

Spring was moving in the air above
and in the earth below and around him,
penetrating even his dark and lowly
little house with its spirit..

~ Kenneth Grahame. *The Wind in the Willows*.

Where to go birding ~

The birds around us definitely feel spring moving in the air, evidenced by their singing, investigating nest boxes and pairing up. The KSBIRDS listserv and the Kansas Facebook Birding Group are reporting thousands of Sandhill Cranes flocking on migration at Quivira NWR out west, American Woodcocks displaying at Marais des Cygnes NWR, and Great Horned Owls and Bald Eagles nesting! Time for winter-weary birders to be on the move too. Go birding!

Not sure where to go? Visit the JAS website and click on 'Birding Sites' under the 'Birding' tab for a list of spots worth a visit and photos of birds you might expect to see. Here's a link: <https://www.jayhawkaudubon.org/birding-sites>.



Cranes in flight.

Kaw Valley Environmental Calendar

In collaboration with other environmental organizations, Jayhawk Audubon has created a master calendar of environmental events in the Kaw Valley. You can see it on our website, jayhawkaudubon.org/calendar.

Click on an event title to open a box with details and scroll down, using the scroll bar on the right, to see a complete description of the event. We hope you will find it a helpful way to plan your social life.



~ Lynn Byczynski
JAS Webmaster

American Woodcock.

Programs of the Jayhawk Audubon Society are free.

All are welcome!

JAS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Monday, March 26

Plants for Birds:

Restoring Bird Habitat One Garden at a Time

Lynn Byczynski and Jennifer Delisle will present our JAS March program. The Jayhawk Audubon Society is partnering with National Audubon to promote the use of native plants in yards, neighborhood parks, and public places. Growing bird-friendly plants will attract and protect the birds we love while making our spaces beautiful, easy to care for, and better for the environment. Audubon's Plants for Birds program is designed to enable all of us to have a positive impact by planting for birds, right where we live. This program will focus on food preferences of the backyard birds found in northeast Kansas, and the native plants that supply that food.



Male Eastern
Bluebird on
Eastern Redbud.
National Audubon
Society

<http://www.audubon.org/news/why-native-plants-are-better-birds-and-people>

Lynn is a long-time commercial flower grower and the author of *The Flower Farmer: An Organic Grower's Guide to Raising and Selling Cut Flowers*. She has been investigating the cut flower potential of native plants as well as transitioning her personal gardens to include more natives. She is the webmaster for Jayhawk Audubon and an at-large-board member as well.

Jennifer is a past-president and current treasurer of JAS, serving on the Board of Directors since 2001. She works for the Kansas Natural Heritage Inventory at the Kansas Biological Survey, a program that maintains information about plants, animals, and natural communities that are sensitive, threatened, or endangered in Kansas. Her farm has a terrific bird list!

~ Lynn Byczynski

Program: 7:00 pm. Trinity Lutheran Fellowship Hall. 1245 New Hampshire. Refreshments.

Successful Seed Sales Thanks to You!

Because loyal members and bird lovers like you make the extra effort to buy seed from Jayhawk Audubon, our 2017-2018 Seed Sale season produced flocks of satisfied birds and dollars to support the education and conservation projects of Jayhawk Audubon. *We realize that it takes more time and a special trip to buy seed from us, so the entire board is very grateful -- and we love having the chance to say hello and chat with you!* Your birds can't speak English, but you know that the seed you offer makes their lives easier and helps them survive through the cold times.

Thank you also to Trinity Lutheran Church for taking us in during the Senior Center renovation. All the space and easy parking were much appreciated. Sometimes things got a little challenging because of the Church's Pet Food Pantry going on at the same time, but it was all good in the end, and we got to meet some neat dogs, cats, and owners. Apologies to all for the confusion that sometimes resulted.

I'm also very grateful to our volunteers, many of whom have been loyally reliable for years, if not decades(!). They give up their Saturdays to set up the sales, tote hundreds of pounds of seed, order, display and explain the books and feeders, and keep track of the cash. *Thanks a million* to Dana Adkins-Heljeson, Gary Anderson, Pam Chaffee, Dave Chaffee, Bill Dodd, Mike Fraley, Chuck Herman, Susan Iversen, Wayne Kennedy, Galen Pittman, Joyce Wolf, and Ron Wolf. You all keep it upbeat and fun!

Hope to see all of you at a sale next fall,
~ Linda Lips, Seed Sale Chair

Ed's. Note: The JAS board thanks Linda for *her years of work as seed sale chair*. She volunteers hours and hours working with suppliers on pricing and availability, creating order forms, compiling orders, meeting the delivery truck early on cold mornings, troubleshooting and toting seed during the sale, storing and delivering seed *after* the sale AND brings treats and bird song for a welcoming vibe! A very big job that in Linda's hands appears easy.



Kitty mesmerized
by
Tufted Titmouse.

Keep Cats Indoors.
[http://
www.audubon.org/
news/cat-owners-
turn-blind-eye-pets-
violence](http://www.audubon.org/news/cat-owners-turn-blind-eye-pets-violence)

➤ Donate to the Chickadee Checkoff ◀

Tax time is barreling toward us, so soon we'll all have the chance to check that box on the tax forms to donate to the Chickadee Checkoff program of the KS Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism. Money donated to the Checkoff is used for the nongame wildlife projects of the department. These may include research, habitat restoration, public education, all sorts of worthy things that don't get as much support from the state as the game and hunting programs. Full disclosure: the Chickadee Checkoff has supported Kaw Valley Eagles Day most years with a monetary grant, so JAS benefits indirectly.

New Membership Chair

Wayne Kennedy has volunteered to be our new JAS membership chair. Membership chair is a key job with a lot of responsibility for the well-being of the chapter. The board appreciates Wayne's willingness to take it on. You'll now find his address on the membership form on the back of the newsletter, so he's definitely all in. Thank you Wayne!

Chuck Herman, who served years as JAS president and membership chair ditto, actually wearing both hats for several years, is ready for a supremely well-deserved chance to redirect his energies. It's hard to thank Chuck enough for all the time and work he devoted to JAS, but we're trying. You're the best Chuck!

Field Trip Chair Still Needed

It would be such a boost to the chapter if we could fill this important position because field trips attract nonmembers and introduce people to the world of birding. That pleasure often leads them to greater involvement in the chapter and environmental advocacy. The chair can be the trip leader or could be a coordinator, finding folks who could lead outings. If you are interested, or you have someone to suggest, please contact JAS president Gary Anderson: gjanderson1963@gmail.com or 785-246-3229.



JAS Officers & Board Members

President:	Gary Anderson: 785-246-3229 gjanderson1963@gmail.com
Vice President:	James Bresnahan
Recording Secretary:	Julie Maxwell
Corresponding Sec'y:	Pam Chaffee
Treasurer:	Jennifer Delisle
Board Member:	Roger Boyd
Board Member:	Vanessa Carlos
Board Member:	Jennifer Dropkin
Board Member:	Dena Friesen
Board Member:	Susan MacNally
Board Member:	Lynn Byczynski
Membership Chairs:	Wayne Kennedy Chuck & Ruth Herman
Newsletter:	Susan Iversen: 785-843-1142 siversen@sunflower.com
Conservation:	Lynn Byczynski
Programs:	Joyce Wolf
Education:	Sandy Sanders
Field Trips:	VACANT
Publicity:	Pam Chaffee
Facebook Page:	Jennifer Dropkin, Administrator jendropkin@hotmail.com
Webmaster:	Lynn Byczynski
Bird Seed Sales:	Linda Lips
Birdathon:	Richard Bean
Christmas Count:	Galen Pittman
Eagles Day:	Bunnie Watkins
Migratory Bird Count:	Vanessa Carlos
Hospitality:	Kelly Barth
Historian:	Ron Wolf
Books & Feeders:	Ron & Joyce Wolf
Audubon of Kansas	
Chapter Representative:	Ron Wolf

In winter, I plot and plan. In spring, I move.

*~ Henry Rollins, punk rocker, writer, radio host
Is he a gardener? Perhaps not, but this is a gardener's take on winter & spring.*

Find Your Plants for Birds at Native Plant Salesor at Native Plant Nurseries:

Sunrise Project Plant Sales

Saturdays, April 14th, 28th, and May 12th
9 am - 2 pm; will also have vegetable plants.
1501 Learnard Avenue, Lawrence
www.sunriseprojectks.org

Monarch Watch Plant Sale & Open House

Saturday, May 12th 8 am - 2 pm
Foley Hall, University of Kansas West Campus
2021 Constant Avenue, Lawrence
Will also sell some non-native butterfly plants
www.monarchwatch.org/openhouse

Grassland Heritage Foundation Native Plant Sale

Saturday, May 19th 9 am - 1 pm
Trinity Episcopal Church Lawn
1011 Vermont Street, Lawrence
www.grasslandheritage.org

Douglas County Master Gardeners Native Plant Sale

Saturday, June 2nd 9 am - 1:30 pm
Douglas Co. 4H Fairgrounds, 2110 Harper St.
www.douglas.k-state.edu

*Can't wait until April 14th for the
Sunrise Project Sale? Head over to Missouri.*

Missouri Prairie Foundation Native Plant Sale

Tuesday, April 3rd 3:30pm - 7:30 pm
Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center
4750 Troost Ave, KCMO
www.moprairie.org
(They're also having a sale on Saturday, April 21st.
9:30 - 2:30 pm at the Gorman Discovery Center.)

Burroughs Audubon Society Native Plant Sale

Saturday, April 28th 9 am - 2 pm
Backyard Bird Center, 6212 NW Barry Road, KCMO
Plants from the Kansas City Native Plant Initiative.
www.kcnpi.org

Vinland Valley Nursery

1606 N. 600 Rd., Baldwin City, KS. 785-594-2966
Open for the season on March 1st. They also sell at the
Downtown Farmer's Market and Cottin's Hardware in
Lawrence. <http://vinlandvalleynursery.com>

Happy Apple's Farm

17524 178th Street, Tonganoxie, KS. 816-260-6417
Spring Plant Sale: April 21, 1:00 - 6:00 pm.
www.happyapplesfarm.com



Henslow's
Sparrow on
Goldenrod.

Learn How to Care for Your New Plants
& Make the Garden Inviting
to Birds, People, and Pollinators:

Grassland Heritage Foundation Workshop Series:
Carnegie Building, 200 W. 9th St., Lawrence

1: Native Plant Gardening Basics
March 15th 7:00 pm

Prairie ecologist Courtney Masterson on aspects of starting
and enlarging native gardens, including site assessment and
selection, purchasing and planting.

2: Landscaping with Native Plants
April 19th 7:00 pm

Patti Ragsdale, designer and planter of native plant gardens
and owner of Happy Apple's Farm.

RSVP encouraged. Email grasslandheritage@gmail.com
to RSVP and for more information. Visit Facebook or
www.grasslandheritage.com for more on the series.

The Importance of Avoiding Neonicotinoid-treated Plants/Seeds

Exactly one week ago, as I looked out the window, tree limbs and bushes were coated with ice. How can I write about spring, gardening, choosing native plants that thrive, when I'm trapped inside because our driveway is doing an incredible imitation of a skating rink! Well here we are today, a week later, with temperatures in the 60s, a brisk wind from the south, the bright sun making distinct shadows everywhere. Ah the promise of SPRING!

So, as you think about what you'll plant or add to an already-established landscape, please do consider native plants that will not need extra-tender-loving care – native plants evolved in this area, are adapted to our weather, and if you attend JAS's program this month, you'll learn lots more about which plants to choose.

But there is one other crucial thing to consider – have the plants or seeds you're thinking of buying been treated with a family of pesticides called *neonicotinoids*? These chemicals, also called *neonics* for short, have been associated with declines in bee populations, and they pose both acute and chronic risks to pollinators, aquatic life and birds. Treated seeds are identified as posing the highest dietary risks to birds. Drift from treated seeds planted as row crops is quite a hazard as these tiny particles are blown onto nearby hedge rows or shelter belts. The EPA found that risks to certain birds from eating neonic-treated seeds exceed the agency's level of concern by as much as 200-fold. For clothianidin, the agency finds that as few as 1–5 seeds of treated corn will be enough to exceed acute and chronic levels of concern for birds. (from an article by Beyond Pesticides. Website: <https://www.beyondpesticides.org/>)

I find it particularly interesting that because of risks to pollinators and aquatic organisms, regulators in Canada, the UK, and Europe have adopted or are considering bans on neonics. But perhaps the most disturbing thing in the US is that many plants may have been treated with neonics, but are not labeled as such. I found this out in a long conversation with a Vice-President of Proven Winners, who said that they have more than 5,000 growers across the US and have no way of verifying whether or not the plants have been treated with neonics. Even more troubling are plants that are labeled as having been treated and when you turn the label over, it says "Approved by the EPA." So, unless you're aware of the hazards of neonics to bees, other pollinators, birds and aquatic life, that label makes it sound like it's OK!

Several nonprofits in the Lawrence area sponsor native plant sales: Monarch Watch, Grassland Heritage Foundation, Douglas County Master Gardeners, and others. (*See dates and locations on page 3.*) You can be assured that these plants are totally free of neonics and can buy them with confidence that they will not pose any threat to birds or other members of the local biota. My policy is to ask the seller(s) if the plants have been treated. Once, when I got a puzzled look from the seller, I decided to forego buying anything because I just didn't want to take the chance of harming the critters that I was trying to help.

~ Joyce Wolf, JAS Program Chair
Kaw Valley Native Plant Coalition



American Goldfinch hanging upside down to eat Goldenrod seeds. Let's all make sure those seeds aren't poisoned with neonicotinoids by buying only neonics-free plants and seeds.
By Robin Seeber. *Birds and Blooms* magazine.

Coming Up in Early May: The Ed & Cynthia Shaw Memorial Birdathon 2018

Greetings! Greetings from Birdathon Headquarters! We're very excited about our prospects for a wonderful Birdathon 2018. Two very able assistants, Jim Bresnahan and Pam Chaffee, have agreed to help line up the sponsors and field participants necessary for a successful Birdathon fundraiser for JAS.

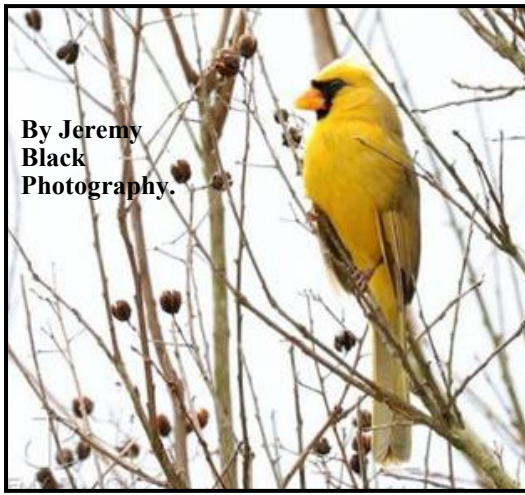
I've always felt that many of you are willing to support JAS as sponsors, but we need to hear from you. Contact us at jbresnahan@ku.edu or pkchaffee@yahoo.com. We'll be in touch to find out how you would like to help. Then we'll contact you again once we have held the Birdathon and compiled the chapter list of bird species.

Of course, enlisting field participants to go out and bird to achieve a chapter list to be proud of has always been a challenge...we need to hear from birders too. May birding in Kansas is terrific, so do think about joining in this year. We'll have more details about this glorious birding event in the April newsletter.

~ Richard Bean
Birdathon Chair

March Field Trips & Other Outings

By Jeremy
Black
Photography.



Rara Avis Indeed

Here's a rare mutation in cardinal coloration—yellow! Every now and then a Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) has a mutation that makes it impossible for the bird to make red feather pigments, leaving it yellow instead of red. Charlie Stephenson of Alabaster, Alabama has had this yellow Northern Cardinal come by her backyard regularly this year.

~ Jennifer Dropkin

JAS Facebook administrator

(For more on this bird, and some other unusual cardinals see this article on the National Audubon website:

<http://www.audubon.org/news/why-northern-cardinal-yellow.>)

Advocate for a Bird Friendly Farm Bill

Thirty-seven million. That's the increase in the number of waterfowl in the Great Plains Prairie Pothole Region over the past quarter-century, **thanks to Farm Bill conservation programs.** Beyond waterfowl, the Farm Bill has sustained habitat for more than 100 bird species, from Western Meadowlark to Black-necked Stilt.

The 2018 Farm Bill is being drafted right now, **and it needs your support.** Ask your Senators to support and strengthen the Bill's conservation measures, such as the Regional Conservation Partnership Program's habitat restoration efforts for birds in most need of conservation. Please contact them soon:

Senator Pat Roberts: Chair of the Senate Agriculture Comm.

109 Hart Senate Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20510.

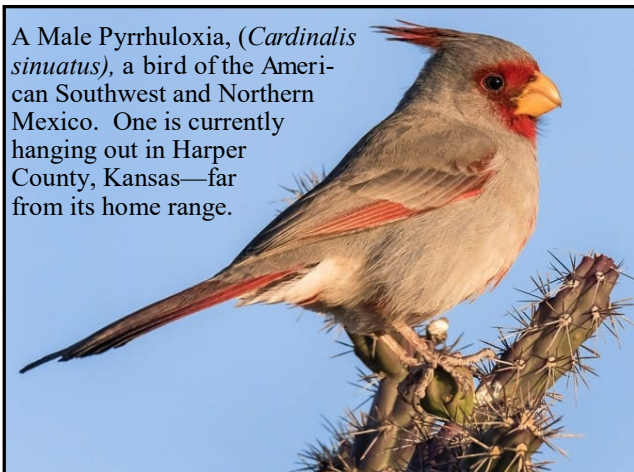
202-224-4774. <http://www.roberts.senate.gov/>

Senator Jerry Moran: 521 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.

Washington, DC 20501. 202-224-6521

<https://contactsensators.com/kansas/jerry-moran>

A Male Pyrrhuloxia, (*Cardinalis sinuatus*), a bird of the American Southwest and Northern Mexico. One is currently hanging out in Harper County, Kansas—far from its home range.



Week of 3/5-3/9: American Woodcocks at the Prairie Center, in Olathe. Date will depend on the weather. See Burroughs Audubon website; <http://burroughs.org/its-free/field-trips-programs/> Contact Jeff Witters at bioguy.witters@gmail.com.

Thu, 3/8: Woodcock Walk Warren Nature Area. Topeka Audubon. 6:30 - 7:30 pm. Meet-up details at <http://www.topekaaudubonsociety.org/calendar>

Sat. 3/10: Local Authors Outside. Annette Hope Billings. Author of *A Net Full of Hope*. 1-2:30 PM. Wakarusa Valley Heritage Museum

Mon. 3/12: Bluebird Association Spring Meeting. 7:00 pm. Come and sign up to help monitor a bluebird trail! Redeemer Lutheran Church, 2700 Lawrence Ave.

Wed. 3/14: Wee Walk - Shaping Up Seeds. Baker Wetlands & Discovery Center. 10 - 11 am. Free, but must register: jkilburg@bakeru.edu or 785-594-4703.

Thu. 3/15: Native Plant Gardening Basics. Workshop # 1 in Grassland Heritage Foundation Series. 7:00 pm. RSVP encouraged. See Page 4 for details.

Thu. 3/15: Native Plant Gardening Basics. Workshop # 1 in Grassland Heritage Foundation Series. 7:00 pm. RSVP encouraged. See Page 4 for details.

Sat. 3/17: Field trip to Settle's Ford, Ladue Bottoms, and Montrose Conservation Areas in western Missouri. Burroughs Audubon. All day trip. For details visit: <http://burroughs.org/its-free/field-trips-programs/>

Sat. 3/17: Take care of the Kaw! Litter pick up at the Turner Boat Ramp in KCK. 9-11am. Friends of the Kaw <http://kansasriver.org/>. See river map and calendar.

Wed. 3/21: School's Out Discovery Day. KU Natural History Museum. 10am - 12 pm. Hands-on fun.

Thu. 3/22: Audubon Nebraska Crane Festival. Rowe Center in Kearney, Nebraska. \$. Read about the crane viewing opportunities and other events and register at <http://ne.audubon.org/birds/crane-festival>

Sat. 3/24: Sierra Club-Kansas Chapter Biennial State Conference. *There Is No More Normal*. Climate change and its impact on Kansas. Dr. Johannes Feddema, keynote speaker. Held at Baker Wetlands Discovery Center, Lawrence **Free, but limited seating. You must register.** See: <http://kansas.sierraclub.org/> for details. RSVP to gjanderson1963@gmail.com

Sat. 3/24: Topeka Audubon 75th Anniversary! Speaker: Al Batt of *Bird Watcher's Digest*. Please see www.topekaaudubonsociety.org for invitation/RSVP.

Sun. 3/25: Paddle Assistant Workshop. Friends of the Kaw. 1:00 - 4:30 pm. Eudora Community Center. RSVP link and details at <http://kansasriver.org/>

Mon. 3/26: Plants for Birds. JAS Program. 7:00pm Trinity Lutheran Church Hall, 1245 New Hampshire.

Sat. 4/7: Field Trip to Quivira NWR and Cheyenne Bottoms. Topeka Audubon. 4:00am - 5:30 pm. Long day, but you'll see amazing birds!. For details: <http://www.topekaaudubonsociety.org/calendar>

UN WORLD WATER DAY ~ MARCH 22, 2018

This Year's Theme: "The Answer Is In Nature"

That means *all of us* — grown-ups, kids, and our government — should

- ★ Plant trees and grasses along riverbanks to stop soil washing away.
- ★ Plant native grasses and wildflowers to restore grasslands.
- ★ Restore/stop destroying natural wetlands.
- ★ Connect rivers to their floodplains.
- ★ Plant trees to restore forests.



- Healthy forests, grasslands & wetlands clean & store vast amounts of water.
- Grassy or treed edges on streams & crop fields stop soil run off.
- Wetlands help reduce flooding & produce food for all kinds of animals.

There are so many humans and cities, these solutions from nature can't solve all our water problems. But working with nature instead of against it will help people & wildlife to have more safe, clean water for drinking, bathing and playing .



The "Answer Is In Nature" because of the Water Cycle



All water on Earth is connected ~ moving around the planet in the water cycle.



Water evaporates from Earth's surface and rises up condensing into clouds in cooler upper air. Rain drops or snow flakes fall from the clouds, sinking into the ground & filling rivers and lakes.

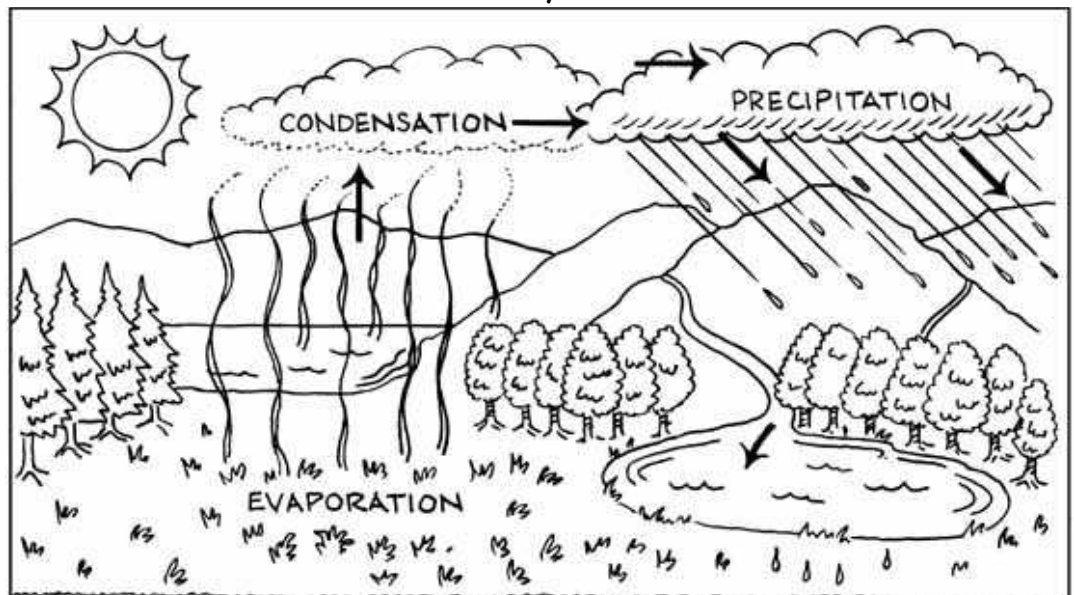
BUT, if the rain falls on roads or buildings, it runs off to sewers and is lost to plants, people & land animals.



As it flows over the concrete, it picks up trash, oil, chemicals becoming polluted!

A good reason to go with Nature's answers and use plants and natural systems to hold & filter run-off.

The Water Cycle



Water Cycle Demonstration/ Experiment

For this experiment you will need the following:

- Plastic ziplock bag
- Sharpie
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water
- Blue food coloring
- Painter's tape



1. Draw clouds at the top & wavy water at the bottom of your plastic bag. This will help you understand what is happening in the real water cycle.



2. Put $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water, and about 4 drops of food coloring in the bag & seal it shut.
3. Tape it on a window using painter's tape. (Easy to remove once your experiment is over.)
4. Now watch what happens! Check on the bag several times per day and record what you see.
5. *To turn this demonstration into an experiment, you have to change something in the setup and observe what happens! That is what scientists do to understand how things work. Only change one thing - or 'variable' - at a time. A few ideas:*
 - ★ Does moving the bag to another window change anything about the cycle? Try north facing, south facing, partial shade, full sun...what else?
 - ★ Does the amount of food coloring you add make any difference?
 - ★ Does the outside temperature matter?
 - ★ What else could you change?

What is the science?

In nature, the sun's heat causes liquid water in lakes, streams, and oceans to *evaporate* (change into water vapor, a gas.) The warm gas (water vapor) rises, and reaches the cooler upper air. There the vapor cools off, *condenses back into liquid water and forms clouds*. When the clouds are *saturated* (full of water), they release some of that water as rain. The rain falls into lakes and rivers & onto the ground and the cycle goes on - all over the world.

<https://greensborosciencecenter.wordpress.com/2017/04/06/diy-science-water-cycle-in-a-bag/>



How Does Nature Clean Earth's Water?

Which land cover does the best job of cleaning water:

- A. **growing plants;**
- B. **plant litter like twigs, bark, & fallen leaves;**
- C. **or bare soil???**

Try this experiment. You'll need:

- 3 large plastic bottles - all the same size; and 3 clear plastic cups or bottle tops or bottoms.
 - Scissors, string.
 - Dirt, seeds or small plants, leaf litter, bark, twigs.
1. Cut away 1/3 of each bottle from top to bottom, making it into a long, open container with high sides. Do not cut off the spout.
 2. Make sure the mouth of each bottle extends off the edge of the table, counter or board.
 3. Put the same amount of dirt in each bottle. Pack the dirt hard keeping it below the spout opening.
 4. Cut the bottoms or tops off 3 other bottles and hang them from the bottles on the board as shown. Or use plastic cups if you have them.
 5. Now dig up a patch of grass or buy nursery plants to cover the dirt in the first bottle. Or you can plant seeds in the first bottle. This takes longer because you have to wait about a month for them to grow before starting the experiment, *but it is more interesting.* Use seeds that germinate quickly: kale, lettuce, broccoli...
 - ★ Remember to *put the cap back on that bottle* To keep the water in when you water the seeds,
 6. Put dead plant litter in the second bottle: leaves, bark, twigs, etc.
 7. Leave the dirt in the third bottle bare.
 8. Once your seeds are well grown with good roots, start the experiment. NOTE: Even the nursery plants will need about a week to root into the dirt in the bottle to make a real test of how good plants are at holding and cleaning runoff.
 9. Slowly pour the same amount of water into each bottle at the bottom end. (Take the cap off #1.)
 10. What happens to the water added to each bottle?
 - Describe in your notebook the appearance of the water running off from each bottle.
 - Does the same amount come out of each bottle?
 - Put the runoff water from each bottle through a paper coffee filter. What do you get?
 - What can you say about how water might get cleaned as it travels through the water cycle?
 - Try this experiment using sand and gravel to cover the dirt in two of the bottles.



This activity is adapted from this website:

<https://www.lapappadolce.net/62-esperimenti-scientifici-limportanza-del-verde/#English>

Don't destroy them! Preserve wetlands for water quality ...and good habitat.

Learn more at <http://worldwaterday.org/>



UN WATER
22 MARCH
WORLD
WATER
DAY

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

2/3

OF NATURAL WETLANDS
HAVE DISAPPEARED SINCE
1900?

The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw: One Woman's Fight to Save the World's Most Beautiful Bird

By Bruce Barcott

Reviewed by Barbara Watkins

This gripping book takes several twists and turns that caught me by surprise. *The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw* (Random House, 2008) is very timely, even though it was published a decade ago. Its primary focus is the efforts to save the scarlet macaw, jaguar, and other species endangered by the prospect of a controversial new dam in Belize. In backstories, Bruce Barcott explores economic, ecological, and geological problems, as well as political intrigue.

Barcott is an award-winning American editor, environmental journalist, and author. He is a contributing editor for *Outside* magazine and has written several books and numerous articles on nature for prominent newspapers and other publications. In his work for *Outside*, he travelled to Belize, a “tiny Central American country often ignored by the rest of the world.” There for six years he tracked the battle between the “forces of global capitalism and international environmentalism” over the fate of the last scarlet macaws in Belize. “At the center of it all was a woman who ran a charming little zoo.”

The woman is Sharon Matola, an American expatriate and the proprietor of the Belize Zoo, the country's most-visited tourist destination. She created the zoo when she inherited two macaws, a jaguar and about 20 other animals at the end of a documentary film project. Barcott asserts that she manages to “delight, enrage, captivate, frustrate and inspire her fellow Belizeans.” “Matola and her confederates—a ragtag army of courageous locals and eccentric expatriates—endure slander and reprisals and take the fight [against the dam] to the courtroom and boardroom, from local village streets to protests around the globe.”

Barcott describes the scarlet macaw as a “creature dreamed up by Dr. Seuss.” The size of a housecat, “it is a red parrot with wings tipped buttercup yellow and royal blue.” This enchanting bird's “powers of reason and memory mark it as one of the smartest birds alive.” (For photos of other interesting birds and animals in Belize, look at Kansas wildlife photographer Bob Gress' documentation of his recent trip there: <http://mailchi.mp/3ff3e85adea6/photoblast-belize?e=e0051012aa>)



In Central America the scarlet macaws are disappearing. In the early 2000s, their population was down to about 200 in Belize. The primary cause of this was deforestation and global warming. Matola and her colleagues argued that macaw habitat in Belize would be wiped out by building the Chalillo Dam on the Macal River. Macaws nested in the area where the Belize government and an international power company wanted to flood the river valley. In retaliation for Matola's protests against the planned dam, the government planned to locate its new national garbage dump next to the zoo.

Although Matola's team won the battle to get the dump moved, a court case in faraway London allowed the dam to be built. Since then, the macaws have stabilized their population by locating their nesting sites on higher ground. Matola resolutely moved on to her next project, rehabilitating injured harpy eagles at the zoo and then releasing them in the wild.

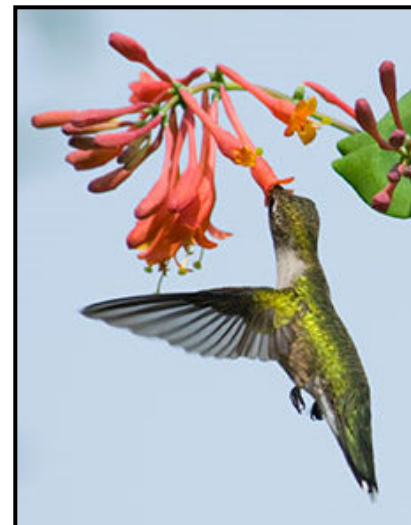
Barcott remains harsh in his assessment of the Chalillo Dam, asserting that it “contained within it a half decade of passion, hatred, rancor, and strife.” “The dam was a fiasco: environmentally devastating, economically unsound, geologically suspect and stinking of monopoly profiteering.” It will be interesting to check its status a decade from now in this era of serious climate change.

Jayhawk Audubon Society
P.O. Box 3741
Lawrence, KS 66046
Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lawrence, KS
Permit No. 201

Return Service Requested

- ★ 3/26: Plants for Birds. JAS Program ~ p. 1
- ★ Kaw Valley Environmental Calendar Debut ~ p. 1
- ★ Seed Sale thanks; New Membership Chair ~ p. 2
- ★ Native Plant Sales, Workshops & Nurseries ~ p. 3
- ★ Avoid Neonicotinoid Treated Plants! ~ p. 4
- ★ Calendar; Yellow Cardinal, 2018 Farm Bill ~ p. 5
- ★ World Water Day 2018; the water cycle ~ p. 6, 7 & 8
- ★ *The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw*. Book Review ~ p. 9



Ruby-throated Hummingbird on native honeysuckle. Chicago Botanic Garden.

Become a Member: Just \$20 to join both National Audubon and Jayhawk Chapter.

___ **National Audubon Society membership is \$20.00.** Members receive four issues per year of the Audubon magazine and will be enlisted as members of the Jayhawk Chapter. All members also receive 9 issues of the JAS newsletter per year and are entitled to discounts on the books and feeders we sell to raise funds to support education and conservation projects. (Make your check payable to National Audubon Society and mail to our JAS membership chair at the address below. You may also join National Audubon online at https://secure.audubon.org/site/Donation2?df_id=9431&9431.donation=form1&s_src=2015_AUDHP_topbanner-button-menu.)

___ **Chapter-only membership to Jayhawk Audubon Society is \$10.00.** (Make check payable to Jayhawk Audubon Society.) You will not receive the Audubon magazine. Those with National Audubon memberships are encouraged to support the chapter by voluntarily paying these dues. Chapter membership expires annually in July. JAS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

___ **To join or donate to Audubon of Kansas** make check payable to AOK or use this online link - <http://www.audubonofkansas.org/joindonate/>.

Please send this completed form and your check to JAS Membership Chairs at the following address:

Wayne Kennedy, 1308 Crosswinds CT. #1 Lawrence KS 66046. E-mail contact: w.a.k.e.n.n.z@gmail.com.

Name _____; Address _____;

City _____; State _____; ZIP Code (9) digit _____;

Telephone (with Area Code) _____

Email address _____

Jayhawk Audubon does not share membership information with non-Audubon entities.

C6ZJ020Z