

Conservation Update

We prefer clean air, soil and water, thanks...

Susan Brown, Concerned Citizens of Platte County, Jill DeWitt, Burroughs Audubon, and Craig Volland, Sierra Club, got the word out on the health effects of proposed additional northland coal-burning power plants by meeting with newspaper editorial boards. Above: outside the St. Joseph-Press News.

Great Plains, the parent company of KCP&L, has not committed to state of the art mercury removal. The degree of mercury capture at the Weston Bend plant is highly uncertain at this time. Every stream and lake in Missouri is currently listed for mercury contamination. One in six women of childbearing age have unsafe levels of blood mercury, putting newborns at risk of neurological damage. And you want to build another coal-burning plant?

Burroughs Conservation is currently attending meetings in Jefferson City with the Public Service Commission and the Office of Public Counsel to advance renewable energy, energy efficiency measures and conservation as alternatives to the proposed plants.

To check additional information concerning the proposed plans, check the concerned Citizens website at www.tellkcpno.org, and KCP&L's website at kcp.com. Burroughs conservation leaders advocate advancing energy efficiency and renewable energy and conservation. A 1.3 billion dollar plant would substantially raise rates, increase pollution for 30-50 years, and let other countries continue the lead in sustainable energy development.

President Bush Reelected, GOP Increases Congressional Majority

Birders and conservationists confronted unprecedented

challenges during the last four years. Congress returned to Washington the week of November 15. High profile anti-conservation proposals once again threaten to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling, pass the massive "polluter paradise" energy bill, and savage core conservation laws like the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act and Clear Air Act. These efforts are backed by politically powerful, well-endowed special interests. The President now has additional allies in the House and Senate who will work hard to pass these measures. Our narrow margin of protection against assaults against solid conservation policy is now seriously threatened. For more information on these issues, please visit the National Audubon website at <http://www.capitolconnect.com/audubon> or contact your local conservation chair.

We will not give up on these issues. There is strength in numbers. We've faced frightening odds before and prevailed. We have countless friends in other Audubon Chapters and supporters throughout the country. As Audubon celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2004, we must seize this opportunity to protect vital habitat for birds, especially Audubon Important Bird Areas, and habitats of concern listed in the recent *State of Birds* report. Audubon conservationists need to reach out, educate and engage Americans in the country's fasted growing outdoor activity—birding. We must not stand by and let our core values disappear.

The Audubon tradition is engaging people in conservation. The time is now to protect America's great natural resources. Spend the time to become informed. Engage your friends, family and colleagues to defend conservation values. Our future of our country's natural resources is in the balance.

Burroughs Hosts Lakeside Walks

On October 31, five BAS members celebrated Halloween with a bird walk beginning at Lakeside Nature Center in Swope Park (the second in a series of monthly walks at Swope; see BAS newsletter or website for details).

The morning was perfect; sunny, clear and cool. The first birds to appear were large flocks of foraging Eastern Bluebirds and American Goldfinches, accompanied by a few lingering Chipping Sparrows. The feeder area behind LNC seemed strangely devoid of songbirds--until we noticed the Cooper's Hawk lurking in a tree near the feeders! We didn't have the opportunity to see this beautiful male snag a meal, but he was remarkably willing to sit still and be admired at close range. Leaving LNC, we were treated to the sight of at least 100 Franklin's Gulls passing overhead in V-shaped formation. Moving on to the woods surrounding the riding stables, we spotted Cedar Waxwings feasting on berries, juncos, White-throated Sparrows, and best of all, a handsome Red-headed Woodpecker patiently caching acorns for winter. It was definitely a "quality over quantity" sort of walk—a great way to spend a crisp Sunday morning!

—Elizabeth Kohler

ASWM in KC

An October meeting of The Association of State Wetland Managers in October gave national and international members a chance to explore the Konza Prairie (yes, buffalo wallows are wetlands!), Cheyenne Bottoms, La Cygne and the Flint Hills, meeting with resource managers and discussing concerns. Issues concerning wetlands, migratory birds, and the protection and restoration of wetlands of international significance were addressed.

BAS Joins Prairie Foundation at Fall Stillwell Prairie Campout

Haflinger ponies pulled the iron-wheeled horse cart across the prairie. Children sang quietly. We dined on scrumptious sausages, beans and rice prepared in Dutch ovens over an open campfire. We talked late and slept soundly under buttermilk skies spangled with brilliant stars.

Burroughs Audubon members joined members of the Missouri Prairie Foundation for this annual October overnight event.

A couple from Kenyon College, Ohio, dropped in on their cross-country prairie tour. We spotted a good sampling of migratory and prairie birds--and sedge wrens. The weekend ended all too soon, but we'll return next fall (www.moprairie.org). Perhaps you'll join us next year at Stillwell Prairie, an hour or two south of Kansas City, out of Nevada, MO.

A work crew tackled restoration activities before guests arrived for evening activities.

--Jill DeWitt

Missouri Blue Green Alliance Advances Policy

Bob Berkebile, internationally renowned architect, spoke recently on sustainability to a meeting of the newly formed Missouri Blue Green Alliance.

The Alliance is a partnership of labor unions, farmers, conservationists and others united in a common goal: to protect the environment while keeping and creating jobs. The coalition is a grassroots organizing effort designed to promote a positive future in which economic growth goes hand-in-hand with safe-guarding our nation's air, water and land.

The Alliance advocates change in the direction our country and state

have taken in recent years on issues of labor and the environment. By working together on policies such a trade, energy, transportation, pollution and safety, we can help improve work and environmental conditions for our families and ourselves.

Member organizations include the United Steelworkers, UAW 249, building trades unions, Family Farms for the Future, Sierra Club, and Burroughs Audubon.

A press conference was held October 19 at the Discovery Center. We announced the release of a report, *Cleaner, Stronger: Secure jobs, a Clean Environment and Less Foreign Oil*. The conference was covered by local TV and trade publications.

The Avian Ark: Tales from a Wild-Bird Hospital

Kit Chubb; Hungry Mind Press, 1991 This paperback is a wonderful read for anyone who appreciates wild birds and great storytelling. The author and her husband founded the Avian Care and Research Foundation in eastern Ontario in the late 1970's. During the succeeding 30 years they have rehabilitated not only raptors, but doves, loons, herons, ducks, woodpeckers, ravens and more. Ms. Chubb, a former nurse, explains the physical ailments and natural behaviors of the birds in a thoroughly comprehensible and interesting manner, while singling out some of the more dynamic and memorable patients from her years of work. She also illustrates the stories with many richly detailed, well-captioned pen and ink drawings. Some of the stories have happy endings, such as those of two different Snowy Owls treated for injuries and released (one was flown to her release site in a military aircraft). Others are tragic, as the tale of young Pileated Woodpeckers, killed in their outdoor aviary by an invading raccoon just before they were ready for their freedom. But all are satisfying—a highly recommended book!

--Elizabeth Kohler

MIGRATIONS



The Wood Pewee

Burroughs members celebrate the lives of several outstanding members, influential in the establishment and vigor of Burroughs Audubon.

MARY LOUISE MYERS, who was president of the Burroughs Nature Club in 1947-49, died in Denver in 2002. Many remember the years she and her husband Jim were caretakers at Camp Towanyak near Lake Quivira, where they fed and banded birds and reported many rare sightings.

HUGH HADLEY, President, Burroughs Audubon 1968-71, died in 2003. His special contributions to the club came through his years on the city desk of the Kansas City Star. He saw that the paper reported our Ten Best Birds list each year, aerial eagle counts along the Missouri River in the days before eagles returned as nesting species. Hugh wrote articles about the founding and progress of club-projects such as Lakeside Nature Center and the Environmental Science Camps in Swope Park.

WENDELL MOHLING, President from 1979-81, founded and directed the outdoor environmental lab at Shawnee Mission Northwest H.S. When the Grassland Heritage Foundation took over operation of the Wagner farm west of Olathe as the Prairie Center, Wendell and wife Carol moved there to develop nature programs and surveys of the wildlife. Wendell was a NASA Space Ambassador and president of the National Science Teachers Association. He moved to Washington, DC where he was Associate Executive Director of