consider:

-Showering accounts for 17% of residential water use or 1.2 trillion gallons per year in the U.S.

-Showerheads purchased since 1992 set a limit of 2.5 gallons of water per minute.

-Low-flow, high-efficiency showerheads, which use only 1.5 gallons of water per minute, could save the average family 3000 gallons of water each year.

-Shorter showers and less water use have the benefit of lower energy bills, since heating water accounts for a substantial amount of a household's energy use.

For more information on how to save water, go to epa.gov/watersense

Don't give up showering! No one would appreciate that!! Just shower smarter!!

Calendar of Events 2013

August 10th – 16th

Nebraska Master Naturalist Program at Fort Robinson State Park near Crawford. If you want to become a master naturalist don't miss this training, they rarely have it in our area For information go to the website at

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

August 18th

Wildcat Audubon Annual Picnic

The picnic will be held at Dave and Ann Duey's, 90152 Enterprise Drive, Scottsbluff at 5:00 pm. Bring a covered dish, table service and a lawn chair

September 14th

Bird Banding at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center

This is a great chance to see birds up close, the banding will begin shortly after sunrise and continue through-out the morning. A state park permit is required

September 14th (Note date change)

General Meeting and Program

RWMC South Plaza Meeting Room at 7:30 pm. Melanie Mancuso and Michael, RMBO banders at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center, will present a program on "Birds of Argentina & Chile"

September 20th-22nd

Nebraska Ornithologists Fall Field Day will be held in Bridgeport Nebraska at the Prairie Winds Community Center. See article on right-hand side of page. You do not need to be a member to attend.

(Scotts Bluff County Fall Bird Count will be done in conjunction with the Scotts Bluff County NOU field trip.)

October 19th

Fall Sandhill Crane and Waterfowl Field Trip to local lakes and ponds. Meet at Arby's at 8:00 am, we'll be back by 1:00

October 19th

General Meeting and Program

Regional West Medical Center South Plaza Meeting Room at 7:30 pm. Program TBA

November 16th

General Meeting and Program

The program will be given by Mace Hack, The Nature Conservatory's executive director for the State of Nebraska, on the Natural History of Bhutan

December 14th

Scottsbluff Christmas Bird Count

Meet at Arby's at 6:30 am, we will return for lunch then go back out to count in the afternoon.

Please contact coordinator, Alice Kenitz 436-2959, akenitz@prairieweb.com if you would like to help with the count.

If you live within the count circle you can be a feeder watcher for the count day. A map of the count circle can be found on the NOU website at

<http://noubirds.org/Documents/CBCMaps/ScottsbluffCBCMap.pdf>

Nebraska Ornithologist's Union will hold it's

Fall Field Days in Bridgeport, Morrill County, NE at the Prairie Winds Community Center on September 20-22, 2013

Field trips will include Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Wildcat Hills Banding Station, Wildcat Hills, Scotts Bluff National Monument, Morrill County where we should find Pinyon Jays and Cassin's Kingbirds and other cool birds. Exit One in Kimball County and other birding hotspots.

Saturday night program; "Nigh Thawks and Far Thawks: Uncommon Stories of a Common Bird" The Common Nighthawk is just that: common and familiar to most of us. But for centuries, we just weren't sure what to make of these strange evening visitors to our settlements and farms.

Rick Wright explores the fascinatingly unnatural history of everyone's favorite goatsucker.

Rick Wright is Book Review Editor for ABA and Senior Leader for Wings Birdwatching Tours.

For more information or to register go to the NOU website at NOUbirds.org

For additional information on field trips contact; Alice Kenitz, 308-436-2959, akenitz@prairieweb.com
Kathy DeLara 308-631-2792, renosmom@charter.net or Ann Duey, 308-632-3544, dduey@actcom.net

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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