



## The Horned Lark

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613 Tamerisk, Junction City, KS 66441-3359

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**From the Keyboard**  
*a few brief notes from the editor*

When it's early August and there's County Fairs to take care of and first waves of fall migration to chase and it's the nicest summer in YEARS, it's tough to stay put at the keyboard long enough to get a newsletter out. But I know how anxious I always was to get the next issue of *The Horned Lark*, so necessity (and a few threatening thunderheads) keep me to my task.

I didn't even hesitate when our persuasive president asked if I would take over as editor of the Horned Lark and I look forward to many (I hope) years of fun and excitement. Our goal is to keep the Horned Lark as interesting, fun, useful and educational as possible. Some parts of it will remain unchanged (it ain't broke don't fix it!) while other parts will be tinkered with. Our trusty typist/layout wizard Dawn and I have some ideas that we will be trying over the next several issues. If you like 'em tell us, if you don't like 'em tell us, if there's something you'd like to see included, tell us.

Starting with this issue we are adding several regular features. One is a "bird of the issue" concept. Another is a "birdwatching hotspot around the state." Both of these will be contributed by birdwatchers around the state, so feel free to make a contribution. I have a journalist friend in north-central Kansas that goes by the pen name of Ol' Buckshot. Buckshot has a deep appreciation for birds and birders and passes on interesting and/or humorous tidbits from time to time which we'll try to include under the heading "Bits of Buckshot."

Other items we will try to print from time to time include: notices of new books or other birdwatching aides, items of interest for computerized birders, backyard birdwatching/bird feeding tips, bird photography tips, who's been traveling where birdwatching...well the list could go on and on. Basically we just want to help you expand your birding horizons and increase your pleasure birdwatching regardless of what your birding level is. Enough twittering for this issue. Read on, enjoy and let us know how we're doing!

Chuck

### EMERGENCY! EMERGENCY! EMERGENCY!

Look toward the end of this newsletter quick! Important Documents attached for those who wish to present papers at the FALL KOS MEETING! Also, Important Documents attached for those who wish to attend! (Until my software gets better acquainted with Chuck's, the face of *The Horned Lark* won't be completely standardized. It will also then take only a couple of days to produce copy for the printer, instead of a whole week...but for now, we're in a short time spot--Dawn). So, PLEASE fill out your forms NOW and call Dave RIGHT AWAY!

## FALL FIELD TRIPS

Mike Rader has put together some dandy field trips for this fall. All of these are Saturday trips so they should fit into most schedules. The list follows and if you don't take advantage of some of these prime locations and quality field trip leaders you're missing a great opportunity! Unless otherwise indicated all phone numbers are home numbers.

- September 20** - Lawrence area with David Seibel for woodland birds. For more information contact *David at (913) 841-7932* or at Johnson County Community College (913) 469-8500 ext. 3133.
- October 31** - Northeast Kansas reservoirs with Dave Bryan for waterfowl, gulls and sparrows. For more information contact *Dave at (913) 341-9584*.
- October 31** - Wichita's Big Ditch with Pete Janzen for LeConte's Sparrow and Cheney for waterfowl and gulls. Meet at Kings-X Restaurant, 21st St & Amidon in Wichita at 8:00 a.m. or call *Pete at (316) 832-0182*.
- November 7** - Milford Reservoir near Junction City with Ted Cable for waterfowl and gulls. For more information contact *Ted at (913) 539-6119*.
- November 14** - Northwest Kansas reservoirs with Scott Seltman for waterfowl and gulls. For more information contact *Scott at (913) 372-5411*.

Mike and the trip leaders have put in a lot of time and effort to get these lined up so let's take advantage of the opportunity. Regardless of whether you are a seasoned pro or a beginner you would enjoy each and every one of these trips, get to meet other KOS members and fellow birders and, who knows, you may just get to find the next Pomarine Jaeger, Yellow-billed Loon or Oldsquaw!

## ATTENTION All Christmas Count Compilers

I would like to get as complete a list as possible of all Christmas/mid-winter bird counts that are planned for this coming season. If you could send me the date, time, meeting location/contact person(s), phone numbers and other necessary points of information we will list those in the next *Horned Lark*. Please send those to me; *Chuck Otte, 613 Tamerisk, Junction City, KS 66441* by November 20.

## Recent Releases

Several books/recordings have hit the market since the last newsletter. By now everyone should be aware of Birds In Kansas, Vol. II and hopefully have acquired their copy! Also recently released is the long awaited and revised "Western Bird Songs" from The Peterson Field Guide Series. This 2 compact disc or 3 cassette tape recording contains the songs and calls of 522 species. A nice addition and well worth the wait! One comment has worked it's way back to the editor already on the "Western Bird Songs." Sharp-eared Dan LaShelle informs me that at the start of the solitary sandpiper you can hear a lesser yellowlegs before you hear the solitary sandpiper. Take a listen and see if you agree.

One book that came out around the start of the year is called The Feather Quest by Peter Dunne. The Feather Quest relates a year of power birding for Peter and Linda Dunne. One thing is for sure....after every chapter I'm ready to go birding!

And for those of you who head to Arizona or other points southwest from time to time, you will want to pick up the revised New Mexico Bird Finding Guide by Zimmerman, Zimmerman and Durrie. I'll be spending a few days in New Mexico between now and the Fall KOS Meetings, so ask me at the Fall meetings how successful I was in utilizing the Guide!

## Bits of Buckshot

E. E. Gibson lives at the west edge of Washington, KS. When he got interested in bluebirds, he went at it in a big way, constructing and erecting more than a dozen nest boxes in his yard and adjoining parkland and pasture.

Despite providing numerous wrenhouse gourds for the wrens, he's been perpetually plagued by wrens wanting to nest in his bluebird houses. Recently, he's been fussing with a pair of wrens trying to set up housekeeping in a bluebird box close to his house. He had thrown out their nest starts many times, but they always came back and tried again.

One day he was mowing the yard nearby when he noticed the mower had cut the head off a garter snake about 7 inches long. He thought: "I'll teach those wrens!"

He put the 6- or 7-inch headless critter in the bottom of the box, expecting to scare the wadding out of a pair of wrens.

Imagine his surprise the next morning to find that the wrens had removed the snake, dropping it near the nestbox post and had at least half a nest of sticks built in the box!

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## Natural History Trip To The Rainforest

Just about the time most of us are wrapping up our 1992 bird lists and getting ready to start that 1993 list, you could be in Costa Rica in the middle of a ten day natural history trip (and birdwatching of course!). Eloise Hart from Kansas City has put together an excellent trip leaving Kansas City on December 27, 1992 and returning on January 6, 1993. Highlights of the trip include 1) Selva Verde, a large private tract of tropical rainforest, 2) a butterfly farm with an unbelievable number of species, 3) Palo Verde National Park with "the largest concentration of waterfowl in Central America," and 4) Monteverde Cloud Forest, one of the most famous forests in the Americas and home of the Resplendent Quetzal. Trip cost from Kansas City is \$2690, graduate and undergraduate credit is available from Avila College (tuition extra) and a 4 day extension to Tortuguero National Park is available for an extra \$490. For more information contact *Eloise Hart at (816) 361-6991*.

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## Are You Computing?

In one of the upcoming issues of *The Horned Lark* we will be focusing on how birdwatchers are using computers. If you're a computing birder drop me a note and let me know how, why, what you don't have that you'd like to have or anything else. Just drop me a line or give me a call - *Chuck Otte, 613 Tamerisk, Junction City, KS 66441, (913) 238-4161*.

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## BIRDS OF CIMARRON NATIONAL GRASSLANDS

by *Ted Cable*

The U.S. Forest Service is sponsoring the production of a book about the birds of the Cimarron National Grasslands and vicinity (i.e. Morton County). Scott Seltman and I have been asked to coordinate this project. To make the book as comprehensive and accurate as possible, we need all of your Morton County bird records. We'll accept your records in whatever form is most convenient for you (checklists, journals, index cards, computer printouts, even scribbled notes on the back of envelopes). We are willing to make photocopies and return originals. In short we want to make it as painless as possible for you to submit your Morton County Bird records. Of course, all those contributing information will be gratefully acknowledged in the book.

















