



SMOKY HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

December 2015

SHAS December 2015 Meeting

Join us on **Thursday, December 17th** for our free monthly program.

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

Event Schedule: Social and refreshments start at 7:00pm program starts at 7:30 P.M.

Guest Speaker: Mike Rader will be presenting “**Birding the Lakes of Kansas**”.

The presentation will include photos taken while birding at lakes, recommendations for some of the better lakes to visit this time of year and what species might be seen at those lakes.

Join us for dinner 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.

Speaker Biography: Mike Rader has had an avid interest in birds since he was a kid and pursued that interest in college at Kansas State University. He has a degree in Park Resources Management, but has always gravitated back to the biological sciences and birds especially. He worked for the US Army Corps of Engineers as a seasonal park ranger and as a forestry technician. He started his full-time career with the Kansas Dept. of Wildlife & Parks (now Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism) in 1989 at Wilson Lake as a Conservation Worker, where he worked in that position for 18 years. The opportunity to work as the Wildlife Education Coordinator came his way and he’s been doing that job, based out of our state headquarters in Pratt, for almost nine years now. He is responsible for the supervision of employees at the Milford Nature Center, the Prairie Center in Olathe, the Pratt Education Center & Museum, and one person at the Kansas Wetlands Education Center at Cheyenne Bottoms. His oldest daughter, Jennifer, works as the director of the Southeast Kansas Nature Center at Galena and while he is not her supervisor, he is responsible for some of the operation decisions at that facility as well. He is also responsible for a statewide program instrumental in assisting schools and other unique locations create wildlife habitat call Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites (OWLS). They provide funding and expertise for the purpose of promoting and establishing outdoor classrooms.

SHAS Calendar 2015-2016

*We have great activities planned for 2015 & 2016.
Save the dates!*

December 17 - Christmas Bird Count pep-talk with Mike Rader

December 19 - Christmas Bird Count

January 21 - Water Pollution with Wes McCall

February 18 - TBA

March 17 - Bird identification with Mike Rader

April 21 - Landscaping for Birds with Brad Guhr



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

A Message From The SHAS Treasurer

The 2015 Fall Bird Seed Sale was a record fund-raiser for our chapter. One Thousand 430 dollars (\$1,430) were raised through the sale of some 6,800 lb of bird seed and 100 lb of suet cakes. With the sale proceeds we purchased 350 lb of Black Oil Seed for our Sanctuary and deposited \$1,230 into our bank account. Thanks to all the Abilene and Salina buyers for their purchases and very generous donations. The hungry birds and some mischievous squirrels in central KS also thank you.

Jeffrey Kasoff

A Message From The SHAS President

The Smoky Hill Audubon Society is enjoying one of the largest treasuries that the organization has had for a very long time. The \$1,230.00 in our coffers, means that we can, without having to worry, that we have enough to keep the trails mowed at the refuge or that we'll have enough money to print and mail this newsletter. We can breathe a sigh of relief that we won't be living "paycheck to paycheck" while we pay our way to having a fully functioning sanctuary, an informed membership and the realization that any minor catastrophes will not bankrupt us, which is a good feeling to have. Unfortunately, it is not enough to meet our most pressing need. In spite of regular preventive maintenance, our mower is showing its age. I figure we have over a thousand very rough miles, sometimes asking the mower to do things that it wasn't designed to do, such as mowing a firebreak through three foot high vegetation. Mowing the refuge is not like mowing a lawn. It's more like mowing a battlefield through grass just high enough to hide a two inch limb that explodes on impact when run over. This is rough service for a mower that's designed for golf course quality turf. The mower has served us well for over fourteen years despite the vigorous conditions at the sanctuary. For those old enough to remember full service gas stations, one would ask the attendant to, "fill 'er up and check the oil". On our mower, we check the gas and fill the oil. We need a new mower before this one falls apart. One that's built to take on the hard stuff but gentle enough to keep the trails in great shape. One that is built for heavy duty service. That's why we need your help. In the spirit of the season, I am asking for your help to purchase a new or slightly used mower. We estimate that it will take an additional \$3500.00 in our treasury to meet our very real need. Won't you take this opportunity to sit down and write a tax deductible check to the Smoky Hill Audubon Society.

Dan Baffa



Christmas Bird Count coming soon!!! Meet at Lakewood Discovery Center (LDC) at 7:30 am on Saturday, December 19. We will organize into 4 or 5 teams to cover the quadrants of our Circle. Coffee and donuts will be provided. We will meet back at LDC for lunch at 12 noon, plan to bring your own food. 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 at Jim's Country Style Chicken, 649 S Broadway, Salina at 5:30 pm. Check our chapter website for updates, like rescheduling if extreme weather blows in.



Donations Needed For A New Lawn Tractor! As most of you know we have a lot of mowing trails to do all summer and as you can guess it is not quite as easy and smooth as mowing your nice front lawn. Our tractor has done a great job for years but is no longer worth the cost of repeated repairs. It is time for a new machine that will take the rough work and be dependable. It is really frustrating to start to mow and have it fail to work. We appreciate the folks that mow and would like for them to keep up the good work, so for those of us that appreciate the clean trails lets give a donation that will help keep it that way.



Don't forget!... Please send your email address to dragonflyk@sbcglobal.net. We will be reducing the number of printed newsletters we mail to members.

Signage Progressing at the Sanctuary

The board of directors voted to post signs at the Sanctuary several years ago to identify plants. Following the seeding project several years back, more interest was shown in developing the sanctuary as a showcase for Kansas Native Flowers.

As area director for the Kansas Native Plant Society, I volunteered to help with the project. The identification of the plants and their locations presented somewhat of a challenge. A plant that blooms in the spring is gone in the fall and the same is true in the fall. Chasing the plants down, marking them and having the markers visible in the surrounding vegetation and convenient to the mowed trails kept the project from moving forward.

As a solution to the problem I proposed we create a series of large signs that could be placed appropriately along the trails. Their purpose would be to educate the visitor as they walked the paths. The first sign is done and deals with Native Kansas Flowers. It should be available for inspection at the first membership meeting.

The second sign will offer information about some of the key trees that are present at the Sanctuary. It should illustrate the shape, leaves and possibly bark of the more common trees. Hopefully if you carried a leaf back to the sign you could identify the tree that caught your eye.

More signs are planned for the near future and we would like to enlist the help of the Audubon membership. We would like to create a sign for prairie birds and another for water fowl. If you have a picture of a bird that you have seen at the sanctuary, please email the picture to me at mneubrand@cox.net and I will try to include it in the sign. We will try to explain that different birds are seen in different seasons. If it takes more than one sign, that should not be a problem.

Other signs for grasses, and possibly small animals would also be appropriate.

The signage is being paid for with funds provided as memorial gifts after Harold Lear's passing. We hope to make him proud that future members of Audubon care as much for the sanctuary as he did.

Mark Neubrand 9-5-2015

Smoky Hills Audubon Harold Lear Wildlife Sanctuary

First established in 1977 by the Smoky Hills Audubon Society comprising 67+ acres of prairie, woodlands and wetlands.
Maintained by local volunteers. Please respect their hard work. *Leave only footprints — Take only pictures.*

When the first European settlers crossed into what is now "The Great Plains," they were probably astonished by what they saw. Landscapes that resembled the Savannas of Africa with large trees dotting the grasslands. When they looked upon hundreds of miles of only grasslands, the best name they could find for this alien environment was prairie, (the French word for meadow). We now know that this vast Meadow has a complex ecosystem we have come to call the Great Plains.

Native Wildflowers

This sign was paid for by the Harold Lear Memorial Fund

Spring April—May	Summer June—August	Fall Sept.—Nov.
 <p>Wild Blue Yarrow (Achillea millefolium) is a perennial herb with finely divided, fern-like leaves and clusters of small, white, daisy-like flowers. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>  <p>Wild Yellow Yarrow (Achillea millefolium) is a perennial herb with finely divided, fern-like leaves and clusters of small, yellow, daisy-like flowers. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>  <p>Wild Black Yarrow (Achillea millefolium) is a perennial herb with finely divided, fern-like leaves and clusters of small, black, daisy-like flowers. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>	 <p>Tall Prairie Grass (Sporobolus vaginifolius) is a perennial grass with a dense, upright growth habit and a long, narrow leaf blade. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>  <p>Blue Flax (Lupinus albus) is a perennial herb with a dense, upright growth habit and a long, narrow leaf blade. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>  <p>Purple Prairie Clover (Dalea purpurea) is a perennial herb with a dense, upright growth habit and a long, narrow leaf blade. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>	 <p>Yellow Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia hirta) is a perennial herb with a dense, upright growth habit and a long, narrow leaf blade. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>  <p>White Daisy (Leucanthemum vulgare) is a perennial herb with a dense, upright growth habit and a long, narrow leaf blade. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>  <p>Red Flower (Rudbeckia hirta) is a perennial herb with a dense, upright growth habit and a long, narrow leaf blade. It is a common sight in prairie fields and meadows.</p>

The Smoky Hills Audubon Chapter offers FREE monthly programs on the third Thursday of the month September-November.



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The Expiration Date shown above your name on the address label is the date that your membership in the National Audubon Society (NAS) expires. This information and your member ID, pulled from the latest membership roster, are over a month old. You can check your membership status by calling NAS at 1-844-428-3826. You are guaranteed of getting the latest info by calling NAS. If your membership has lapsed, then please renew with NAS and/or consider directly supporting our chapter by becoming a SHAS Chapter-Only Member (See details about our new Chapter-Only Membership on our Chapter Website, www.smokyhillaudubon.com under Join/Donate Tab).

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SMOKY HILLS AUDUBON HAROLD LEAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY	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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