

# Wing Beat

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## Winter Birding Wonderlands

Rather than throwing another log on the fire when bone-chilling winds come whistling down from the tundra in darkest winter, avid birders bundle up and hit the trail in search of waterfowl, owls, winter finches and other "good" birds.

*Wingbeat* asked three Burroughs Audubon members to reveal their favorite winter spots and the birds they see there.

Lone Star Lake in Douglas County is the top pick of Burroughs President Mike Stokes. The 100-plus acre lake is a jewel, deep enough to attract diving ducks like scaup, loons and canvasbacks, but not so big that waterfowl swim to the middle where they are hard to see.

The lake is ideal for studying small and large Canada Geese, with eight or nine subspecies identified, said Stokes. The lake each year attracts a small raft of Greater Scaup, a bird of the coasts and Great Lakes that is uncommon in the Midwest.

A subdivision road surrounds the little lake. There are picnic tables where, weather permitting, birders can eat while watching waterfowl.

There is good habitat diversity surrounding the lake, with a grassy area that is good for sparrows, said Stokes. "And when you leave the little lake basin, you are immediately in farm country ideal for birds like Loggerhead Shrikes, Red-tailed Hawks and Rough-legged Hawks."

The lake is 12 miles southwest of Lawrence on Highway 59, not far from Clinton Reservoir. There is no fee.

Mark Land's favorite winter birding spot is also his favorite in spring, summer and fall. He works at Apria Healthcare in Lenexa, 10 minutes from the entrance to Shawnee Mission Park, a 1,250 acre urban refuge that includes a 150-acre lake, ponds, marshes, forests and meadows.

Land birds in the park every work day year-round, often dashing there during his lunch hour where he sees 25-30 species in 35-40 minutes of intense birding, and where he has seen more than 200 species in the last five years.

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## BIRD COUNT 2004!

It has been over one hundred years since the Christmas Bird Count, or 'CBC', replaced holiday bird kills. Today, over 50,000 birders participate in this all-day census of early-winter bird populations. Results are compiled in the longest-running database in ornithology, revealing population trends throughout the Americas.

Beginning birders, seasoned ornithologists—all are welcome to participate in any bird count. Novice birders are paired with seasoned birders. Compilers, organize the count, coordinate and combine all observers into field parties to produce the best coverage within the circle. The online

database can be accessed at [www.birdsource.org/cbc/](http://www.birdsource.org/cbc/).

Additionally, *American Birds* publishes a summary each year of the previous year's count.

This year Kansas City's bird count will be held Saturday, December 18 at locations throughout metropolitan Kansas City. Don Arney will lead a group at Swope Park. Contact Don by phone at 813-931-8536 or by email, [sora@kc.rr.com](mailto:sora@kc.rr.com) for an assignment.

Marilyn and Kosh will host a **Bird Feeder Watch** on the 18<sup>th</sup>. They will host the traditional compilers' supper at 5:30 PM that Saturday at 24406 Timberlake Trail, Greenwood, MO. Participants are welcome. An early RSVP is absolutely required, so she can plan on food. A taco salad, dessert, and beverage will be provided. Participants split costs of the dinner, which in the past has been around \$6.00. Call 816-537-5988 to participate! --Marilyn Koshland

**General Meetings** are held the **FIRST THURSDAY** of each month, September through June, at the Missouri Department of Conservation's **Discovery Center**, 4750 Troost.

DECEMBER 2, 6 to 9 PM:

**HOLIDAY POTLUCK:** Bird slides by Bob Fisher! Bird songs by Jack Revare! White Albatross gift exchange! Bring any unused items, nature-related or not. **BIRD TRIVIA QUIZ!** Door prizes. Join us—bring a covered dish, salad or dessert of your choice. Burroughs will provide tableware and beverages. Bring your own slides or photos to share (please inform Marilyn at (816) 537-5966 or [koshland@mindspring.com](mailto:koshland@mindspring.com)).