



The Official Newsletter
of the
Kansas Ornithological Society

The Horned Lark

613 Tamerisk, Junction City, KS 66441-3359

September 1996

Vol. 23, No. 3

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper

From The Keyboard -

As I start the process of putting together each and every issue of the Horned Lark it is sort of like breaking open a piñata, you never know what I'm going to wind up with until I really get inside of it. I have a file of letters, notes, e-mail messages, etc. that I clean out after every issue and accumulate material for the next issue. So I know, sort of, at least some of the material that is going to be in the issue when I start. The trick comes in trying to get some sort of a "flow" to the issue or making sure that the front of a page and the back of a page make sense or that facing pages don't "clash" or even figuring out do I squeeze an article down to 1 page or try to stretch it out over 1 1/2 pages and then find some good filler? Sometimes I fear I try to squeeze too much in to fill pages. Hopefully you find the Horned Lark to be like a piñata also and are always pleasantly pleased by what you find inside!

This issue brings a little sadness, it contains John Rakestraw's last *Winged Tip* column. There's a small note in the corner of page 3 describing where John has gone. John came to Kansas quite a few years ago from "back east" (meaning anywhere east of the Mississippi) and has added greatly to Kansas birding. I was envious of where John lived the past several years in St. John, sooooo close to Quivira and Cheyenne Bottoms. But a great opportunity came along and John couldn't pass it by. He was concerned about re-learning eastern bird songs, but I'm sure he will add greatly to the Ohio birding community as he did with us. I also suspect that we will be seeing more of his articles in other popular birding press, and you'll be able to say, "I first read his stuff in the Horned Lark!" I've been in communication (read that as subtle arm twisting) with a couple of folks and hopefully we'll have some new articles starting in the December issue to pick up where John left off.

As I've visited on the phone with several KOS folks and exchanged e-mail on the Kansas Birders discussion list the over-whelming question seems to be, "where's migration?"

We're all a little tired of summer and we'd all like to see those confusing fall warblers and winter sparrows. Although I know that my faithful friend's, the Harris' Sparrows, are still probably a month or so away I keep wondering how soon, and if, the Red-breasted Nuthatches will show up in the cemetery pines.

I hope many of you will hurry up and get those fall meeting registrations turned in. The Hutch/Newton folks have a fine event lined up and I keep wondering if this is the year that the board meeting will be over in time for me to get to sit in on the birders hour? Anyway, it is going to be a lot of fun so plan to head for Newton the first weekend in October and don't worry how those football games will end up!

See you there!
chuck

Who's Who in KOS - 1996

President, Mike Rader, PO Box 395 Wilson, KS 67490

Vice-president, Roy Beckemeyer, 957 Perry,
Wichita, KS 67203

Corresponding Secretary, Dwight Platt, RR2 Box 209,
Newton, KS 67114

Membership Secretary, Margaret Wedge, 1645 Louisiana,
Lawrence, KS 66044

Treasurer, Gregg Friesen, 515 E 4th, Newton, KS 67114

Board Members:

Shannon Rayl, 1013 Marymount, Salina, KS 67401

Bob Gress, 1409 West 35th N, Wichita, KS 67204

Bill Busby, 626 East 1900 Rd, Baldwin City, KS 66006

John Schukman, 14207 Robin Rd, Leavenworth, KS 66048

Business Manager, (acting) Galen Pittman, 12042 258th St.,
Lawrence, KS 66044

Editor, *The Bulletin*, Max Thompson, 1729 East 11th St.,
Winfield, KS 67156

Editor, *The Horned Lark*, Chuck Otte, 613 Tamerisk,
Junction City, KS 66441, 913-238-8800, OTTE@JC.NET

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

FALL MEETING BENEFIT AUCTION !!

The local committee for the 1996 fall KOS meeting will conduct a benefit auction for the KOS endowment fund. Members and others are invited to donate items for sale. If you have items for this event, please notify Lorna Harder at 316-283-1612 or by mail at Lorna Harder, C/O Kauffman Museum, Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117. You can E-mail Lorna at: BobH@Hesston.edu with the subject reading, "Attention Lorna H: KOS"

KBBAT SPECIAL BLOCKS AT CHEYENNE BOTTOMS

The Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas project (KBBAT) has three special blocks covering portions of Cheyenne Bottoms and is soliciting your observations of breeding birds at the Bottoms (1992 - present). Ed Martinez (316-792-2062) is compiling two of these blocks. Please contact Ed about bird observations. For maps of the blocks and other information, please contact Bill Busby (913-864-7692; email w-busby@ukans.edu). If KBBAT needs another field season in 1997 to mop up standard blocks, we will continue observations in Cheyenne Bottoms blocks next year as well.

Bill Busby

Wetlands Publication Available

Several months ago I had the opportunity to pick up a book called, *The Impacts of Federal Programs on Wetlands, Volume II*. Volume I covered the lower Mississippi Alluvial Plain and the Prairie Pothole Region of the Upper Midwest, Volume II covers everything else (I'm still trying to get my hands on copies of Volume I). This two volume set was a report to congress by the Secretary of the Interior in March of 1994. There is a lot of information in this book. When I obtained my copy there was a catch.... I had to take a whole box of them which means that I still have around 20 copies that I would love to give away. Just give me a call, drop me a note, e-mail me a message and I'll send one your way and pick up the postage on it! And in the meantime if someone wants to find me a copy of Volume I I'd sure like to have one!

Chuck Otte

Please send Chuck your Christmas Bird Count dates and information as soon as possible!!!

Membership Directory Updates

A couple of corrections/additions to the directory sent out in the last issue. Tyler Hicks (a young second year birder) wrote to let us know that his phone number was not in the new directory and to advise us that his number is: 316-777-0404.

Phil Meninger wrote to let us know that Mr. Paul C Finninger passed away several years ago but KOS hadn't been notified. While not quite a charter member Mr. Finninger was a member from 1950 until his passing.

Several members wrote to advise us of new or recently changed e-mail addresses. Lisa Edwards new address is lisa@brightok.net. I had Bill Busby's address and merely forgot to include it. Bill's email address is: busby@falcon.cc.uknas.edu. If you have or in the future obtain an e-mail address and we don't have you listed in the directory please send me a message at otte@jc.net and then be sure to let me know if you want to be added to the Kansas bird discussion group or if you want to received the Kansas rare bird alert via e-mail.

In this issue -

<i>Announcements</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Turn In KBBAT Block Paperwork</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>A Listening</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Winged Tips</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Another View - Records Committee</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Teaming With Wildlife</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>KOS Student Research Fund</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Partners In Flight Update</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Fall Meeting Registration</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Spring KOS Meeting, April 1997</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>ABA Code of Birding Ethics</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>Call for Papers</i>	<i>17</i>
				<i>The Bird's Nest</i>	<i>19</i>

BIRDING EFFICIENCY: Making the Most Out of Short Birding Trips

John Rakestraw

Imagine that you have just one or two hours to bird a large area. There is no way you can search all the available habitat in the time allowed. How should you proceed? Should you take the shotgun approach, racing from spot to spot, and try to cover the whole area? Or should you pick one or two hot spots and search them thoroughly? Both methods have merit. The approach you choose should depend on the type of habitats available, the current status of migration, and your own preferred birding style.

The shotgun approach is standard practice for the successful birdathon participant. The idea is to cover as many different types of habitat as possible in order to find the greatest variety of bird species. This method is very effective if you have a lot of time. But during a short birding excursion, this approach may cause you to use too much of your birding time traveling between hot spots. In this case, it is often more effective to spend your time thoroughly searching one or two sites.

What is the advantage to staying in one spot? When birds are actively feeding, the avian population of any given location will be changing constantly. Some birds move out as others are arriving. Every birder has had the experience of "just missing" a bird that others had seen a few minutes before, or the equally frustrating experience of having a great bird show up right after you leave. You can never guarantee that you won't miss some birds. But if your time is limited, you can often find more species by picking one or two sites and going over them with a fine-toothed comb. By staying put, you do not lose any birding time to travel and you have a better chance of seeing birds that move into the area after you arrive.

Is it ever better to take the shotgun approach on a short birding trip? If you spend some time at one site and find that there just aren't any birds around, then it would definitely be to your advantage to check out another spot. During the nesting season, for example, birds tend to remain within territories. So if no birds are present when you arrive, it is not as likely that birds will move into the area any time soon. Even if birds are present at your first site, you may wish to visit several locations in order to check different habitats. Some birders prefer birding at a faster pace, covering as much ground as possible, and gleaning the obvious birds from each site.

In deciding whether to thoroughly search one area or run from spot to spot, your first step is to determine whether any

birds are present at your first site. In very open habitat, such as mud flats, it should be obvious whether birds are there or not. But in heavy cover, you should take your time in assessing the situation. Some birds may go into hiding when you arrive. Allow these shy birds time to relax and show themselves.

During the KOS spring field trip in Elkhart, at the infamous windbreak north of the cemetery, a Green-tailed Towhee had been seen in a large brush pile. Several birders walked right up to the brush pile and clapped their hands in an attempt to tease the bird into view. As you might expect, the bird remained hidden. Other birders kept a respectful distance from the cover, occasionally scanning the brush pile as they birded the rest of the windbreak. These birders were rewarded with very satisfying views of the towhee as it perched on top of the brush pile or fed on the ground. In this case, a quiet patient approach was much more effective than the pish-and-move-on approach.

Once you have determined that some birds are present, take the time needed to scan the entire flock. Mixed flocks are common in migration and during winter. If the habitat is attractive to some birds, then there is a good chance that others will be arriving shortly.

If you determine that there are few or no birds at your first site and decide to try another spot, pick a different type of habitat. If the warblers just aren't around that day, maybe the shorebirds will be. If you do decide to run from spot to spot, plan a route that connects the various sites as closely as possible. This will minimize your travel time and give you more birding time at each site. Try to squeeze in as much actual birding as possible into the time that you have available.

Good Luck John!

For a couple of years now John Rakestraw has been writing a regular feature for the Horned Lark. Unfortunately this will be John's last feature. John has moved to Lebanon, Ohio, where he has taken the position as naturalist for the Kern Outdoor Education Center, a large YMCA camp in southwestern Ohio. John wishes to express his thanks to all the KOS members who have helped him over the past several years. Good luck, John, and we'll miss your articles!

THE KANSAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

STUDENT RESEARCH FUND

The Kansas Ornithological Society's Student Research Fund has been separated into individual funds. These funds will be oriented around the state's universities and colleges as well as cities or regions as needed or requested by the members of KOS. This will facilitate the generation of money for the funding of the students of Kansas working on bird research. Hopefully KOS members will be more willing to contribute to a fund if it's going to a university or region of their liking. Many students pursuing avian research in Kansas today will continue to produce a diverse group of ornithologists that will be the leaders and active members of a strong ornithological society in the decades to come!

A Fund can be originated by any KOS member, or if you would like additional details about these funds please contact the Student Research Fund Committee chairman.

The New Student Research Funds are as follows:

Ted F. Andrews Fund for students at Emporia State University. Dr. Andrews was a charter member of KOS and president in 1952

Maurice F. Baker Fund for students at Southwestern College. Dr. Baker was the KOS vice president in 1950

Ivan L. Boyd Fund for students at Baker University. Dr. Boyd was a charter member of KOS and its first president in 1949.

Herschel T. Gier Fund for students at Kansas State University. Dr. Gier was a charter member of KOS and its second president in 1950.

E. Raymond Hall Fund students at Kansas University. Dr. Hall was a charter and lifelong member of KOS.

Harry W. Menke Fund for students at the Garden City Community College and the Finney County area. Menke was the pioneer ornithologist in Finney County during the late 19th century.

L. D. Wooster Fund for students at Fort Hays State University. Dr. Wooster was a charter member of KOS and president in 1953.

Please send a contribution to one or more of the funds so our Kansas students can pursue their ornithological research. KOS has the U.S. Treasury Department 501(c)(3) status making your contribution tax deductible. If your bank account is a little low, donate something to the KOS auction and mark the money generated for one of the student research funds.

Make checks payable to: Kansas Ornithological Society

Mark memo line with the Fund of your choice

Send donations to: Tom Shane, SRF Committee Chair
1706 Belmont
Garden City, KS 67846
316-275-4616

We regret that the photograph can not be included in this electronic version of the newsletter.

Laurie Ryland of Holcomb has received a \$250 research scholarship from the Harry W. Menke Fund for work on her Masters Degree at Ft. Hays State University. She is working on the summer birds of Lake McKinney and environs. The Harry W. Menke Fund is one of the separate funds within the KOS Student Research Fund for students from the Garden City area. *Photo by Tom Shane*

HELP WANTED !! BUSINESS MANAGER NEEDED!

Galen Pittman has graciously agreed to step back into his former role for a few months as Business Manager and we want to extend to him our **deepest** appreciation. But he specified that this was only temporary. We need a full time Business Manager to take over as soon as possible.

Business Manager is a rather diversified job. As the KOS Business Manager you would be responsible for getting the newsletter copied and mailed out after the editor sends it to you all completed as well as the mailing of *The Bulletin* (so some basic knowledge of bulk mailing may be helpful but not necessary). You would also keep all the inventories of

the Society's for sale items such as checklists, clothing, window decals, etc.

I'm sure that there is more that I am forgetting or just don't know about. If you are interested, or know someone that is interested, you need to contact Galen Pittman. Galen will be able to give you the complete job description and be able to answer your questions for you. Galen's phone number is (913) 842-7105. His address is on the front page of the newsletter.

Help the Society grow, get involved!

JOINT MEETING
of the KANSAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
and the WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY, MANHATTAN, KANSAS
April 17 - 20, 1997

The Wilson Ornithology Society was founded in 1888 and took the name of Alexander Wilson, pioneer American ornithologist and artist. Like the Kansas Ornithological Society, amateur (non-professional) ornithologists have always been involved in the activities of the Wilson Society. This mix has always made the meetings of the Wilson Society, like the meetings of the KOS, a most pleasant and congenial experience. Indeed, the Manhattan meeting will be highlighted by the inaugural presentation of the The Margaret Morse Nice Plenary Lecture, named after one of North America's most famous amateur ornithologists.

Scheduled activities will begin Thursday evening at 8 p.m. with a reception in the newly completed Beach Art Museum on the K-State campus. Papers sessions will be held all day on Friday and Saturday in the K-State Union and will tentatively include symposia on Great Plains Ornithology, New World Wrens, and the impact of the Crop Reserve Program on grassland birds. The Wilson Society has a very active Undergraduate Outreach Committee and will develop sessions on the teaching of ornithology that will interest many of you. Additionally there will be ample opportunity for contributed papers and posters, and KOS members are

encouraged to submit abstracts for a position on the program, following directions that you will receive in early December in the meeting announcement brochure. On Friday evening there will be a bison barbeque on Konza Prairie, and the Friends of Konza Prairie will offer van rides into the bison area as well as opportunities for hiking on your own. The annual banquet will be Saturday in the K-State Union. There is no banquet speaker, but traditionally the president of the Wilson Society, currently Keith Bildstein, Director of the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania, will make a few brief remarks.

The Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society will lead local birding trips on both Thursday and Friday mornings, and the Kansas Ornithological Society will be organizing trips on Sunday - an all-day trip to Quivira/Cheyenne Bottoms and half-day trips to Milford Reservoir, Tuttle Creek Wildlife Area, and Konza Prairie.

So plan on attending, 17 to 20 April 1997. Plan on presenting. Plan on making folks from across the nation welcome in the Great American Desert.

KBBAT Blocks?
Time to Turn Them In!!!

If you have Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas Block paperwork still in your hands from work done this year get them turned into your regional coordinator as soon as possible. Even if you haven't met your target number or even if you know there was stuff you missed still turn it in. You can always go back next spring and do some more work and turn in an update. This way we can see how much, or how little, remains to be done. If you are holding paperwork for a block and haven't done anything on it send that in also. If you think you can get to it next year fine, include a note saying so, but if Dr. Zimmerman hears nothing from you the block will probably be handed out to someone else anyway. Send that paperwork in now!

HELP WANTED !!

Do you like birds and birding? Do you like to write? Have you ever read the *Horned Lark* and thought, "I could write something like that?!" Well, you're probably right! We are always looking for more material for the Horned Lark. If you have a one time article you'd like to write up or an idea for an ongoing series write it up, send it to the Horned Lark Editor, 613 Tamerisk, Junction City, Kansas, 66441 (otte@jc.net) and you may see your name in print very soon!

another view - -

Further comments on records committees: Why birders should contribute to and participate on a committee.

Pittman's (*Horned Lark* 23:9-11, 1996) recent article gave a good overview of the philosophy and mechanics of how a records committee functions. The Kansas Bird Records Committee (KBRC), particularly Chairperson Mick McHugh, is to be commended for using a real case example to illustrate the evaluation process. The fact that McHugh offered his unaccepted record as an example underscores the openness and accessibility of the KBRC.

Aside from some of the obvious benefits that a records committee furnishes, such as providing a more thorough and objective evaluation via multiple person review, and a permanent record of unusual sightings, it also offers a means of elevating one's birding skills! Through my tenure as a member of the Missouri Bird Records Committee (MBRC), my identification and documentation skills have tremendously improved, and my knowledge of avian distribution patterns has been considerably augmented. I would be myopic if I didn't consider my stint as a committee member a privilege.

The conscientious evaluation of other observer's records invariably forces one to become more familiar with the identification and distributional literature. Furthermore, having additional people evaluate a record frequently elevates everyone's consciousness, ranging from the documentor to the birding community at large. A recent example from the MBRC demonstrates this process. For two consecutive years an adult male Barrow's Goldeneye was reported on a small oxbow lake in northwest Missouri. The first year it was seen and a single photograph was secured by a couple of birders -- the record was unanimously accepted by the committee. The bird fortunately reappeared at the same location the following year and was seen and photographed by additional birders, including a MBRC member. The record was circulated with the new documentation and photo, and accepted on the first round. Nevertheless, one committee member noted the subtle, but clearly visible characters in the new photo, that indicated the bird was a hybrid between a Barrow's and Common Goldeneye. As a result of that member's comments, the committee then sent both photos to experts who confirmed that the bird was indeed a hybrid. If it were not for the one sharp-eyed member, this record would have appeared in the literature as a Barrow's Goldeneye. Disconcertingly, all written documentation from both years depicted a typical Barrow's Goldeneye!

This illustrates two important points: why it is imperative to have more than one person evaluate records, and why all observers should make detailed field notes. As a result of being involved in this evaluation process, I learned much from fellow committee members and outside experts about goldeneye identification. Moreover, because this information has been further disseminated to the birding community as a whole, future reports of extralimital Barrow's Goldeneyes will be more carefully scrutinized.

Serving on a records committee should be an enlightening experience and considered a privilege! I encourage birders to support records committees and serve if the opportunity arises.

As a footnote, birders should be aware of the resources available to them at KU's Division of Ornithology. We have a world class specimen collection and our division's library is first-class -- both are invaluable for complementing your field experience.

Mark Robbins
Division of Birds
Museum of Natural History
University of Kansas
phone: 913-864-3657
email: mrobbins@falcon.cc.ukans.edu

We regret that the photograph can not be included in this electronic version of the newsletter.

Birders from one of the field trips pause for a group photo at Point-of-Rocks during the Spring KOS meeting May 4, 1996 in Morton County. Left to right are: Tom Shane, Pat Freeman, Diane Cable, Ted Cable, Diane Seltman, Scott Seltman, Stevie Seltman, Dave Bryan, Linda Bryan, Elizabeth Mulhern, Ben Mulhern and Dan Mulhern.
Photo by Tom Shane

Kansas Partners in Flight Update

Kansas Partners in Flight (PIF) will hold its second meeting in conjunction with the fall Kansas Ornithological Society meeting in North Newton.

The first meeting was held last May in Manhattan and was well-attended with 24 participants including David Pashley, PIF Supervisor, Jane Fitzgerald, Midwestern Regional Coordinator, and representatives from KOS, Regional and National Audubon, The Nature Conservancy, Kansas Dept. Wildlife and Parks, Kansas Biological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army, and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

This fall's Partners in Flight meeting will be held Friday, October 4 from 2-6 p.m. in the Kauffman Museum at Bethel College in North Newton. We plan to spend much of the meeting working in subcommittees dealing with science/technical issues, management, and information/education.

For more information about the meeting or about Partners in Flight contact Bill Busby (Kansas PIF Working Group Chair), Kansas Biological Survey, 2041 Constant Ave., Lawrence 66047, phone 913-864-7692, e-mail w-busby@ukans.edu.

Many KOS members, even if they are not members of the American Birding Association (ABA) are at least familiar with the organization and have seen the ABA code of ethics before. A new, expanded code of ethics was just recently passed by the ABA Board of Directors. The ABA has done a fine job in developing this code and should be commended and we appreciate their generosity in letting us reproduce it here for the Honed Lark readership. Let's all read and follow this code!

AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

- 1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.
- 1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

- 1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.
- 1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law and the rights of others.

- 2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
- 2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.
- 2(c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

- 3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
- 3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

- 3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

- 4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
- 4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

- 4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
- 4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.
- 4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.
- 4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g., no tape recorders allowed).
- 4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CODE -- DISTRIBUTE AND TEACH IT TO OTHERS.

ABA
PO Box 6599
Colorado Springs, CO 80934-6599
(800)850-2473 or (719)578-1614
fax: (800) 247-3329 or (719) 578-1480
e-mail: member@aba.org

1996 FALL KOS ANNUAL MEETING

October 4, 5 and 6, 1996

North Newton & Hesston, Kansas

Registration forms, hotel information, call for papers are all at the back of this newsletter.
September 26th deadline! Don't let time slip away! Send in your registration today!

A Listening by Ruth Jameson Green

Have you ever attended a listening? If not I'll tell you about it. The time is set for just beginning to be nearly dark. Admission is free. The meeting place is a high hill ridge between two deep wooded ravines.

Come prepared with a thick blanket for sitting and to pull around you as the evening deepens and cools. A thermos of a hot drink might be pleasant. The occasion is for listening and becoming more aware of the Caprimulgidae, Nightjars, Goat Suckers or whatever your colloquialism calls for.

If you arrived a bit early you may have seen and heard the Nighthawk or Bullbats dive and boom after insects, but really you have come to hear the chorus of the Whip-poor-wills and the Chuck-will's-widows whose voices arise from the deep woody ravines. First from the east ravine you hear the Whip-poor-will calling his name, then in seconds the Chuck-will's-widows naming themselves. And their voices are tuned up for the night's performance. There are so many voices, they seem to drown each other out. Suddenly you feel ALIVE and it's going to be a great show.

If you are lucky, you may hear from nearby on the ridge, a Poor-will call. Flashing a brief light in his direction will reveal his red eye reflection. Then you begin to pick up the voices from the west where the dark had just arrived. As time passes the birds seem to be competing, and if there happens to be a storm cloud approaching from the west, a loud clap of thunder drives the bird chorus almost into a frenzy.

From all-night camp-outs, it is apparent there is somewhat of a lessening of the calls after midnight, and those still at it are making fewer repetitions without stopping.

When the dawning is possibly an hour away the bird chorus starts up again singing hurriedly and again very vociferously as if they must finish before the sun rises above the eastern horizon.

The birds rest during the day and I have seen several different birds sitting lengthwise of a rather large branch since their feet can not accommodate perching crosswise. I have run on to an occasional bird on the ground in the oak woods on my farm, and have also seen them fly off in a sort of zig-zag fashion through the trees. So we have come from the aerial insect feeder to a ridge bird, to the two valley singers all in this wonderful family of birds, the Caprimulgidae.

A friend who has attended Listeners, reports being in a tree where a Chuck-will's-widow perched nearly at her arms length from her and began to sing vigorously.

It makes a fine way to experience nature at night. A group of good friends can enjoy the companionship as well as Listening.

[editor's note - after one of those long nasty days in July I came home from work and found the above story and a short note from Ms. Green. It was one of those delightful notes and story that make the rest of the day just fade away. Ruth writes the following about her rural Olsburg home:

"We live on a prairie ridge between two deep ravines and thoroughly enjoy the bird noises around while sitting out waiting for planet Jupiter to put in an appearance around 9:00 p.m. It makes a perfect way to end the day and have sometimes stayed out long into the night or all night on fishing trips."

Ruth goes on to apologize that the typewritten copy isn't the best but the "typewriter is not my best tool since I never really learned to type." It was good enough for me as was her wonderful story! Ruth has been a KOS member since 1964 and I hope to hear from her again!

Do some of you have an interesting story of your own? Perhaps a favorite bird or favorite birding location? Maybe a birding trip in Kansas or a special life bird sighting? Write it up and send it on in. We'll take care of grammar and spelling, if necessary, and share it with the other Horned Lark readers!]

Teaming With Wildlife An Overview and Update

[Many of you who were at last fall's KOS Annual Meeting in Salina heard Ken Brunson talk about the Teaming With Wildlife coalition. It has been the KOS Board of Directors position not to promote or endorse candidates, positions, etc. The Board encourages KOS members to also be involved in other organizations which have those activities as primary goals. The *Horned Lark*, however, does attempt to keep you informed of items that may interest you.]

Teaming With Wildlife is a coalition of now over 1,000 businesses and organizations dedicated to passing the Wildlife Diversity Funding initiative (WDI). The WDI is an outdoor enthusiasts' dedicated user fee, in the form of modest surcharges on a spectrum of outdoor products. This user's fee would be used to fund wildlife diversity projects. It would aim to do for non-game wildlife funding what the Pittman/Robertson act and Dingell/Johnson act has done for game species.

The user fee would be up to a 5% surcharge on manufacturer's price of products. Items that are being

considered for a user fee that would be of interest to birders include: optics (binoculars & spotting scopes), photo equipment and film, bird seed, feeders, etc.

What would be some of the benefits for birders? Restore, acquire, manage and secure more bird habitat, help build a Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan, conduct research on birds, assist private landowners, supply grants to bird clubs, conservation groups and state/federal agencies. provide services for birders, create birding trails, sponsor more birding field trips, meet the needs of teachers for songbird educational trunks, produce educational materials and nurture the next generation of birders.

The Teaming with Wildlife coalition is looking for more volunteers to contact businesses and legislators to encourage endorsement and passage. For those interested in helping with this initiative please contact Ken Brunson, Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks, 512 SE 25th Ave, Pratt, KS 67124-8174, 316-672-5911 or e-mail at uskanztn@ibmmail.com.

No Birding Roundup this issue!

You will notice by its absence that there is no birding roundup this issue. The birding roundup is undergoing a couple of changes. Instead of covering quarterly periods we are converting over to cover the same periods as the Audubon *Field Notes* cover. The winter period (December to February) will be in the June issue, spring (March to May) in September, summer (June & July) in December and fall (August to November) in the March issue. This seems to be periods standardly used by many birders to designate the birding seasons PLUS it will give the two people responsible for the Roundup, Scott and Chuck, more time to get it written and proofed. The late spring roundup (April/May) as well as the summer roundup will both be in the December issue. Thank you for your understanding and patience!

Cyber-birding Update

I stumbled across a great World Wide Web sight the other day: www.petersononline.com. The sight had been worked on for months and just coincidentally came on line a few weeks after Mr. Peterson's passing. Grant yourself lot's of time to look around. There's lot's of information and good links to other birding sights.

For those of you not on KS_BIRDSL you need to drop me a note so we can get you added. This Kansas birding discussion group has recently grown in size and activity with recent discussions on what's moving through everyone's backyards, what to be looking for and county record databases. Drop me a note at otte@jc.net to join the fun!