

Welcome Glynnis Collins!



Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center is delighted to welcome Glynnis Collins as its new director. Glynnis comes to our prairie from Champaign-Urbana, where she spent ten years on the staff Illinois' only statewide clean water advocacy organization, Prairie Rivers Network. There, she served first as a staff scientist and then for the past seven years as executive director. Her professional work in the conservation field began in California, as a scientist and permit writer at the state's water quality regulatory agency. She holds a B.S. degree in Environmental and Forest Biology from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and an M.S. degree in Biology from the University of Southern California.

Glynnis' passion for conservation began in childhood. While growing up in western New York State, her family frequently hiked and camped, fostering an appreciation for the beauty of the natural world. At the same time, the Love Canal disaster unfolded near her home town, impressing on her how urgently we need to stand up for the natural world and for future generations.

Glynnis is delighted to join SCPAC. She believes that a healthy and robust non-profit sector is vital to the work of conservation and appreciates the opportunity to use her non-profit management enthusiasm and skills in support of tallgrass prairie conservation here in Nebraska. Glynnis lives in Lincoln with her husband, Nick, three children, and dog. Please stop in to say hello and welcome Glynnis!

Tallgrass Prairie Champion
p.3

Habitat
p.4

Education
p.5

Tastes in the Tallgrass
p.7

Spring Creek Prairie Programs Dec-Apr

CBC4Kids! (Christmas Bird Count for Kids): Wednesday, December 30

10:00 am – 12:30 pm Free

Especially designed for kids & their families, join us for this family-fun citizen science events. Help us count birds and enjoy a hot chocolate picnic at the end.

Winter Walkabout: Saturday, January 2

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm \$5/person or \$8/family

Wonder how prairie animals survive the winter? Come find out during this seasonal stroll through the tallgrass, with activities for all ages like tracking & snow art.

Snug-as-a-Bug!: Saturday, January 30

10:00 am - 12:00 noon \$8/family

Using magnifiers, microscopes, & mindful techniques, adult/child teams will probe through leaf litter & logs to discover a variety of spineless wonders wiling away the winter. Activities include a short hike and an indoor investigation session.

Great Backyard Bird Count: Friday - Sunday, February 12-14

10:00 am - 11:30 am Free (donations welcome)

Be a citizen scientist and discover the amazing birds of Nebraska. The family-fun bird walks will be led on Friday & Saturday, with a special adult "Sweetheart Stroll" on Sunday for couples on Valentine's Day with special chocolate treats.

Chilly-Chicken/Chicken Chili Day: Saturday, April 9

7:00 - 11:00 am \$5/person Kids under 12, Free

Join us to see and hear the elusive (and one of our species of management concern) Greater Prairie-Chickens as they call and dance from their local leks (dancing grounds). After a few hours of chicken watching, enjoy breakfast of chicken chili and cinnamon rolls!

Words 4 Birds!: Sunday, April 17

11:00 am - 2:30 pm Free (donations welcome)

Celebrate nature and National Poetry Month with us and several amazing local poets. At 11:00am will be a poetry writing workshop for all ages, followed by a "bring-your-own-picnic" lunch hour, and finishing with readings from the poets - both professional and workshop attendees, with the beautiful prairie backdrop.

Letter from the Director

Glynnis Collins



I couldn't be more pleased to be joining the great team here at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center. My first month on the job has had me learning about the ambitious goals and impressive programs of the Center, getting to know our volunteer stewardship board, and understanding our collaborative relationship with our Audubon partners, most importantly Audubon Nebraska and the Ian Nicholson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary.

One of the things that was most appealing to me as I considered this position was the depth and breadth of community support for this work. The Board, donors, volunteers, supporters, and staff truly are the lifeblood of this effort, and I look forward to working more with all of you going forward. Thank you for being part of the success at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center.

As you'll read in this issue of the Prairie Sage, the staff and volunteers at the center have been busy carrying out our work, not missing a beat despite significant staff transitions. Over the last three months we've hosted thousands of visitors, over 1,200 children in school programs, a festival for over 500 people, and our most successful fundraising dinner. These activities help us successfully meet our goals - all focused on tallgrass prairie conservation.

Sincerely,

Citizen Science Projects Energize Youth and Adults

Our prairie bird citizen science project continued for a fourth summer. Staff and volunteers recorded numbers and locations of specific prairie birds, among them Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, Bobolink, Dickcissel, Henslow's Sparrow, and others. This information will help us gauge how our land management practices benefits these species. Thank you to volunteers John Carlini, Shari Schwartz, and Ruthie Stearns for their expert help (and for getting up before dawn!) in completing the bird surveys.



Dickcissel

photo by Gordon Warrick



Bell's vireo on nest, one of the prairie birds in survey project.

Photo by Gordon Warrick

Two new citizen science projects and events were initiated this year. From late summer through the end of September, a great group of volunteers started monitoring milkweed plants in our butterfly garden for monarch butterflies and their larva. The data are reported back to the University of Minnesota's Monarch Larva Monitoring Project, which helps conserve habitat for monarchs with measurements on milkweed density. And October saw our first ever participation in THE BIG SIT, a national citizen science bird census event. The center hosted six friends and birders and counted 49 species.



Photo by Gordon Warrick

Looking for a Place to Host an Event?

Remember Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center when planning business meetings, wedding and anniversary receptions, and other get-togethers. Call (402) 797-2301 for information and rates.

Letter from the State Director

Marian Langan

Many of you are aware of the large tourism industry in the northeast states called “leaf peeping,” built around the fall tree leaves turning color. A few years ago we began talking about “prairie peeping” season. The amazing turn of color in the fall prairies deserves as much attention as the leaves! As autumn brings cooler temperatures, the vibrant greens of summer turn into glowing oranges and even reds depending on the time of day. When the rays of a stunning fall sunset hit the prairie grasses just right, they glow – it truly makes your heart leap to see it.



We wish we could capture those moments for all of you that are making them possible. I can say that my heart leaps equally when I think about everything that has been made possible by the big clan of people here at Audubon. Your support by sharing your time, talent, and treasure sets the conditions to make all kinds of hearts leap – a visitor’s seeing a fall sunset on a prairie, a child’s holding their first frog, and I hope yours, when you reflect on the difference you have made for the birds and wildlife of Nebraska.

Sincerely,

Marian Langan



Gerry Dimon Receives Award from Marian Langan, executive director, Audubon Nebraska

2015 SCPAC Tallgrass Prairie Champion *Gerry Dimon*

As a fitting conclusion to the annual Tastes in the Tallgrass dinner, attendees joined us in celebrating Gerry Dimon’s commitment to the conservation of tallgrass prairie. Gerry was presented with the 2015 Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center Tallgrass Prairie Champion Award on September 13, 2015.

Gerry Dimon has played a significant role at SCPAC for over twelve years. He was a founding

board member and has been an active alumnus. His experience with the local community and many boards helped successfully build a solid foundation for SCPAC from its very beginnings. This year, his contributions reached a new level as he served for six months as volunteer interim director prior to the arrival of new SCPAC director, Glynnis Collins. Gerry’s many contributions have made more habitat available for birds and more outdoor experiences possible for children. Gerry has generously shared his time and talents with SCPAC, and we cannot thank him enough for his dedication and support!

The Tallgrass Prairie Champion Award was developed to honor people whose work has had a significant impact on tallgrass prairie conservation. Nominations are made by the board and staff of SCPAC and the Wachiska Audubon Society. The winner is selected by the SCPAC board. Past recipients are Ernie Rousek, Tim Knott, and the Wachiska Audubon Society.

Message from SCPAC’s Stewardship Board

This is the time of year where the activities around friend and family gatherings have a tendency to bring us back to our “roots.” It is with that reflective gaze that I offer my personal thanks to each and every one of you for being our bedrock. Those prairie grass roots remain strong and tall!



The past few years have been exciting for SCPAC. They have also brought about changes and challenges. But as President of the Stewardship Board, I am ultra “jazzed” about what the future offers.

We have talented and dedicated staff at SCPAC. The volunteer Board continues its strong insight and spirited enthusiasm. Our new Strategic Plan assures we have a roadmap for continued growth and successes.

Our stakeholders to whom we are forever indebted, remain our constant. All of the countless volunteers and financial partners help us remain who we are today. As an “insider” to the organization it just feels like we are ready to “launch” ourselves into the next phases of growth and opportunities. It is all very exciting and refreshing!

Let me take some time . . . at this time . . . to offer each of you all the best during this season of celebrations.

Cheers!

Lana Flagtwet

Lana Flagtwet
Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
Stewardship Board President

HABITAT

Ed Hubbs,
Habitat Program Manager

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center is excited to welcome Ed Hubbs as the new habitat program manager. He is a graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife emphasizing habitat management and a minor in grassland ecology and management. He has worked as the student prairie manager at 9-Mile Prairie for the university, as a conservation technician for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, with private landowners, and is an active member with the Tri-Country Prescribed Burn Association. He looks forward to continuing the excellent land stewardship already taking place and bringing in his own skill set to help advance the Center's goals of restoring native tallgrass prairies.



Please welcome Ed on your next prairie visit!



Fence post with logs and debris piled against it. Some wires are broken and the post was pulled out of the ground from the force of the floods.



Close up of completed fence.



Temporary fix that was made around a large pile of debris that destroyed the permanent fence.

Our Warmest Thanks to:

To Arnold Mendenhall, who oversaw our grazing operation while we were filling our habitat program manager position.

To Peter Jurich, who completed his Eagle Scout project at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center. He, along with his dad, Joe, made wooden posts for two parking lot signs, painted our outdoor sign box, and built wooded frames for several outdoor signs to be placed at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center and Rowe Sanctuary.

To Bill Edwards for all of his help in keeping up with prairie maintenance over the summer. He mowed trails, assisted with special events, and helped with maintenance of our management vehicles.

To the Prairie Hill Learning Center. When our new exhibits were installed in the Ethel S. Abbott Grand Prairie Hall, one prairie exhibit that we have had since the building was constructed needed a new home. The learning center was excited to receive the exhibit for their students, and we were happy that our exhibit will continue to teach youngsters for years to come.



Jason St. Sauver,
*Community Education
Director*

It is impossible to believe the winter season is almost upon us after such a full and fun fall on the prairie. The calendar was loaded with events and programs for both the public and our local schoolchildren, including one of our biggest fall festivals ever. In late September, Twilight on the Tallgrass saw nearly 500 people enjoy a lovely evening under the harvest moon on the prairie. Many of the attendees were first-time visitors, who enjoyed wagon rides, telescopic views of the moon, and many activities provided by volunteers and local conservation partners.



Diane Edwards, right, helps guests onto the hayrack at Twilight on the Tallgrass. Photo by Sue Block



Amy Plettner and Dave Taylor, right, help visitors look for pond critters at Twilight on the Tallgrass. Photo by Sue Block



Fourth graders enjoy a reflective 'quiet minute' during their Prairie Immersion field trip.

Prairie Immersion

The fall months were also extremely busy with almost 1,200 Lincoln Public Schools fourth graders exploring the tallgrass as part of the Prairie Immersion program. The students investigated insect biodiversity, discovered amazing prairie plant adaptations, and created lasting memories of their day at Spring Creek Prairie. A big "Thank You" goes to all our amazing Discovery Leaders who help make this great program possible: Staff – Deb Hauswald, Amy Plettner, Kevin Poague, and Jason St. Sauver; Volunteer Discovery Leaders – Paul Canny, Barbara DiBernard, Emilie Ellingson, Judy Greenwald, Jeff Hagaman, Kate Halbrook, Barb Hoppe Johnson, Bruce Johnson, Jane Reinkordt, Ruthie Stearns, Peg Tilgner, and Moni Usasz.

Prairie Club

Other big news saw the revival of Prairie Club! A great group of youth, (ages 10-16) from the local Crete community, joined us in September for their first of eight monthly visits to explore, play, create, and conserve. In the coming months the club will create prairie art, help plant prairie seeds, learn bird and bug identification, and much more.

Jason St. Sauver, front, holds a monarch while a club member prepares to tag the insect to track its southerly migration.



CREATE YOUR LEGACY

A Triple Play of Benefits

Do you have stocks that have increased in value? Donating appreciated securities enables you to support Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, conserve cash for other uses, and avoid potential capital gains tax on the appreciation. Donated shares must be appreciated in value and owned for longer than one year.

It is important to note that the legal date – and value – of your gift depends on when Audubon receives it, not when you instruct your broker to make the transaction. If you would like to make a gift of stock, have your broker contact Raji Mosa at (212) 979-3167 or rmosa@audubon.org. And, don't forget to call us at (308) 468-5282 to let us know your gift is on the way!



Melissa Filipi

You can also use appreciated stocks to fund a larger gift that will pay you an income for life. Please call Melissa Filipi at (402)-797-2301 or Shari Kolding at (512) 236-9076 for more details.

One cup of coffee can
make a **HUGE** difference.



Community Service Fund

Audubon Nebraska is a proud member agency of Community Services Fund. Donations may also be designated for Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary or Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center by contacting nebraska@audubon.org, (402) 797-2301.

Learn more about CSF at www.CommunityServicesFund.org.

Just in Time for the Holidays! New Gift Ideas!

What to give someone who has everything? Are you looking for a new way to honor a special person or event in your life? Or to offer a tribute to someone who has been important to you? Our new Prairie Patch may be the perfect solution. Support Rowe Sanctuary with your \$100 donation and receive an exclusive set of two handmade, biodegradable sheets embedded with native Nebraska prairie seeds. Use these sheets to share your thoughts with others, to plant at Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, or to create your own native garden.

Let your creativity run free with these custom papers, uniquely designed for you.

Help us seed the prairie, help us spread the word about conservation, and become an important part of our work – purchase your Prairie Patch today!

These creative packages are available all year. Stop in today to purchase your Prairie Patches, or order online at rowe.audubon.org (shipping charges may apply).

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

There are many ways that you can help us fulfill our mission of conserving the tallgrass prairie by engaging people in our natural and cultural resources. Support of all types makes a difference, with your help we can make the world a better place!

- Become a volunteer. Our volunteers are an important part of our successes. There are many opportunities available that can fit in to any schedule. We're happy to play "matchmaker" and find the perfect volunteer opportunity for your interests, skills, and time!
- Tell your friends and family about us! Raising awareness of our work opens many doors, and introduces a new group of volunteers, donors, and supporters to our mission.
- Donate. We rely on the generous support of our donors for the work that we do. We do not receive funding from any national organization. All money raised here, stays here. You can return a gift in the envelope provided, visit our website to donate online, or stop by to make a gift in person.
- Commemorate a life event with a gift in honor or memory of friends, family, or occasions.
- Take a look at our wish list on the back page for additional gift ideas.
- Become a monthly donor. You can provide regular, ongoing support for our work by visiting our web site, rowe.audubon.org.
- Include us in your estate plans. Several simple, flexible, tax-advantaged options can benefit your heirs and Rowe Sanctuary at the same time.

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Tastes in the Tallgrass – our biggest yet!

This September's Tastes in the Tallgrass was our most successful yet! Two hundred fifty guests joined us for the eighth outing of this annual event, celebrating the achievements of the past year, giving old friends a chance to reconnect, and introducing dozens of new supporters to the prairie. As always, we raised vital funds to carry out our mission – this year's event brought in almost \$50,000 that will go directly to protecting the tallgrass prairie and connecting people with nature.

Keynote speaker Sophia Laquinta was one of the first children to participate in our youth programs many years ago – at a summer

camp in partnership with Bright Lights. She shared with guests how her experience at Spring Creek Prairie fostered a lifelong love for nature, a love that enriches her life as a busy young professional today. She gave heartfelt thanks to all the supporters that make it possible for us to continue to inspire the next generation of conservationists.

Gerry Dimon was awarded the Tallgrass Prairie Champion Award for his years of outstanding service (see article on pg 3).

Many thanks to everyone who worked together to further build support for the prairie in such a meaningful way!



Admission

SCPAC Supporters (\$50+)	FREE
Adults	\$4
Seniors (60+)	\$3
Students	\$3
Ages 6-17	\$3
Ages 5 and under	FREE
Tuesdays	FREE

Members of National Audubon Society and Wachiska Audubon Society receive \$1 off admission.





Art in the Visitors' Center

Two new art installations can be viewed in the Ethel S. Abbott Grand Prairie Hall.

FLOCK is part of a larger art project, MASS MIGRATIONS, by artist Rachel Simmons. Flock was created by Rachel with help from the community at Constellations Studio in Lincoln as part of her residency. The bird silhouettes were chosen specifically for Nebraska, but visitors to the studio helped to paint them and put them through the printing pressed for the final designs to be added. The FLOCK will roost in the rafters of the hall this fall and winter.

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center

11700 SW 100th Street
P.O. Box 117
Denton, NE 68339
Phone: (402) 797-2301 (-2304/fax)
scp@audubon.org
<http://springcreekprairie.audubon.org>

Open Monday - Friday 9 - 5; Saturday - Sunday 1 - 5

All year, except major holidays

Admission charge; Tuesdays free

Glynnis Collins – Director
Jason St. Sauver – Community Education Director
Kevin Poague – Operations Manager
Ed Hubbs – Habitat Program Manager
Amy Plettner – Caretaker

Audubon Nebraska

Marian Langan – Executive Director
Melissa Filipi – Director of Philanthropy
Carey Collingham – Corporate and Foundation Coordinator
Cindy Houlden – Donor Relations Coordinator

Stewardship Advisory Board

Deb Dahab	Jeff Jewell	Daniel J. Semrad
Christie Dionisopoulos	Bruce Johnson	Lyle Sittler
Judy Dougherty	Mari Lane Gewecke	Scott Stuckey
Lana Flagtwet	Jenni Lesoing-Lucs	Tom Tallman
Stephen J. Gage	Cindy Morris	Barbara Wright-Chollet
Matt Gonzalez	Cindy Rose	
Jeff Hagaman	Sam Seever	

Adrian Olivera Art installation

Adrian Olivera, a photographer from Lincoln, has a collection of photos on exhibit in the Ethel S. Abbott Grand Prairie Hall. His work focuses on the hidden treasures of Nebraska, beautiful places not known by many. The photos will be on display through spring 2016.



by Adrian Olivera

Wish List

Metal detector

Truckload of river rock to extend the permanent fire break around visitor center

Hand-held vacuum

Binoculars (good working order, please)

\$5 Million Endowment



We appreciate the publication support provided by:
A to Z Printing
3721 W. Mathis Street, Lincoln, NE 68524
402-477-0815 • www.atozprint.com

CONTACT US:

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
11700 SW 100th St. P.O. Box. 117
Denton, NE 68339

If you would like to receive *The Prairie Sage* electronically, write scp@audubon.org or call (402) 797-2301.

PHONE: (402) 797-2301

EMAIL: scp@audubon.org

WEBSITE: springcreekprairie.audubon.org

FLICKR: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/scpac/>

Also find us on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.