the library !!

# ➤ We're Calling a Do-Over <</p>

The weather was sooo bad the night Richard Mabion spoke in May that only a few people ventured out to hear his timely eco-justice message. We strongly believe he deserves a wider audience and Mr. Mabion has generously agreed to come over to Lawrence again for our August meeting to spread awareness of an environmental/health problem affecting our KCK neighbors.

The program will be at the Lawrence Public Library for greater visibility. There are now six co-sponsors: JAS, League of Women Voters of Lawrence/Douglas County, the Water Advocacy Team, Lawrence Ecology Teams United in Sustainability, Sierra Club, and LPL is sponsoring as well as providing the auditorium.



The Birds & the Birders Showed Up for Birdathon. Will You Support Them?

JAS birders spent a day in the field searching woods, wetlands & prairies and found 171 species including **one parrot!!** (To find out who scored which parrot see the species list page 6.)

Our volunteer birders enjoyed themselves because...birding, but their true aim was to raise the money needed for important chapter environmental education programs such as Eagles Day, Plants for Birds, Learning About Nature field trips, Natural History Museum Camp scholarships, cosponsoring the free Monarch Tagging event, outof-town speakers and future initiatives.

Please support these JAS programs with a Birdathon contribution. Any amount is welcome and will all be put toward outreach & education. You'll find the donation form on page 7.

Monday, August 26th

# Diesel Emissions & the BNSF Railroad in KCK Neighborhoods

Richard Mabion, our August speaker, is the founder of Building A Sustainable Earth Community, an environmental literacy organization and direct affiliate of Clean Air Now. He will discuss their work to protect community health by identifying and documenting environmental & health related problems caused by freight transportation (aka goods movement) in the Kansas City, KS region. Diesel exhaust, and other pollutants emitted by goods movement, warehousing, and related activities are a persistent, significant source of health problems in the area.

The group also works to create communitybased environmental justice programming in after-school settings to educate future inner-city leaders about the causes of pollution and its effects on their life and in their neighborhoods. In 2011 the Midwest Sociological Society gave Building A Sustainable Earth Community its Social Action Award which recognizes exceptional grassroots organizations working to further social justice in the Midwest.

Richard Mabion was born and raised in Kansas City, Kansas. He served a 2-year tour of duty for the U. S. Army during the Vietnam Conflict, then went to college, graduating in 1971 with a BS in Education, minoring in Psychology. For the next three decades he was a self-taught urban social engineer and businessman in both Kansas City and St. Louis, Missouri. Since 2006 he has been a community organizer in the environmental movement in KCK.

Please join us for this timely topic as our Clean Air Act protections are under attack. ~ Joyce Wolf, Program Chair

#### BYO Dinner with Richard Mabion: 5:00 pm.

Merchant's Pub & Plate.

746 Massachusetts St., Lawrence RSVP to Jim Bresnahan: jbresnahan@ku.edu

**Program:** 7:00 pm. Lawrence Public Library Auditorium. 707 Vermont Street.



#### Life of Conservation Successes Honored

Ron Klataske, **Executive Director** of Audubon of Kansas (AOK), received The President's Award from the Western Assoc. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) for conservation successes in the central Great Plains during the past 50 years. He represented National Audubon from 1970 to 1998 and AOK since 1999.



Two projects that Ron developed resulted in new units of the National Park system: the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in the Flint Hills and a 76-mile stretch of northern Nebraska's Niobrara River designated as a National Scenic River. He also proposed creation of the Konza Prairie near Manhattan and the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve in Oklahoma.

He led Audubon campaigns opposing federal dam and diversion proposals on the Niobrara & Platte rivers in Nebraska. Both projects were dropped and the Platte now provides crucial spring stopover/rest habitat in central Nebraska for a half million migrating Sandhill Cranes.

(Above text adapted from AOK press release.)

Ron's legacy of prairie preserves and freerunning rivers is a hard-fought conservation achievement that benefits wildlife & humans alike. Thank you, Ron! To learn more about AOK: <a href="https://www.audubonofkansas.org/">https://www.audubonofkansas.org/</a>



Sharp-tailed Grouse and Bobolinks breed on the AOK Hutton Sanctuary on the Niobrara. You can visit the sanctuary & stay in one of the houses. Contact AOK through their website.

### National Prairie Day Report

Jayhawk Audubon took the lead on organizing Lawrence's first-ever celebration of National Prairie Day, June 1 at Burroughs Creek Park. The event was part of the grand opening of the Prairie Block Project, a community-led endeavor featuring creekside nature trails, nature-themed public art made of recycled materials and a new shade pavilion. 14 organizations highlighted the wonders of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem with exhibits, activities, and demonstrations. JAS talked up benefits of native plants and gave away over 500 for the Plants for Birds program. Thanks to all who made National Prairie Day such a success:

- -Kansas Biological Survey;
- -Grassland Heritage Foundation;
- -Prairie Park Nature Center;
- -Monarch Watch;
- -Baker Wetlands
- Discovery Center;
- -Kansas Native Plant Society;
- -Kansas Land Trust;
- -KU Sustainability -Prairie Acre;
- -KU Natural History Museum;
- -Virginia Commonwealth Univ;
- -Topeka Zoo;
- -Friends of the Kaw.
- -Outside for a Better Inside.

Thanks also to the

volunteer/ turtle lover & her future native plant garden. **Barrett Emke** Plants for Birds Burke Grant program of the National

Audubon Society for providing funding for this event. ~ Jennifer Delisle, Treasurer & Plants for Birds

#### Bird Stories Connect Us All ~ at the How-to-Festival and In Everyday Life Jennifer Delisle demonstrated "How to Become a Better Birder" at Lawrence Public Library's How-to Festival on June 15. Birders of all ages and skill levels stopped by to pick up a few tips and share favorite bird stories.

Sharing bird stories is part of the fun of being with other birders, but also a way to connect with all sorts of folks. Birds are everywhere, even the densest cities and bleak places like garbage dumps. People notice and are fascinated by them; they are significant actors in our shared world. So bird stories can be a bridge to those whom we might disagree with on just about any other topic, and so may serve in a small way to reach across our national divide. Up with birding! See Jennifer in the library's video: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/">https://www.facebook.com/</a>





Just a few of hundreds of native plants JAS gave away at the Prairie Block Party courtesy of our Burke Grant from Plants for Birds. We chatted with attendees about using the plants in a garden, and the ways natives are key to the intricate web of lives in a healthy ecosystem. Pictured: Dena Friesen, Susan Iversen and Lynn Byczynski. Susan MacNally and Jennifer Delisle also volunteered, and Jennifer was a main organizer of the National Prairie Day event. Photo by Barrett Emke.

Jennifer Dropkin has put more photos of the event on the Jas Facebook page. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/Jayhawk-Audubon-Society-309527825743050/">https://www.facebook.com/Jayhawk-Audubon-Society-309527825743050/</a>

# From KSBIRDS listserv on 5/14/19: A Funny Bird Story Shared, or Is It a Funny Raccoon Story??

I've been watching birds for years and years, and I've never laughed as hard at them as I did yesterday. I was looking out my kitchen window, watching the silly raccoon hanging almost upside down in order to eat the seed in the feeder. Her back legs were hooked over a branch, leaving her front feet free to forage. Two titmice started coming in behind her, then flying in and landing on her upturned rump where they snatched hair right out of her coat! The raccoon would whip her head around but she was—literally—in no position to be able to get to them, and they certainly knew it! They "harvested" hair for about 10 minutes! I've heard of them landing on people reclining on their decks and snatching hair for their nests, but I've never seen them actually doing anything like this before! It was hilarious!

Marla Shoemaker, Manhattan, Riley County (Reprinted with permission)

Join KSBIRDS listserv to get and share bird sightings, stories and more: <a href="https://listserv.ksu.edu/ksbird-l.html">https://listserv.ksu.edu/ksbird-l.html</a>To join the KS Ornithological Society, the listserv sponsor and home of amazing birders, visit: <a href="http://ksbirds.org/">http://ksbirds.org/</a> They're also on Facebook.

#### **JAS Officers & Board Members**

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Migratory Bird Count: Vanessa Carlos

Audubon of Kansas Chapter Representative: Ron Wolf

# The Seabird's Cry:



## The Lives and Loves of the Planet's Great Ocean Travelers

By Adam Nicolson Reviewed by McKay Stangler

Perhaps you, like me, adore certain authors so much that you would read a book they wrote on virtually any subject, no matter how uninterested in the subject you might otherwise be. Adam Nicolson is one of those authors: I would happily read a volume of Scottish stew ingredients, had he penned it. The writing talents of this royal peer—officially, Adam Nicolson, 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Carnock, FRSL, FSA; truly, no one does titles quite like the Brits—are world-class, dripping with learned allusions and steeped in the history of seemingly everything.

Fortunately, I was already interested in the subject of his latest work, *The Seabird's Cry: The Lives and Loves of the Planet's Great Ocean Voyagers*. Nicolson has written about a wide range of subjects in the past, ranging from the making of the King James Bible to a book about Rudyard Kipling's wife, and his intellectual curiosity and depth of knowledge are simply astounding. I can't recommend highly enough his book *Why Homer Matters*, which is ostensibly about Homer and his world but, like all great books, is truly about what it means to live a good and honorable human life.

In that book he notes that the ancient Greeks viewed seabirds as physical manifestations of the spirits of the dead, which in turn got him thinking about seabirds and their glorious journeys. If you are like me, your jaw will drop at least once per page as you learn about the wayfaring and seafaring of these very threatened birds.

Consider, for example, that in order to raise a single chick, each adult puffin must catch 450 small fish each day for eight or nine hours. Nicolson notes that this is the metabolic equivalent of a grown man spending eight or nine hours every day knocking down walls with a sledgehammer. This also requires them diving into freezing waters *up* to 1,100 times per day. Think about that next time you gripe, as I sometimes do, about children's snacking proclivities.

Or consider the intelligence of seabirds: a herring gull, after watching humans toss bread to ducks in a pond, stole a piece of bread and broke it into pieces. It then tossed those pieces in the water and proceeded to systematically catch each fish that came up to grab the bread. (There has been something of a renaissance in gull studies, one piece of which I'll review next month.)

Nicolson breaks his book into ten chapters, one bird per chapter (kittiwake, shearwater, gannet, etc.), and examines not just the bird but its entire social and natural context. Throughout, Nicolson is an amiable guide and a spinner of stunning sentences. To wit, this passage describing the world's largest gannet colony:

And so this stinking, death-encrusted, vivid, howling all-life gathering of gannets and their offspring — so shockingly intense that it is in a category beyond the beautiful — is no colony, no monument to togetherness, but a giant clutch of deeply individualized beings as much each other's allies as arrows in a quiver, or athletes on a start line, or the axes bound in a Roman fasces. I have never witnessed life less accommodating.

The entire book is that beautiful, that baroque, that bracing.

Finally, consider the albatross. I'm not even going to list anything amazing about it, because *everything* about it is amazing. This is a bird whose wings span 11 feet or more, who in 70 or 80 years of life might raise 40 or 50 chicks, and will fly millions, literally *millions*, of miles across our vast watery planet.

Sometimes I'll encounter a very outspoken atheist, and he (it's always a he) will loudly pontificate on the absurdity of belief in the divine. I'll smile and nod, being something of a skeptic myself, and then I'll reply: "Have you ever seen a hummingbird?" Sure, he'll answer, a bit confused. Why? No reason, I'll say. It just seems to me that if God were trying to speak to us, it's hard to imagine a more perfect message than the hummingbird.

Now, after reading this glorious book, I think I'll amend my response. I think I'll say: do you know much about the albatross?





## Did You Know? Caves and a Dark Vision

By Jim Bresnahan

We live in a world of light. We humans can't function without it. It is fortunate, then, that our local star so heavily bathes us in photons, the energy waves/particles of light that power our biosphere through photosynthesis and indirectly allow us and most other creatures to see to carry out our daily work. Photons are almost everywhere. Even in deep space there are photons from distant stars; some have travelled at the speed of light for millions of years to reach our eyes. Yet there are places where light does not penetrate.

The depths of the ocean would seem an obvious location. However, light is actually common in that environment as over 76% of creatures in the deep ocean actually produce their own light by means of bioluminescence, much like fireflies do.

The most common terrestrial locations devoid of light are deep within caves. With the exception of some New Zealand caves inhabited by bioluminescent glowworms, once you enter a cave and travel beyond the entrance you are in total darkness. Splash on some photons by way of lanterns, lights or camera flash, however, and a cave is a kaleidoscope of color & shapes of formations such as soda straws, stalactites, stalagmites, columns, draperies and flowstone. These cave structures, or speleothems, are formed by the dissolution of limestone or dolomite by weak acidic water from the surface and the subsequent deposition of calcite when the water evaporates. Pure calcite is white, almost colorless, but iron and other minerals combine with the calcite to add shades of orange, red, black and other colors.

Most animals can't survive permanently in the interior of caves unless they are specially adapted to live there. There are various blind, unpigmented cave fauna called *trog-lobites* such as the blind



cave fish, crayfish and various unpigmented and pigmented salamanders which are uniquely adapted to the cave environment and can't survive on the surface.

These troglobite fauna depend upon organic matter washed into the cave from the outside as well as upon the guano of bats which roost in caves during the day but fly out at night to feed



Other-worldly speleothems. Photo by Jim Bresnahan.

on insects. Decomposing bat guano and other organic matter feed bacteria and fungi which are the first links in the cave aquatic and terrestrial food chain that includes small crustaceans, flatworms, millipedes, insects and other invertebrates.

Probably the darkest site in the Universe is the site of sight itself: the occipital lobe of the brain. The brain is surrounded by half an inch of bone and further enveloped by meningeal membranes. There is not even a light-filled entrance. There are no photons in this location; only fluxes of sodium and potassium ions across nerve membranes. The occipital lobe of the brain processes visual input from the retinas of the eyes. It is responsible for all perception and interpretation of visual stimuli coming from the eyes. Complete damage to the occipital lobe of the brain or interruption of the nerve conduits to it from normal eyes results in total blindness.

Key visual functions include reading, reading comprehension, recognition of movement, depth perception, and all information regarding the shapes and colors that make up our perception of the world. Except for music and aural, tactile and olfactory perception, our art and science, our concept of beauty and most human aspiration and achievement are probably the result of this dark vision.

https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/08/21/science/the-deep-seas-are-alive-with-light.html

https://sciencetrends.com/occipital-lobe-function-and-definition/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Arachnocampa luminosa



# Species List for the 2019 Jayhawk Audubon Birdathon: 171!



Canada Goose Wood Duck Gadwall Mallard Blue-winged Teal Northern Shoveler Northern Bobwhite Ring-necked Pheasant Wild Turkey Pied-billed Grebe Virginia Rail Sora American Coot Killdeer Least Sandpiper Spotted Sandpiper Solitary Sandpiper Greater Yellowlegs Lesser Yellowlegs Franklin's Gull Ring-billed Gull Common Tern Forster's Tern **Double-crested Cormorant Neotropic Cormorant** Great Blue Heron Black-crowned Night-Heron Turkey Vulture Bald Eagle

Cooper's Hawk Red-shouldered Hawk Swainson's Hawk Red-tailed Hawk Rock Pigeon Eurasian Collared-Dove Mourning Dove Great Horned Owl Barred Owl Chuck-will's-widow Eastern Whip-poor-will Common Nighthawk Ruby-throated Hummingbird Belted Kingfisher Red-headed Woodpecker Red-bellied Woodpecker Downy Woodpecker Hairy Woodpecker

Northern Flicker Pileated Woodpecker American Kestrel Eastern Wood-Pewee Willow Flycatcher Least Flycatcher Eastern Phoebe Great Crested

Flycatcher Eastern Kingbird Western Kingbird Scissor-tailed

**Flycatcher** Bell's Vireo Yellow-throated Vireo Blue-headed Vireo Warbling Vireo Red-eyed Vireo Blue Jay American Crow Fish Crow Horned Lark Purple Martin Tree Swallow Northern Roughwinged Swallow Bank Swallow Cliff Swallow Barn Swallow Black-capped Chickadee Tufted Titmouse White-breasted

Nuthatch
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Sedge Wren
Carolina Wren
House Wren
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Wood Thrush
Swainson's Thrush
American Robin

Eastern Bluebird
Gray Catbird
Brown Thrasher
Northern Mockingbird
European Starling
Cedar Waxwing

Ovenbird Louisiana Waterthrush Prothonotary Warbler Black-and-white Warbler Golden-winged Warbler Blue-winged Warbler Orange-crowned Warbler Tennessee Warbler Nashville Warbler Kentucky Warbler Common Yellowthroat American Redstart Northern Parula Magnolia Warbler Blackpoll Warbler Yellow Warbler Yellow-rumped Warbler Yellow-throated Warbler Wilson's Warbler Yellow-breasted Chat Eastern Towhee Chipping Sparrow Clay-colored Sparrow Field Sparrow Lark Sparrow Savannah Sparrow Grasshopper Sparrow Song Sparrow



Wild Parrots of Southern California website

Lincoln's Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
Harris's Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow
Summer Tanager
Scarlet Tanager
Northern Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Painted Bunting
Dickcissel
Bobolink
Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Meadowlark

Thanks to Membership Chair Wayne Kennedy, this year's list boasts new species. Wayne was in Southern California and came up with an intriguing list including some very range-restricted birds like Oak Titmouse, & a Lilac-crowned Parrot. Likely the very first Parrot ever on a JAS Birdathon list! Wayne's birds are listed separately below but are in the species total.

Western Gull Heermann's Gull Lilac-crowned Parrot Black-chinned

Hummingbird Costa's Hummingbird Allen's/Rufous

Hummingbird Acorn Woodpecker Pacific-slope Flycatcher Black Phoebe Say's Phoebe Vermilion Flycatcher Ash-throated Flycatcher Cassin's Kingbird Western Scrub-jay Common Raven Oak Titmouse Bushtit Wrentit Western Bluebird California Thrasher Townsend's Warbler Hermit Warbler Lazuli Bunting Black-headed Grosbeak California Towhee Spotted Towhee Hooded Oriole Lesser Goldfinch

#### KS list continued:

Yellow-headed Blackbird Common Grackle Great-tailed Grackle Brown-headed Cowbird Orchard Oriole Baltimore Oriole House Finch American Goldfinch House Sparrow





## **DONATIONS**

## We Need Your Support!

The Jayhawk Audubon Society appreciates your support to carry out the work we do in environmental education, and protection and enjoyment of the natural world we all share. We hope you will consider making a donation to help us continue **50 years(!)** of work on local and state environmental issues. Please send your check or money order with this printed form to:

Jennifer Delisle, Treasurer Jayhawk Audubon Society P.Ó. Box 3741 Lawrence, KS 66046 Please check all that apply: My check or money order is enclosed. My donation is for Birdathon, Learning About Nature Project, a memorial, or another purpose Please send me more information about Jayhawk Audubon. Please add me to your email listserv and/or send me a complimentary newsletter. (NAME) (STREET ADDRESS, Apt. #) (CITY, STATE, ZIP)  $(EMAIL - OPTIONAL^{**})$ (PHONE — OPTIONAL)

NOTE THAT WE DO NOT SHARE OUR EMAIL LIST WITH ANYONE.

<sup>\*\*</sup>However, we hope to switch to an electronic newsletter to save paper and costs. To make an e-newsletter effective we need to have email addresses for most of our members.

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

\* 8/26 JAS program: Air Quality Eco-justice Action in KCK p 1 \* Birdathon Report, List and Donation Form pp 1, 6, 7 \* AOK's Ron Klataske Conservation Successes Recognized p 2

\* The Seabird's Cry. Book Review by McKay Stangler p 4 \* National Prairie Day Doings pp 2,3 \* Did You Know? Caves and A Dark Vision p 5

\* Sharing Bird Stories pp 2, 3

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Richard Mabion, our May speaker. In 2016 he was Man of the Year for EPA Region 7's Environmental Justice Dept. He has been President of the KCK NAACP since 2014. He will alert us to air quality issues in Kansas City. See page 1.

# 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 their closest chapter. Members also receive 9 issues per year of the JAS newsletter 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 <a href="https://secure.audubon.org/site/Donation2?">https://secure.audubon.org/site/Donation2?</a> 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 & your check to our JAS Membership Chair:

| Wayne Kennedy,  | P.O. Box 442111, | Lawrence, | KS 66044. | E-mail contact:  | w.a.k.e.n.n.z@gmail.com . |
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