



**Defending wildlife and habitat through:**

**Advocacy  
Conservation  
Education**

## News & Updates: October 2021

In this issue:

- Celebration of Cranes - Pre-Register!
- Grasshoppers are flourishing @ Mount Mitchell
- Walnut Valley Association (Winfield Festival) - Thank you!
- Board of Trustees Nature Walk Recommendations

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## Celebration of Cranes Hudson, Kansas & QNWR Nov 5-6, 2021



[Click here to Pre-Register](#)

**Don't miss out - see thousands of cranes, get expert help and learn about wetlands!**

### **Speakers and Topics:**

- **Tips on Bird Photography**, Dave Rintoul, Ph.D. Biologist, birdwatcher, and photographer
- **The Personal Prairie**, John Price, Professor of English, UNO (virtual)
- **The Beauty and Mystery of Wetlands**, Dave Haukos, PhD; Kansas State University
- **Wetland Ecology: How Plants Cope with the Unique Conditions of Wetland Soils**, Irene Unger, Ph.D., Baker University
- **Tips on Using Binoculars**, Jackie Augustine, Ph.D. AOK Executive Director

**Self-paced tour of Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.**

## **Grasshoppers Flourish at Mount Mitchell**



Jackie Augustine, Executive Director, has made a concerted effort to document the birds, wildflowers, and insects on all of AOK's properties this year. Of the 188 species identified at Mount Mitchell, a 45-acre AOK Sanctuary south of Wamego, 53% are plants and 37% are insects. Of the insects, butterflies or moths were the most common (27%), followed by grasshoppers and katydids (19%) and beetles (17%). The grasshopper diversity on this site was remarkable given that grasshoppers, katydids, and crickets only make up 2.4% of the worldwide insect diversity (according to Wikipedia). To learn more about grasshoppers, Jackie turned to a grasshopper expert with ties to Manhattan, Dr. Ellen Welti. She stated that grasshoppers are a dominant herbivore in grasslands. In the west, grasshoppers are often considered pests which eat crops and compete with cattle. Drought, a common phenomenon in the west in recent years, can increase grasshopper densities. This has led to large-scale aerial spraying efforts which have intensified in recent years, both by local land owners, and by government agencies. Large-scale aerial spraying may control grasshoppers in the short-term but it has many negative long-term effects. First, grasshopper species can compete with each other, which can keep individual species in check. Large-scale spraying selects the few most robust species, which may cause larger outbreaks in later years. Spraying is indiscriminate and also can kill important invertebrates such as those that are predators





and parasitoids of grasshoppers, as well as pollinators and seed dispersers. The loss of grasshoppers, an integral member of grassland ecosystems, will have strong repercussions up and down the food chain. Find out more about grasshoppers in our upcoming issue of *Prairie Wings*, our printed magazine.

Grasshoppers pictured are:

Upper left: Admirable Grasshopper *Syrbula admirabilis*

Upper right: Differential

Grasshopper *Melanoplus differentialis*

Second down on Right: Spotted Bird

Grasshopper *Schistocerca lineata*

Third down on right: Snakeweed

Grasshopper *Hesperotettix viridis*

Lower right: Two Striped

Grasshopper *Melanoplus bivittatus*



## Walnut Valley Association - it was Festive!



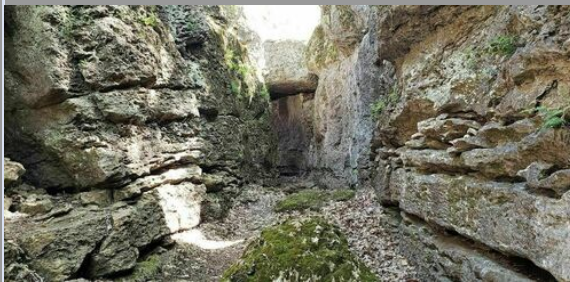
Thank you to all who stopped by our booth at the Walnut Valley Association (Winfield Festival) last month!

Jackie and Kelley had a great time talking Kansas wildlife and habitat.

See you again next year!



## Members of AOK's Board share favorite walks, hikes and birding spots!



### Rick Tucker Suggests:

The Elk River trail is a hike to remember; it is a scenic 15 mile trail with 3 shorter trails at Elk City Lake in Montgomery County. These are beautiful hikes with limestone bluffs and hilly terrain through Cross Timbers hardwoods and prairie. The longest hike is not recommended during hot weather.

[Elk City State Park](#)

## Contact AOK

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