

Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area

Newsletter

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

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SPRING RAINS: THE GOOD AND THE NOT SO GOOD RESULTS

We have had a very good May and early June with regards to rainfall here in central Kansas. We received about 9.5 inches of rain at the Area office from May 1st through mid-June. A lot of that rain soaked into the parched soil as they were nice slow rains. Further west, in the Pawnee River drain-

age, more rain fell and several times the rainfall was quite heavy producing significant runoff that we were able to capture at the Arkansas River diversion dam. This was the first time we have been able to use the recently completed pipe project from our diversion dam to Dry Creek. Overall the

system works very well. As with all new systems, we do have some bugs to work out and we are still learning what we can and cannot do with the gates. We do know one thing for sure. We are no longer losing water to seepage from the floor of the old open canal.

All the water we brought in through the inlet system, mostly from the Arkansas River, was placed into Pool 1A for storage. That pools' depth went from about 13 inches to 48 inches as of late June. We still have the hot and dry months of July and August to go through, but we are in pretty decent shape for this fall with regards our water.



Jason Black photo

Arkansas River water being delivered to Dry Creek on its way to Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area.

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Cheyenne Bottoms is a Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project funded by your purchase of hunting equipment. Some of the best wildlife hunting and viewing opportunities in the United States can be had on land purchased and maintained by these hunter generated dollars.

AMERICAN KESTREL

The following information is taken from *NatureWorks*, on the New Hampshire Public TV web site www.nhptv.org.

Also called the sparrow hawk, the American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) is the smallest North American falcon. It is 9 to 12 inches in length with a wingspan of 21 inches. It has a

rusty tail and back and two vertical black stripes on its face. It has a short, hooked bill; white cheeks; a long tail and long pointed wings. The male has slate-gray wings and a spotted breast and belly. The female has rusty wings and streaks on her breast.

The American kestrel can be found throughout North and South America from near the tree-line in Alaska and Canada, south to Tierra del Fuego.

The American kestrel can be

found in almost any habitat that has open areas for hunting and tall places for it to perch. It is the only North American falcon

The American kestrel mates from March to early June, depending on its geographic location. The female may mate with two or



Photo by Dan Witt

or hawk that nests in cavities. It makes its nest in tree cavities, under eaves, in woodpecker holes and in nesting boxes.

The American kestrel eats grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, dragonflies, butterflies, small mammals, sparrows and other small birds, reptiles and amphibians. It perches on trees and telephone poles looking for prey. It often hovers over its prey and then drops down on it. Unlike other falcons, the American kestrel often catches its prey on the ground.

three males before settling on a single mate. She lays three to seven eggs. The female does most of the incubation. The eggs hatch in about a month. At first, the female brings food to the female who then feeds the chicks. Later, the male will also feed the chicks. The chicks fledge in about 30 days but stay with their parents for a few weeks after fledging. Except for during mating season, the American kestrel is a solitary animal.

(Spring Rains-Continued from Page 1)

We began pumping Pools 3B and 4A into Pool 1C in mid-March. We were attempting to store that water and dry those two pools out in an effort to address the expanding cattail and silt accumulation in both pools. We utilized the propane pumps when Pools 3B and 4A were deep enough to provide water to them, and eventually went to the electric pumps as their depths decreased. Because of the rains we received, our efforts to dry them out have failed. We quit pumping out of Pool 4A in mid-May, concentrating our pumping effort on Pool 3B. The inability to dry out a pool means that we are not able to do work on controlling cattail. Nor are we able to get to a lot of the Phragmites clumps coming up in the dense cattail stands. This is the downside to the early rains. However, as stated earlier, we still have July and August coming up and opportunities for vegetation management may still be possible. Besides, one normally doesn't complain about rains in this part of Kansas. As the photos show, we still have a fair amount of open water, it is simply limited in the perimeter areas.



These photos illustrate the diversity of vegetation density currently on the wildlife area. There are some dense stands of cattail developing such as shown in the above photo in Pool 2. Below is Pool 4A showing some extensive open water area. Kim Schneweis photos.



ANNUAL INFO NIGHT SCHEDULED

The annual Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area Information Night has been scheduled for Tuesday, 25 August, at 7 PM. It will be held at the Kansas Wetland Education Center on Kansas Highway 156 in the southeast portion of the Wildlife Area. Current conditions, water levels, waterfowl season dates and upland game and waterfowl migration forecasts will be presented. The get-together is free and open to the public.

CAMP HOPE— 2015

Camp Hope is an opportunity for youth, 7 to 17, dealing with cancer, to try and forget their problems by having enjoyable activities. KDWPT staff assist with the fishing pond, prepare and host the evening fish fry. This year about 50 youth went fishing. The event is held every June.



A lot of 'fish stories' were told this year.

WILDLIFE, PARKS AND TOURISM WEB SITE

The Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism web site provides a host of valuable services. Examples include: weekly waterfowl reports; WIHA and FISH Atlas; Hunter Ed Class schedule; license and permit sales; hunting and fishing regulations; legislative updates; and the Outdoor Store with books and DVD's related to all outdoor interests. Don't forget that each Department property has it's own page. Check it out at:

www.kdwpt.state.ks.us



Cheyenne Bottoms was designated as a 'Wetland of International Importance' by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in 1988. Only 35 sites in the U.S. are recog-



nized as such. In addition, it is recognized as an 'Important Bird Area' by the American Bird Conservancy and is listed as a 'Hemispheric Reserve' by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network.

Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism
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