



SMOKY HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. Box 2936 Selina, Kansas 67402-2936

**Mark your calendar for the
upcoming Christmas Bird
Count on Sat. 20-Dec-2014**

December 2014

December 2014 Meeting

Join us on Thursday, December 18th for our FREE program:

Location: Kansas Wesleyan University, Peters Science Hall, Room 229

Event Schedule: Social and refreshments start at 7:00 PM, program starts at 7:30 PM

Chuck Otte will speak on the topic: Kansas Bird Populations and Distributions – Does Anyone Really Know What’s Going On?

Bird populations, anywhere, are in a constant state of flux. Researchers, wildlife managers, and bird watchers all try to monitor, estimate, and predict, what is happening, but in many ways, it's often a shot in the dark or the classic six blind men describing an elephant. Otte has been tracking bird distributions in Kansas for the past 20 years and will share glimpses of what he's seen, what he's documented, what other citizen scientists have postulated simply to point out how much we still don't know.



Guest speaker: Chuck Otte, County Extension Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources, K-State Research and Extension. B.S. in Agronomy (Crop Production) - 1979
M.S. in Agronomy (Plant Breeding and Genetics) – 1981.
Employed by the Geary County Extension Office since February, 1982, Chuck has the sole programming responsibilities for agriculture, horticulture and natural resources for Geary County, Kansas. He served as President of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents in 2007 and Chairman of the Junction City/Geary County Metropolitan Planning Commission for four years, serving on the commission for a total of nine years. Chuck is a past president for the Kansas Ornithological Society (KOS), served as the KOS newsletter editor for over twelve years, served as secretary of the Kansas Bird Records Committee for six years and has served as Chairman of the Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council, an advisory group to the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. Chuck grew up on a family farm in York County, Nebraska. His hobbies include bird watching, gardening, travel, and cooking.

Join us for dinner with the guest speaker at Gutierrez Restaurant at 5:30 PM. Please RSVP Dan Baffa, 620-271-8891, or danbaffa1@yahoo.com); if you wish to join us for the pre-meeting dinner.

2014-15 Smoky Hills Audubon Calendar

We have great activities planned for 2014 & 2015. Save the dates!

Thursday, December 18 – SHAS Meeting: Chuck Otte, Topic: Kansas Bird Populations and Distributions

Saturday, December 20 – Christmas Bird Count, Lakewood Discovery Center, 7:30 AM

Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015 – SHAS Meeting: Ron Klataske, Director of Audubon of Kansas

Thursday, February 19 – SHAS Meeting: Scott Newland, Curator of Birds at Sedgwick County Zoo
Topic: The MAC Project – Protecting Pacific Species

Thursday, March 19 – SHAS Meeting: Bob Gillespie, Natural Resources Coordinator, Illinois Natural History Survey, Topic: Prairie Chickens

All SHAS Meetings are open to the public and held at Kansas Wesleyan University, Peters Science Hall, Room 229, unless otherwise noted. Social and refreshments begin at 7:00 PM, program starts at 7:30 PM. Dinner with speaker is at 5:30 PM. Please RSVP Dan Baffa, 620-271-8891, or danbaffa1@yahoo.com; if you wish to join us for the pre-meeting dinner.

SHAS Board Meetings

SHAS Board meetings are generally held the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in Room 213, Peters Science Hall, Kansas Wesleyan University. ALL members are welcome to attend.



Christmas Bird Count coming soon!!!

Meet at Lakewood Discovery Center (LDC) at 7:30 am on December 20th. **Coffee and donuts will be provided.**

We will meet back at LDC for lunch, plan to bring your own.

New participants are welcome to join us at this **noon** lunch break for the continuation of the CBC in the afternoon. The data collected will be compiled over dinner around 5 pm. Dinner Location to be announced to CBC participants on day of count. Check our chapter website for updates, like rescheduling if extreme weather blows in.

Fall 2014 message from SHAS Board

Want to save a tree or a local natural habitat? Do you want more students of all ages to enjoy the Smoky Hills Audubon Harold Lear Wildlife Sanctuary and learn an appreciation for nature and the out of doors?

*The Smoky Hills Audubon Society of Salina, KS needs your help. We receive annual baseline funding from the National Audubon Society in the amount \$2.75 for each National member assigned to our chapter. This funding and local donations allow us to send out a newsletter, bring in speakers for our monthly programs, run educational programs and keep up our Sanctuary. **Read complete message on our chapter website, www.smokyhillaudubon.com, under the Banner Tab labeled Mission>>>>***

Please send your email address to danbaffa1@yahoo.com. We will be reducing the number of printed newsletters we mail to members.

A message from SHAS Treasurer and Sanctuary News

Great News: *The Fall Bird Seed Sale was a successful fund-raiser for our chapter. Nine Hundred – Ninety dollars (\$990) were raised through the sale of some 6,000 lbs of bird seed and 70 lbs of suet cakes. With the sale proceeds we purchased 450 lb of Black Oil Seed and 20 suet cakes for our Sanctuary and deposited \$757 into our bank account. Thanks to all the Abilene and Salina buyers for their purchases and donations. The hungry birds and some mischievous squirrels also thank you.*

Update, *I wrote mischievous squirrels above, leaving out a FAT raccoon (Procyon lotor) resting on BirdFeeder ledge around 9:15 pm, Monday, 8-Dec-2014. The ledge is only 6 inches wide – the masked bandit, weighing at least 20 lb, ignored my verbal threats to get off and my bright flashlight. I thought s(he) was a deep sleeper for a nocturnal critter. After a few minutes I headed over to the pond to bother some Canadian Geese and consider how to check the feeder without getting bitten by the ‘Coon of the Baskervilles’. Returning about 10 minutes later armed with my trusty SLR to shoot the beast, I found him long gone. Seed was still left in the feeder.*

Lastly, Lonesome George of Santa Cruz Breeding Station in the Galapagos is no more. He was the last of Pinta island Tortoises. He passed away in his sleep of ‘old age’ in June 2014. The photo of a stuffed George were taken 3-Dec at AMNH. See more details and video at the following links:

<http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/lonesome-george>, http://www.galapagos.org/about_galapagos/lonesome-george/. Also, learn about plight of Galapagos World Heritage site at the links:

http://www.galapagos.org/about_galapagos/other-publications/, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1>

An excellent accessible book about loss of biodiversity is David Quammen, *The Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an age of Extinctions*, Scribner, 1996.

Happy Holidays, Jeffrey Kasoff

Smoky Hills Audubon Society would like to thank a) our 2014 Contributors for their generous gifts and b) our new local only chapter members. All local only chapter members joining in 2014 are paid up through 31-Dec-2105.

The Harold V. Lear Memorial Fund has just reached \$1,431.00. See Harold’s Obituary on our chapter website in Oct 2014 newsletter. Thanks to all contributors. We will describe in future newsletters how the fund will be used to help with our chapter’s educational activities and sanctuary. *Thank you!*



SHAS Contacts 2014 – 2015

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SMOKY HILLS AUDUBON HAROLD LEAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, "OUR POND"	All are welcome. Large groups should check with Dan before scheduling a trip and to arrange for guided nature tours. Dan Baffa, 620-271-8891, danbaffa1@yahoo.com
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