

SOMETHING WILD!

Text and Illustrations By
Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.



SOMETHING WILD!
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD
Atalapha collaris

THESE BIRDS CAN FLY BACKWARD - A LITTLE FEAR THEY FEED ON NECTAR AND INSECTS FROM DEEP IN THE FLOWER.

THE NEST IS BINDER WEBB, DANDELION DOWN, AND LINED WITH MOSS AND LICHEN WALLS.

MALES HAVE A COURTSHIP FLIGHT THAT WATCHES HE FLIES BACK AND FORTH IN A PENDULUM-SHAPED PATTERN AS IF HE WERE ATTACHED TO A STRING SUSPENDED FROM SOME HIGH POINT ABOVE.

THE NAME COMES FROM THE SOUND OF THE RAPIDLY-BEATING WINGS. THIS IS OUR SMALLEST BIRD. MALES ARE METALLIC GREEN WITH A BRIGHT RED THROAT. FEMALES LACK THIS RED. AS A RESULT FEMALES SUGAR WATER FEEDERS, THEY WILL CONTINUE TO RETURN. MALES MAY SET UP A FEEDING TERRITORY AT THE FEEDER.

COMPOSED OF MOSS AND LINED WITH BINDER WEBB AND DANDELION DOWN.

MALES HAVE A COURTSHIP FLIGHT THAT WATCHES HE FLIES BACK AND FORTH IN A PENDULUM-SHAPED PATTERN AS IF HE WERE ATTACHED TO A STRING SUSPENDED FROM SOME HIGH POINT ABOVE.

ONE OF THE MIRACLES OF MIGRATION IS THE FLIGHT ACROSS THE GULF OF MEXICO AND BACK BY THESE WISE BIRDS.

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SOMETHING WILD!

A Wildlife Education Guide

*This comprehensive program was originally developed, written, designed, and illustrated by **Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.***

The editorial revisions and updating were provided by

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Mark Shoup, Mike Miller and Bob Mathews.

Layout revisions -Dana Eastes

This educational material is provided free of charge to educators in the state of Kansas to promote an awareness and appreciation of Kansas' wildlife to Kansas children.

Funded by hunting and fishing license fees and the Nongame Wildlife Tax Check-Off Program.

For information on other education resources contact

Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks

512 SE 25th Avenue

Pratt, Kansas 67124-8174

(620) 672-5911

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Agriculture in the Classroom
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124 Bluemont Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-7946

Botanica - The Wichita Garden
701 N Amidon
Wichita, KS 67203
316-264-0448

Brit Spaugh Zoo
City Park, North Main
Great Bend, KS 67530
620-793-4160

Chaplin Nature Center
US 166 Box 216
Arkansas City, KS 67005
620-442-4133

Children's Museum of Wichita
435 S Water
Wichita, KS 67202
316-267-3844

Clement Stone Nature Center
7240 SW Tenth St.
Topeka, KS 66615
785-273-5806

Dillon Nature Outdoor Education Center
3002 E 30th
Hutchinson, KS 67501
620-663-7411

Dych Arboretum of the Plains
Hesston College
PO BOX 3000
Hesston, KS 67062
620-327-8127

Emporia Zoo
75 Soden Rd.
South Commercial St.
Emporia, KS 66801
620-342-6558

Materials Center
Environmental Education Curriculum
Education Division
Farrell Library Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-532-6516

Ernie Miller Nature Center
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Olathe, KS 66061
913-764-7759

Grassland Heritage Foundation
PO BOX 394
Shawnee Mission, KS 66201
913-262-3506

Great Plains Nature Center
6232 E 29th St. N
Wichita, KS 67220
316-683-5499

Fick Fossil & History Museum
700 W Third St.
Oakley, KS 67748
785-672-4839

Kansas Academy of Science
1930 Constant Ave.
Campus WEST
Lawrence, KS 66047
785-864-2700

KS Association for Conservation & Environmental Education
Laura Downey
2610 Claflin Rd.
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-537-7050

Kansas Association of Conservation Districts
RT 1 BOX 102
Summerfield, KS 66541-9801
785-244-6590

KS Bass Chapter Federation
816 Capitol View Dr.
Topeka, KS 66617
785-264-1364

Kansas Biological Survey
Foley Hall
2041 Constant Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66047-2906
785-864-7725

Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks
512 SE 25th Ave.
Pratt, KS 67124
620-672-5911
www.kdwp.state.ks.us

Kansas Geologic Survey Campus WEST
University of Kansas
1930 Avenue A
Lawrence, KS 66044
785-864-3965

Kansas Herpetological Society
Museum of Natural History
University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS 66045
785-864-4540

Kansas Museum of History
6425 SW Sixth Ave.
Topeka, KS 66615
785-272-8681

Kansas Ornithological Society
Department of Biological Sciences
Fort Hays State University
Hays, KS 67601
785-628-4000

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The Kansas School Naturalist
Division of Biological Sciences
Emporia State University
Emporia, KS 66801
620-343-1200

Kansas State Conservation Commission
109 SW Ninth ST SU 500
Topeka, KS 66612-1299
785-296-3600

Science, Math, & Environmental
Education Kansas State Department of
Education
120 E Tenth St.
Topeka, KS 66612-1182
785- 296-3201

KS State Department of Health and
Environment LSOB
900 SW Jackson 9th Floor
Topeka, KS 66612-1290
785-296-1500

Animal Damage Control
Kansas State Extension Services
Dept. of Animal Sciences & Industry
Kansas State University
128 Call Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-5654

Kansas State Extension Forestry
Kansas State University
2610 Claflin Rd.
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-537-7050

Kansas Water Office
901 S Kansas Ave.
Topeka, KS 66612
785-296-3185

Kansas Wildlife Federation, Inc.
PO BOX 5715
Topeka, KS 66605
785-266-6185

Kauffman Museum
Bethel College
North Newton, KS 67117
316-283-1612

Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge
702 E Xavier Rd.
Kirwin, KS 67644
785-543-6673

Lake Afton Public Observatory
MacArthur RD @ 247th ST W
Wichita, KS
316-978-3191 or 316-794-8995

Lakewood Park Nature Center
Salina Park & Recreation
300 W Ash
Salina, KS 67401
785-826-7335

Lee Richardson Zoo
Finnup Park
312 E Finnup Dr.
Garden City, KS 67846
620-276-1250

Milford Nature Center
3115 Hatchery Dr.
Junction City, KS 66441-8369
785-238-5323

Museum of Natural History
University of Kansas
Jayhawk Blvd.
Lawrence, KS 66045
785-864-4540

Nature Conservancy
Southwest Plaza BLDG
820 SE Quincy, Suite 301
Topeka, KS 66612
785-272-5115

Nature Reach / Science Education Center
Pittsburg State University
Pittsburg, KS 66762
620-231-7000

Diane Johnson
Operation Wildlife
23375 Guthrie Rd.
Linwood, KS 66052
785-542-3625

Pine Ridge Interpretive Center
Pomona Reservoir
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Vassar, KS 66543
785-453-2201

PSU Science Education Center
College of Arts & Science
Pittsburg State University
Pittsburg, KS 66762
620-235-4292

Pratt Nature Center
512 SE 25th Ave.
Pratt, KS 67124
620-672-5911 ext 108

Project Learning Tree Forestry Extension
Kansas State University
2610 Claflin Rd.
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-537-7050

Project WILD / Aquatic
Kansas Dept. of Wildlife & Parks
512 SE 25th Ave.
Pratt, KS 67124
620-672-5911

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Schmidt Museum of Natural History

Emporia State University
*1200 Commercial
Emporia, KS 66801
620-341-5611*

Sedgwick Co. Dept. of Environmental Resources

Historic County Courthouse
*510 N Main St.
Wichita, KS 67203
316-721-9418*

Sedgwick County Zoo

*5555 Zoo BLVD
Wichita, KS 67212
316-942-2212 Ext. 213*

Soil Conservation Services

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Salina, KS 67401
785-823-4500*

Sunset Zoological Park

*2333 Oak St.
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-587-2737*

Zoo Education Program

Topeka Zoological Park
*635 SW Gage Blvd.
Topeka, KS 66606-2066
785-272-5821*

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Kansas Field Office
*315 Houston Suite E
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-539-3474*

Wildcare

*PO BOX 901
Lawrence, KS 66044
785-583-9800*

Wildwood Outdoor Education Center

*7095 W 399th St.
La Cygne, KS 66040
913-757-4500*

Wolf Creek Environmental Education Area

*1550 Oxen Lane NE
Burlington, KS 66839
620-364-4141*

Z-Bar / Spring Hill Ranch

*RT 1 BOX 14
Strong City, KS 66869
620-273-8494*

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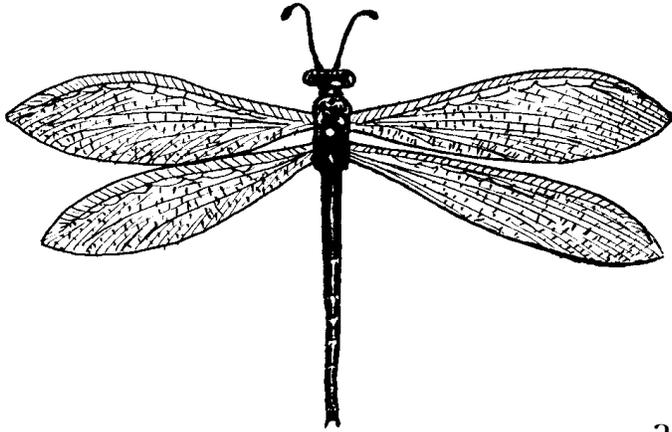
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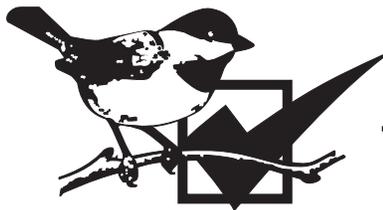
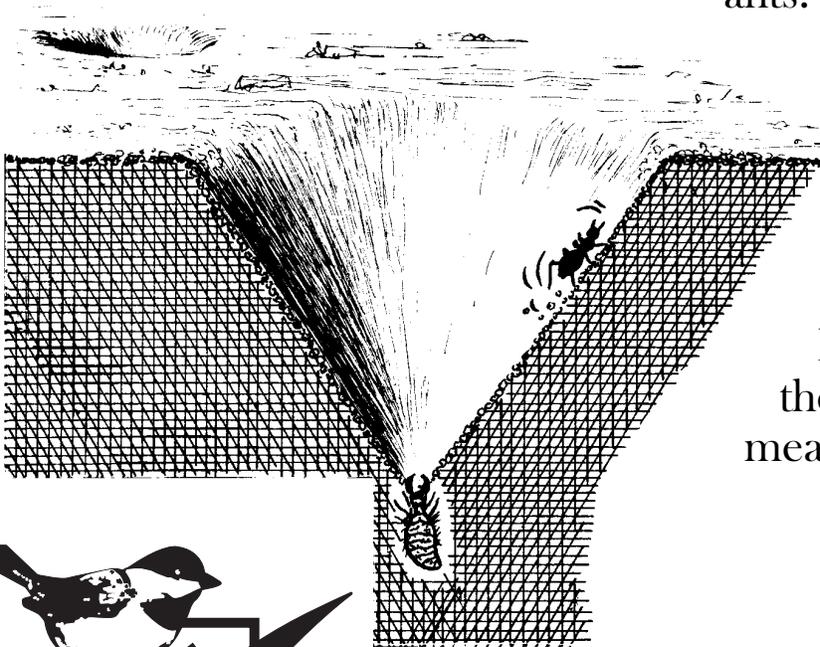
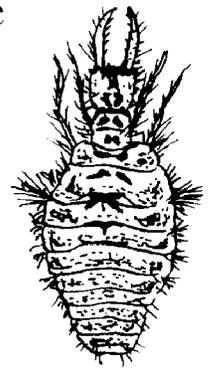
ANT LIONS

Family *Myrmeleontidae*

Few people are aware of this predaceous beast of the insect world. The small adults resemble damsel flies.

They are slow fliers with thin, transparent wings and are attracted to light. Most people pay little attention to them. It is the larval stage that is unique. This one-inch creature constructs conical pits in sand or loose dirt as traps for insects, especially

ants. The victim falls down the steep sides, being drawn deeper into the pit as it struggles to free itself. The ant larva, at the bottom of the pit, soon has its next meal.



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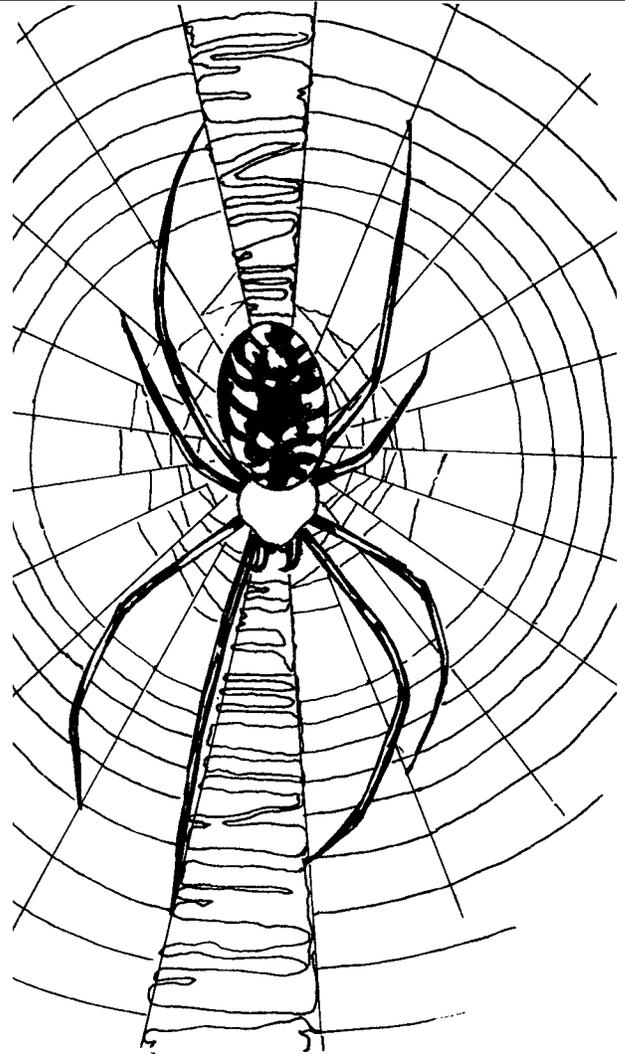
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BLACK AND YELLOW GARDEN SPIDER

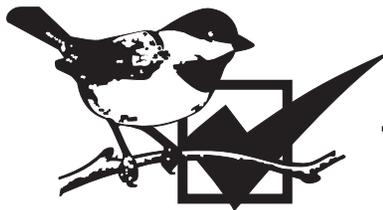
Argiope aurantia

This large, brightly marked spider generally builds its webs in weedy spots, such as gardens. The spider hangs down in the center of the web, waiting for the prey to blunder into the sticky webbing. Grasshoppers are the most common prey, but they feed upon a large variety of insects. They are also known as the “writing spider” because of the



irregular line of thick, white weaving above and below the center of the web. These lines make the web visible to birds, preventing them from flying into the web and destroying it.

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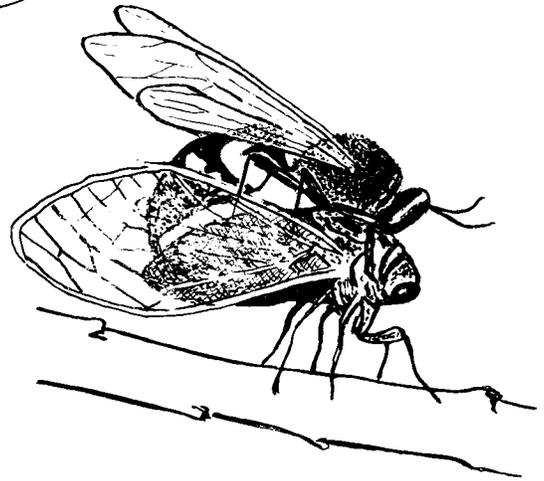
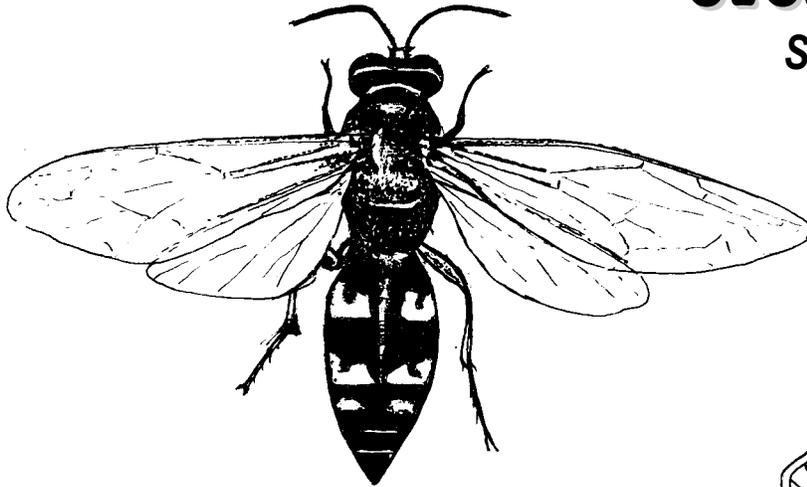
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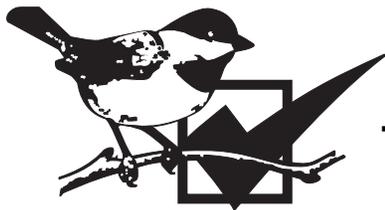
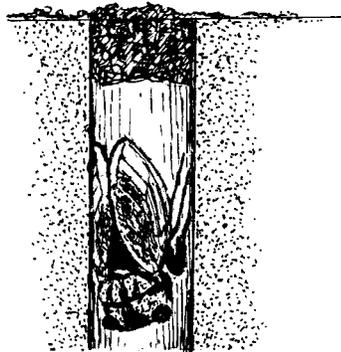
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CICADA KILLER

Sphecius speciosus



This large, black and yellow wasp can make quite an impression on people. It uses the cicada (commonly called a “Locust”) as food for its young. It seeks out the cicada and paralyzes it with its stinger. The wasp flies with its victim to its burrow, into which it inserts the cicada. An egg is laid on the cicada, and the opening is closed. The hatched cicada killer larva now uses the cicada as food to start its new life.



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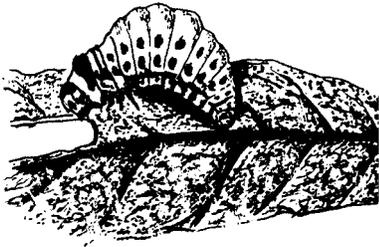
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COLORADO POTATO BEETLE

Leptinotarsa decemlineatas



This yellow and black, striped beetle is an all too familiar farm and garden pest, but it was not always so. Originally, it was a resident of the Rocky Mountain

foothills and fed on native prickly buffalo bur. The encounter of the beetle with the potato started when the early settlers began planting potatoes (a close relative to the buffalo spur) in the beetle's territory. The beetle found the

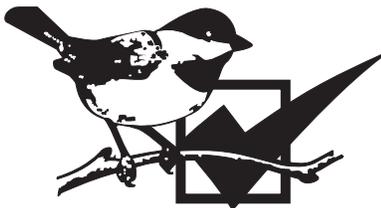


potato to its liking. It has since spread to the east coast and to Europe.

Adults winter over in the soil, emerging in warmer weather to lay their eggs on potato plants. The orange, black-spotted larva feeds on the leaves of tomatoes, and eggplants.



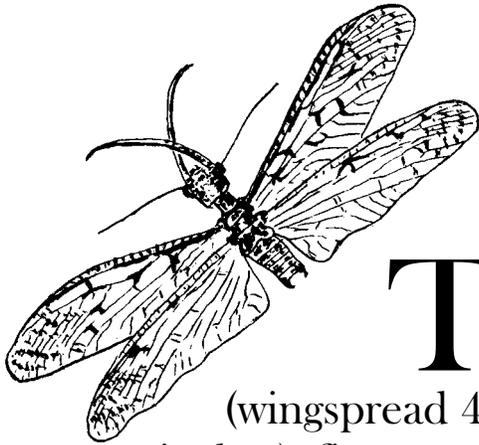
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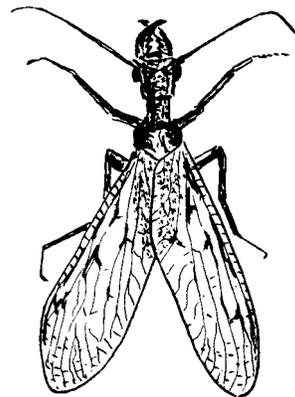
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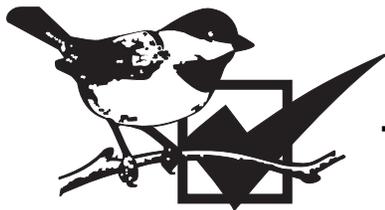
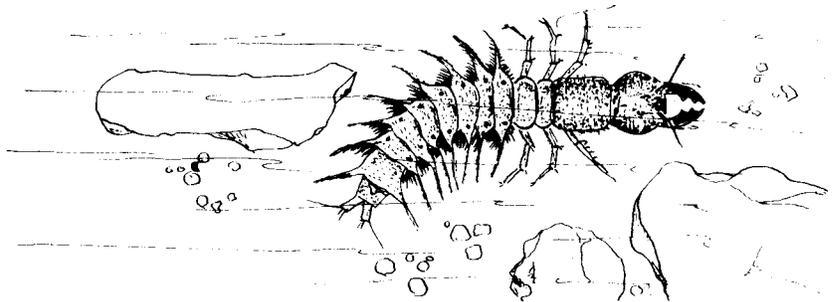
These large (wingspread 4-5 inches), fierce appearing insects are rather common, but are unfamiliar to many in their adult form. Dobson flies are likely to be found along wooded creeks and rivers. In the summer evenings, they are attracted to light. Their sudden presence can startle campers and night-time fisherman. The adults are easily distinguished; the male has extremely large mandibles, whereas the females are

DOBSON FLY

Corydalis cornuta



smaller. Their eggs are laid in the water, and hatch into a large, segmented larvae called "hellgrammites." The larvae have eight pairs of hairy looking gills, one pair for each segment. Hellgrammites are found in the stony riffles of streams and are highly desired as fish bait.



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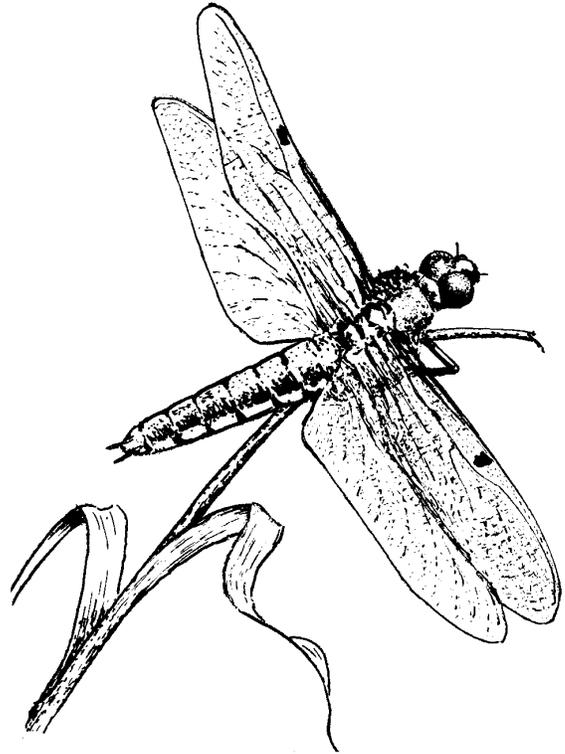
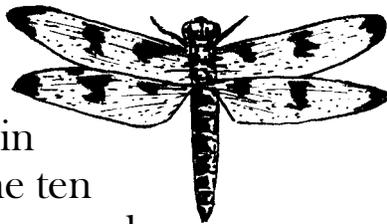
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DRAGONFLY

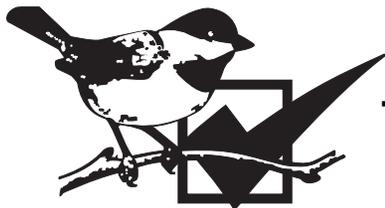
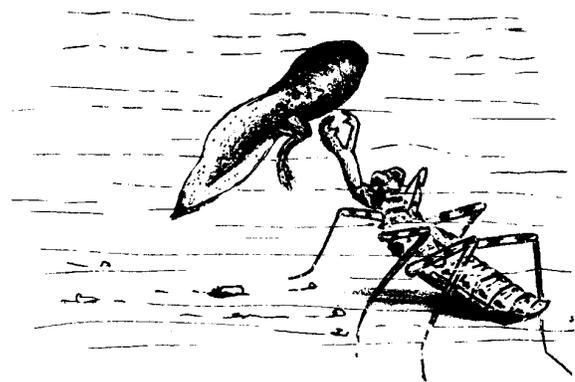
Order Odonata



Dragonflies are well named, looking very much like dragons. The adult form can be found where ever flying insects congregate. Species can be identified by the patterns on their lacy wings. One of the most familiar dragonflies in Kansas is the ten spot, found around most ponds in the state. After the female's eggs have been fertilized, she dips to the surface of the water to deposit them. The eggs hatch into aquatic nymphs, which undergo a series of growth stages before emerging as adults.



The nymph has an under-slung jaw that can be shot forward for grabbing prey.

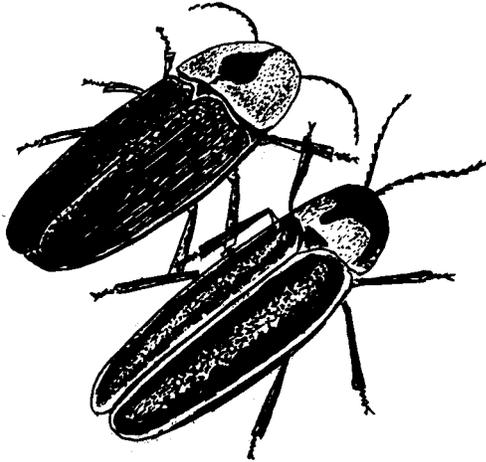


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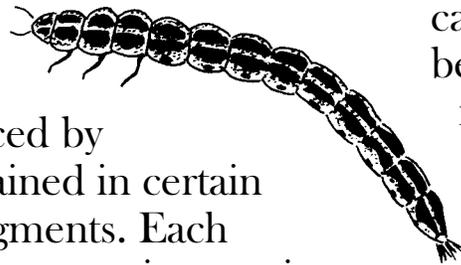
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FIREFLIES

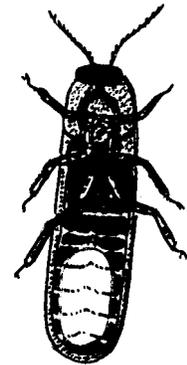
Family Lampyridae

A large number of beetles are able to produce flashes of cold light. We call them fireflies or lightning bugs. The light is produced by luciferin contained in certain abdominal segments. Each species has its own unique series of flashes. This code is recognized and responded to by the opposite sex of the same species. In some species only the male

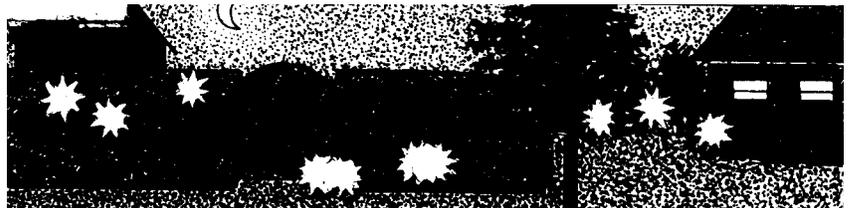
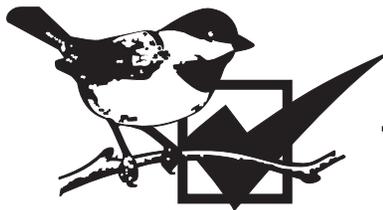


has the ability to fly. Flightless females are known as glow worms. Their larvae live in the ground and decaying logs.

They are called wireworms. Fireflies occur around the world. For centuries, captive ones have been used in



rituals and as ornaments by various groups of people. It is safe to say most children have gazed at a jar filled with fireflies in the dark of their bedroom.



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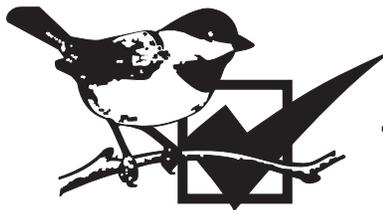
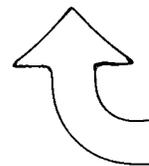
GREEN CICADA

Tibicen pruinosa



A sound of summer everyone is familiar with is the harmonious trill of the cicada. It is produced by vibrating membranes located just above the hind legs of the male. The first several years of a cicada's life is spent underground as a nymph, feeding on

sap from the roots of trees. Upon emerging from the ground, it sheds its skin for the last time and loses its ability to feed. It will mate, lay eggs, and soon thereafter dies. Damage to fruit and shade trees may result from eggs laid in their twigs. The most common and largest of the cicadas is the green cicada.



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SOMETHING WILD!

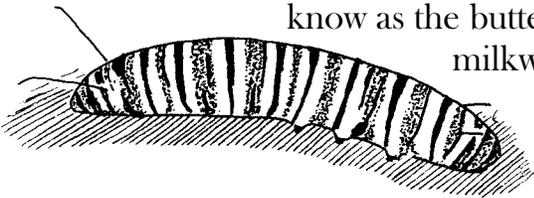
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

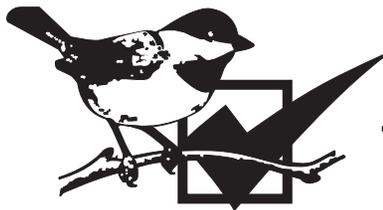
Danaus plexippus



The monarch butterfly is one of the best known and most abundant butterflies in Kansas. Monarch caterpillars dine exclusively on milkweeds, some which contain a poison affecting vertebrate animals, such as birds, but not invertebrates. One species of plant is so attractive to monarchs it is known as the butterfly milkweed.

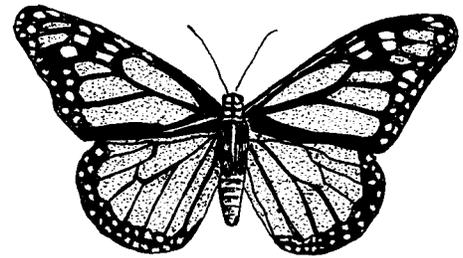


When the caterpillar becomes an adult butterfly, this poison is still contained in its body. Upon eating a monarch, a bird becomes ill and will avoid eating monarchs. Each year, monarchs engage in an incredible migration. They travel thousands of miles, battling wind, storms,



and predators.

The viceroy, which resembles the



monarch, is protected by its resemblance to the monarch. Although its body contains no poison, predators will avoid it because they believe it will taste as bad as a monarch. You can identify a viceroy from the monarch by the black line on the rear portion



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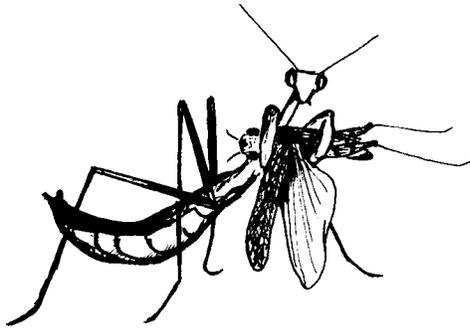
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PRAYING MANTIS

Stagmomantis carolina

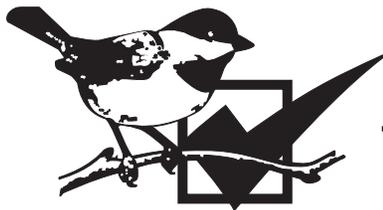
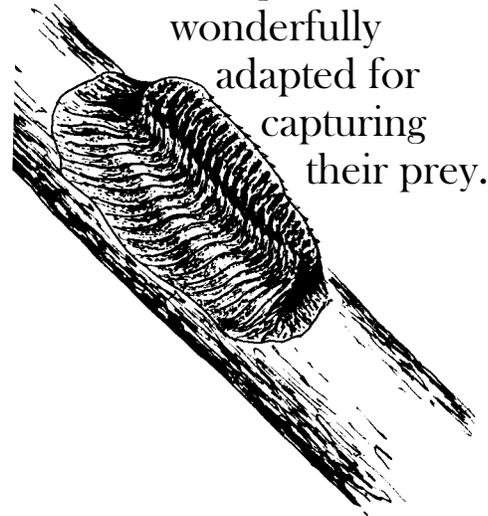
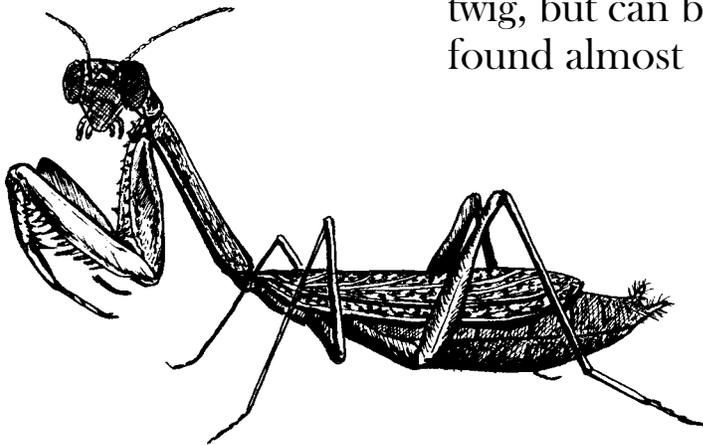


The Carolina mantis is the common green or gray mantis seen in Kansas. They can reach a length of 2

inches. They receive their name from the way they hold their front legs, as though in prayer. Mantises lay their eggs in a foamy liquid that dries to a hard, paper-like consistency. The egg case is generally deposited on a twig, but can be found almost

anywhere. It resembles a loaf of bread in color and shape.

Despite their fierce looks, mantises are not harmful to people. They are avid predators on other insects. Their front legs are wonderfully adapted for capturing their prey.



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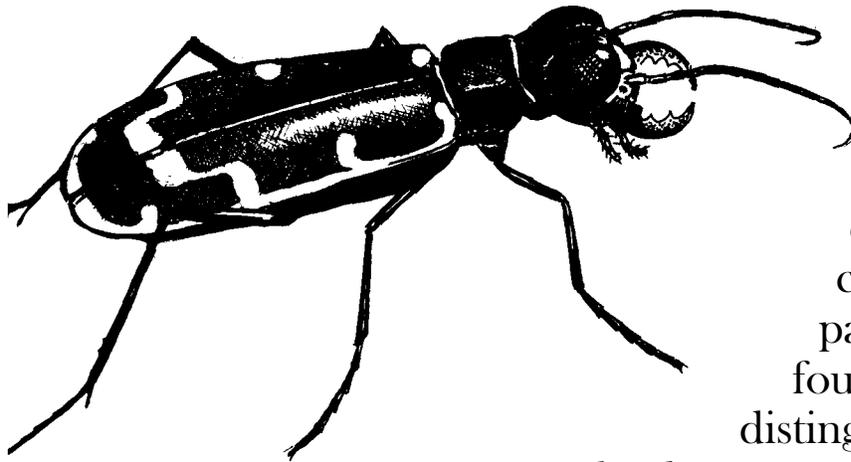
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TIGER BEETLE

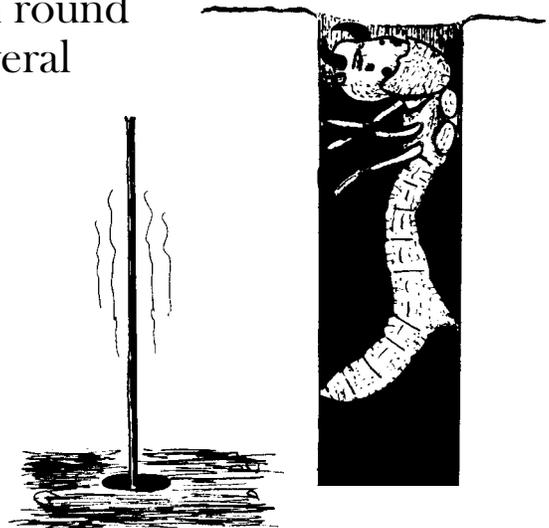
Family cicindelidae



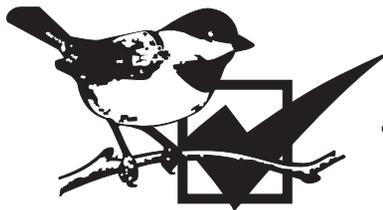
These shiny, metallic, long-legged insects are often seen running on country roads or sandy paths. The thirty species found in Kansas are distinguished by their wing covers and color patterns. Other insects make

up most of their diet. The larvae live in round burrows, 1/16 inch in diameter and several inches deep. Its large head and formable jaws are in wait at the top of the burrow for any insect or spider that's close enough to grab.

You can catch the larvae by dropping a straw into the burrow. When it twitches, quickly pull it out.



**Good luck
tiger hunting!**



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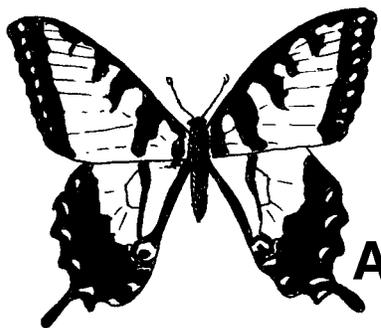
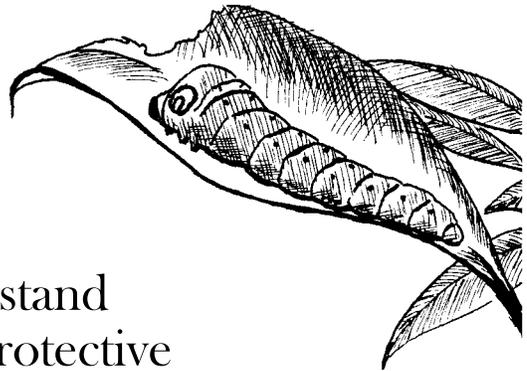
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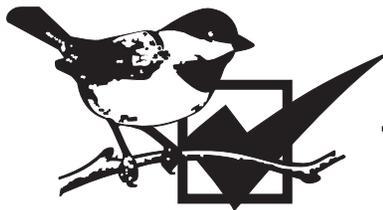
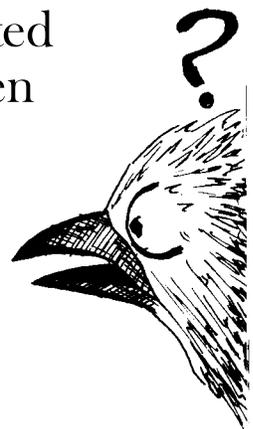
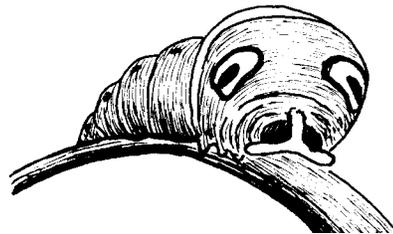
TIGER SWALLOWTAIL

Papilio glaucus

The wingspread on this beautiful yellow and black butterfly is more than four inches. Females are darker than males. It is hard to see and understand the markings forming the large, protective



eye pattern (B) because most butterflies are mounted and illustrated with their wings spread as in drawing (A). Their caterpillars are green with an enlarged, white-banded front end that bears a pair of large eye spots. This giant, eye-spotted head will, hopefully frighten predators away.



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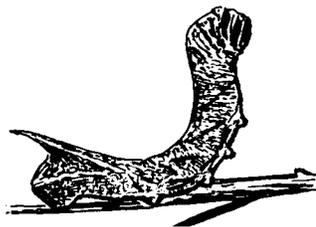
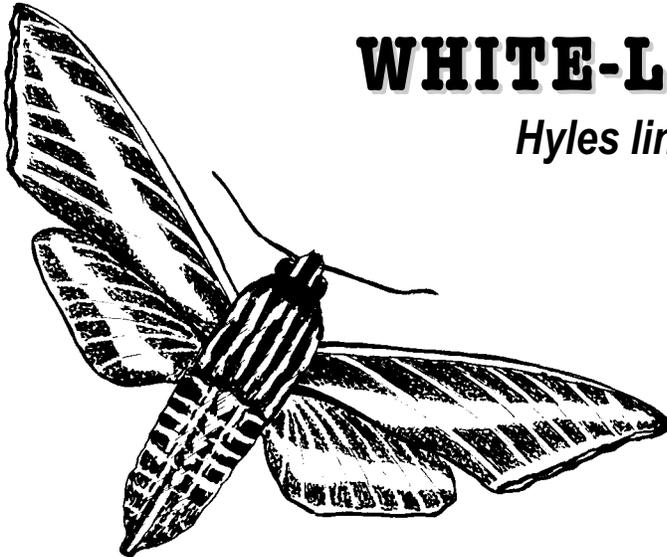
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WHITE-LINED SPHINX

Hyles lineata

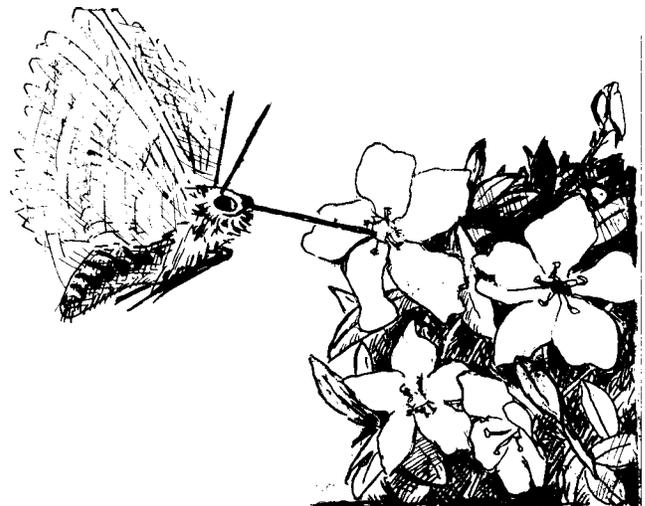


extract nectar from the blossoms.

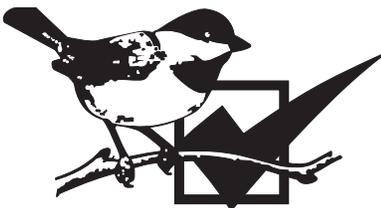
The larvae are smooth-bodied caterpillars with protective camouflage.

The name sphinx comes from the larva's resting or danger posture, the front of the body held erect and still, resembling the mythical sphinx of Egypt.

This common moth has a wing spread of 2 to 3 inches. Moths of this family are also known as hawk or hummingbird moths. They can be seen at dusk hovering over open flowers in gardens, uncoiling their long tongues to



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ZEBRA SWALLOWTAIL

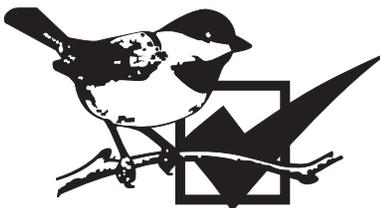
Eurytides marcellus



The black and white stripes and long, slender tails make this spectacular butterfly easy to identify. The spring adults are quite a bit smaller than those of summer, making it appear as though there are two, distinct, size groups. These butterflies always seem to be going somewhere in a big hurry. Caterpillars are green, yellow, and orange with a black stripe on the bump of their backs. They eat the leaves of the pawpaw tree.



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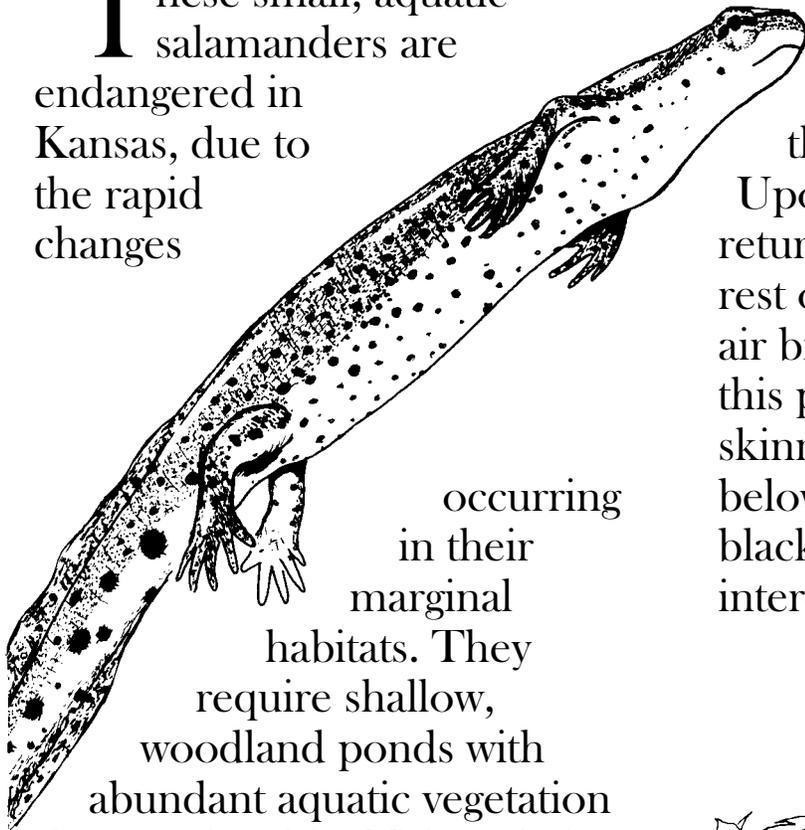
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CENTRAL NEWT

Notophthalmus viridescens

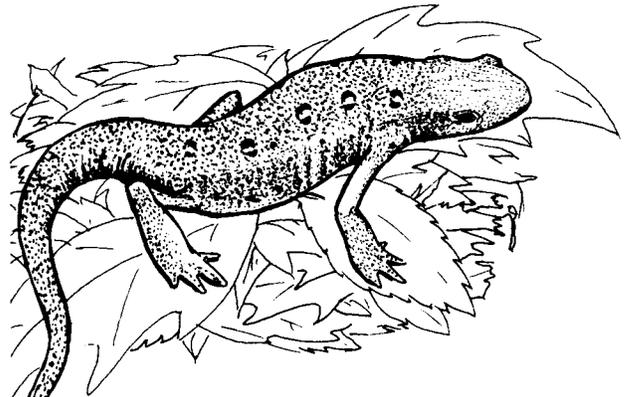
These small, aquatic salamanders are endangered in Kansas, due to the rapid changes



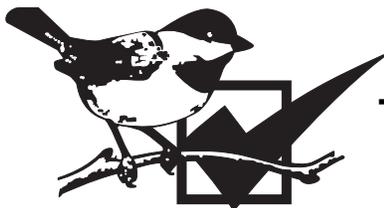
occurring in their marginal habitats. They require shallow, woodland ponds with abundant aquatic vegetation that are devoid of fish. Their eggs are laid in water and hatch into gilled larvae. During the transformation to adulthood, the larvae lose their gills and

leave their aquatic environment. The young adults have a rough skin that is orange-red in color.

Upon reaching maturity, they return to the water to spend the rest of their adult life as aquatic, air breathing organisms. During this phase they are smooth skinned; green above, yellow below, and covered with many black spots. They make an interesting aquarium animal.



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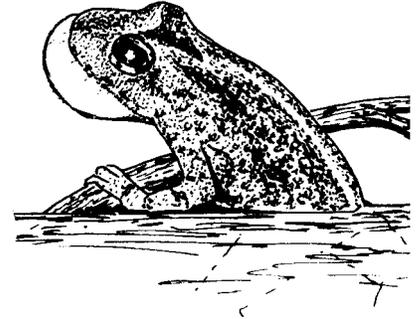
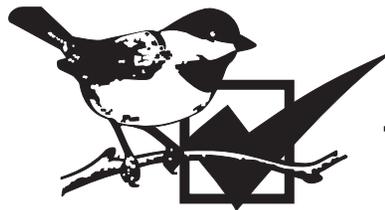
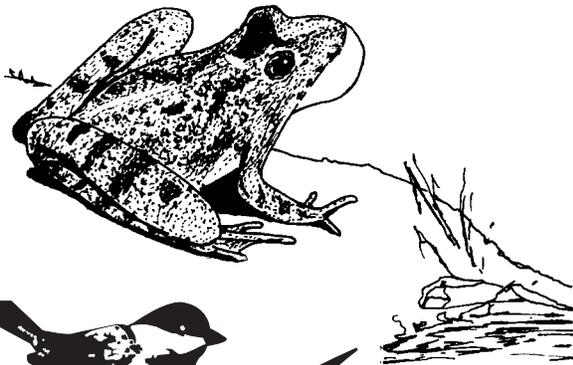
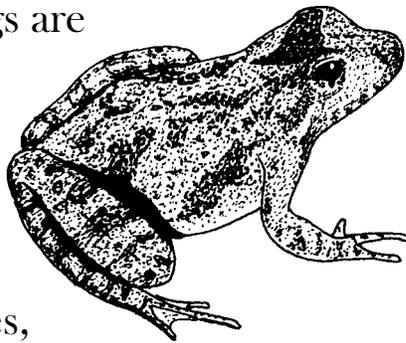
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CRICKET FROG

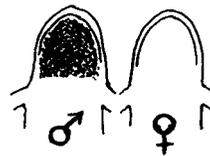
Acris crepitans

Cricket frogs have been found in almost every county in Kansas.

These frogs are abundant around farm ponds, along the edges of lakes, and on the banks of streams. They spend most of their time in the open, sitting on mud flats or moist soil, never far from the water. When disturbed, they leap into the water, diving to the



bottom. Both the male and female are mottled gray in color. The sexes can be told apart by the dark coloration on underside of the males' jaw. Their main food



source is tiny insects, mostly flies. Their common name comes from their cricket-like call; a series of "chik-chik-chiks" that, at times, seem endless. They will call from both the shoreline and the water.

Tadpoles are tiny and black in color.



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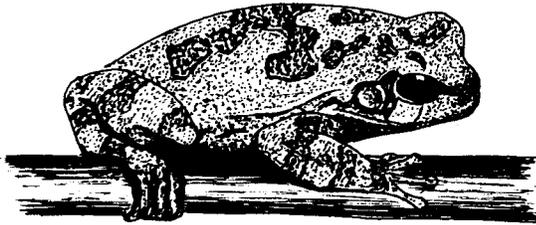
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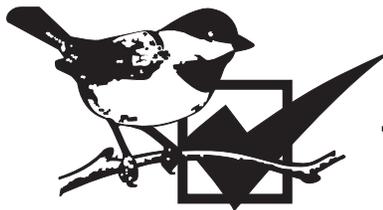
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GRAY TREEFROG

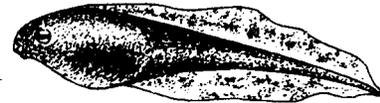
Hyla versicolor



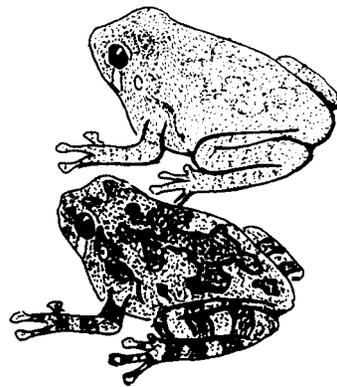
Due to their requirements for shade trees and moisture, Gray treefrogs are only found in the eastern part of Kansas. They are often found around houses and other buildings. These charming, little frogs, with big eyes and sticky toe pads, will spend sunny days huddled up in the shade. Their short, trilling song is very distinctive.



They often call when the humidity is high, giving rise to the idea they can predict the coming of storms. The color patterns can



patterns, depending on weather, temperature and mood. Tadpoles are high-finned and colorful, with gold, red and orange in their body patterns.



range from almost white, with faint markings, to being quite dark with very distinct



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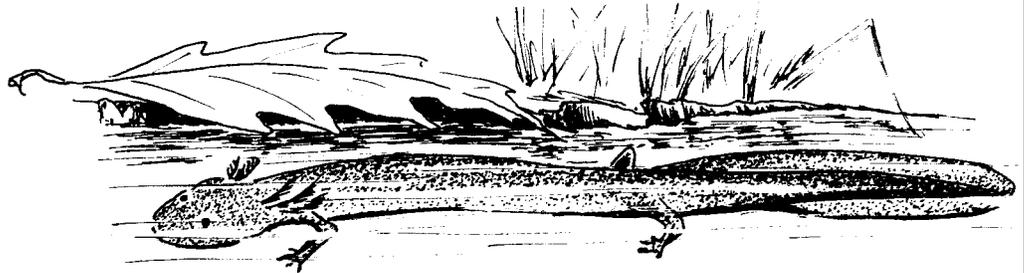
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SOMETHING WILD!

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GROTTO SALAMANDER

Typhlotriton spealaeus



The Grotto salamander occurs in the southeast corner of Kansas known as the Ozark Uplift. The adults spend their lives in the perpetual darkness of limestone caves streams.

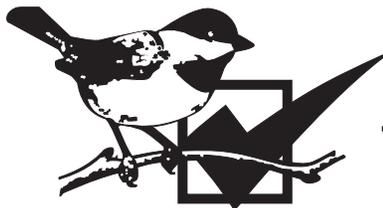
Its existence is being threatened by building construction and water

pollution. Not a great deal is known about its life history. We do know its larvae live in streams just outside of caves. Larvae have skin pigment and functional eyes. When mature, they

move into the cold blackness of the cave, losing both their eyesight and coloration; becoming the “white ghosts” of the cave.



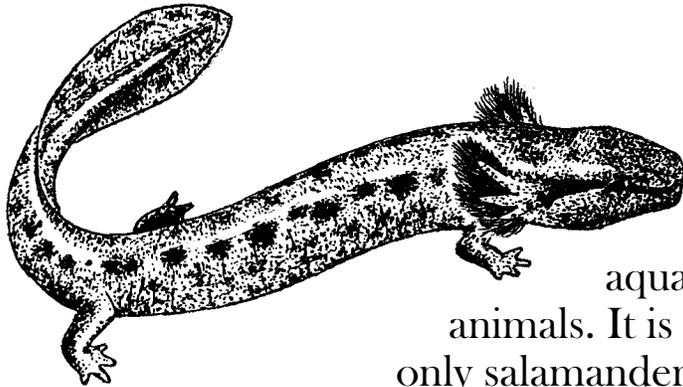
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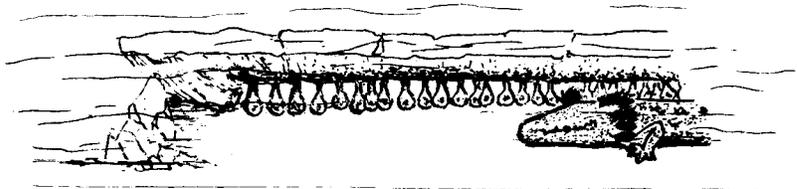
MUDPUPPY

Necturus maculosus

This salamander, sometimes called a “Water Dog” is found in the streams of the eastern third of Kansas. It is thoroughly aquatic, using three red, feathery gills on each side of the back of the head for respiration. Mudpuppies may exceed a foot in length. They eat a variety of small

aquatic animals. It is the only salamander in Kansas with four toes on each rear foot. Females may lay as many as 150 eggs at a time. They are

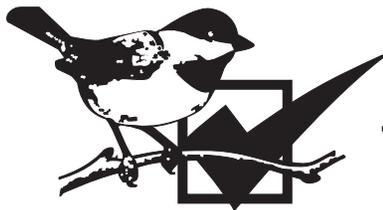
the eggs. Mudpuppies are sometimes caught on fishing lines. Some people believe they are poisonous, which is far from the truth.



placed, requiring considerable acrobatics on the part of the female, on the roof of submerged cavities, such as rocky ledges or logs. Sometimes the female will guard



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PLAINS LEOPARD FROG

Rana blari

Also known as the grass frog or striped frog, this is one of the most abundant and widespread of the Kansas' amphibians. The yellow-striped folds on its back and the large, dark blotches on a green to brown medium sized body distinguishes the leopard frog from most other Kansas frogs.

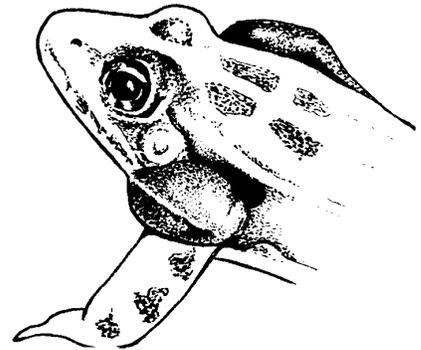
The call comes from internal vocal sacs that swell out just

behind its head. The call is a low chuckling sound; similar to what is produced



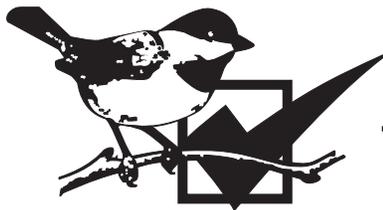
when one drags a finger over a taut balloon.

Males will begin calling, for breeding purposes, in March. Females will lay eggs



in large, floating masses, containing up to 5,000 eggs.

The eggs hatch in five to twenty-five days with the resulting tadpole changing into a frog after three months.

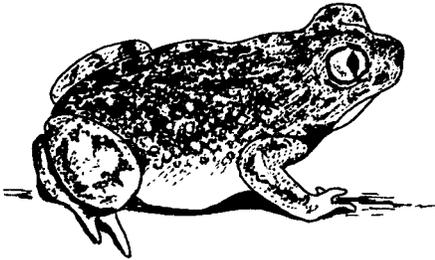


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PLAINS SPADEFOOT

Spea bombifrons

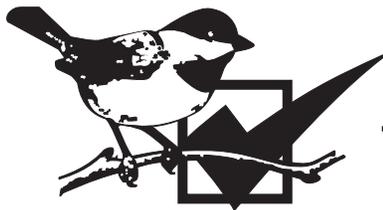
The spadefoot toad is found throughout Kansas except for the southeast portion of the state. It spends most of the day in loose sand burrows scattered across the prairies and floodplains of Kansas. When frightened, the spadefoot has the power to magically disappear. It is the shuffling of its hind legs in the loose sand which quickly causes the toad to vanish. It is more common than its

secretive nature might indicate.

The name “spadefoot” comes from a large, black structure on the hind foot used for digging. These amphibians breed in the heavy rains of spring and summer. At these rain created pools, the male will call in choruses for the attention of the female.



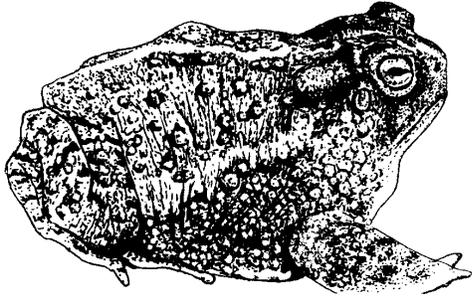
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ROCKY MOUNTAIN TOAD

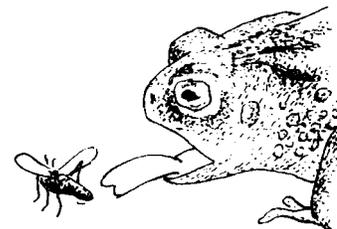
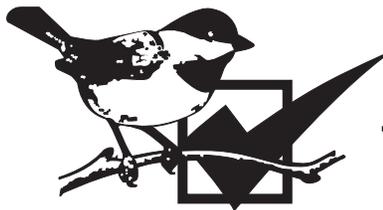
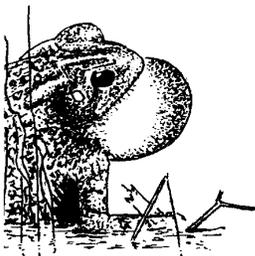
Bufo woodhousii

These abundant amphibians, also known as garden toads, are found in a variety of habitats throughout Kansas. They can be found far from water due to

their thick skin, which prevents them from drying out.

Toads are generally nocturnal (active at night), but can be seen during the daytime on cloudy, cooler days. The toad's tongue is hinged at the front of the mouth and can be flipped out to capture prey. Their diet consists of insects, making them beneficial to gardeners. They do not cause warts, but can secrete a poison that can irritate the linings of the mouth and eyes. Males call along the edges of wetlands to attract females. Their vocal sac swells like a

balloon, resonating their call, and acts like a beacon to interested females. The call of the toad is a short "scream." Unlike the egg clusters of frogs, toads lay eggs encased in a transparent, long strand membrane. The larval (tadpole) stage is short because eggs are usually laid in temporary wetlands, such as ditches or flooded fields. The toads emerging from these waters are very tiny.



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TIGER SALAMANDER

Ambystoma tigrinum

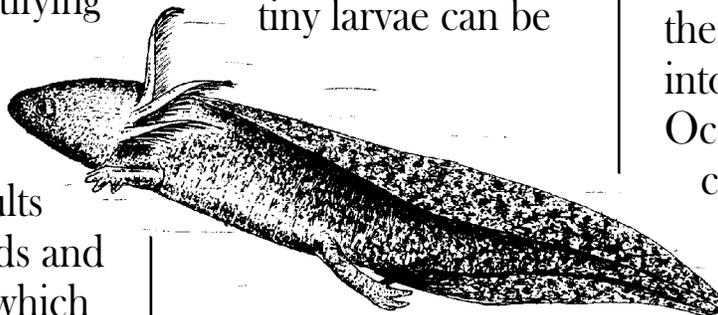


While salamander species are scarce in Kansas, the tiger salamander is the only one found over the entire state; justifying its selection as the state amphibian. In late winter, adults find small ponds and cattle tanks in which to breed. The egg cluster, containing forty to fifty eggs, is attached to underwater debris, such as twigs and

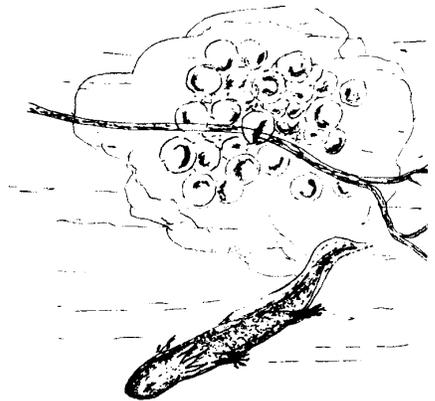
stems.

After the eggs are laid, the adults leave the water and spend most of the time

underground. The tiny larvae can be

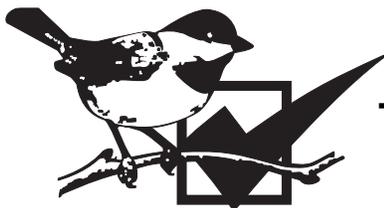


distinguished from those of frogs and toads by their external gills and four legs. The larvae will lose their gills and tail fin during the two



months it requires for their transformation into adults.

Occasionally, larvae can't make the transformation and grows into a very large larva, call an "Axolotls". Although they are capable of breeding, they remain in a permanent larvae stage.



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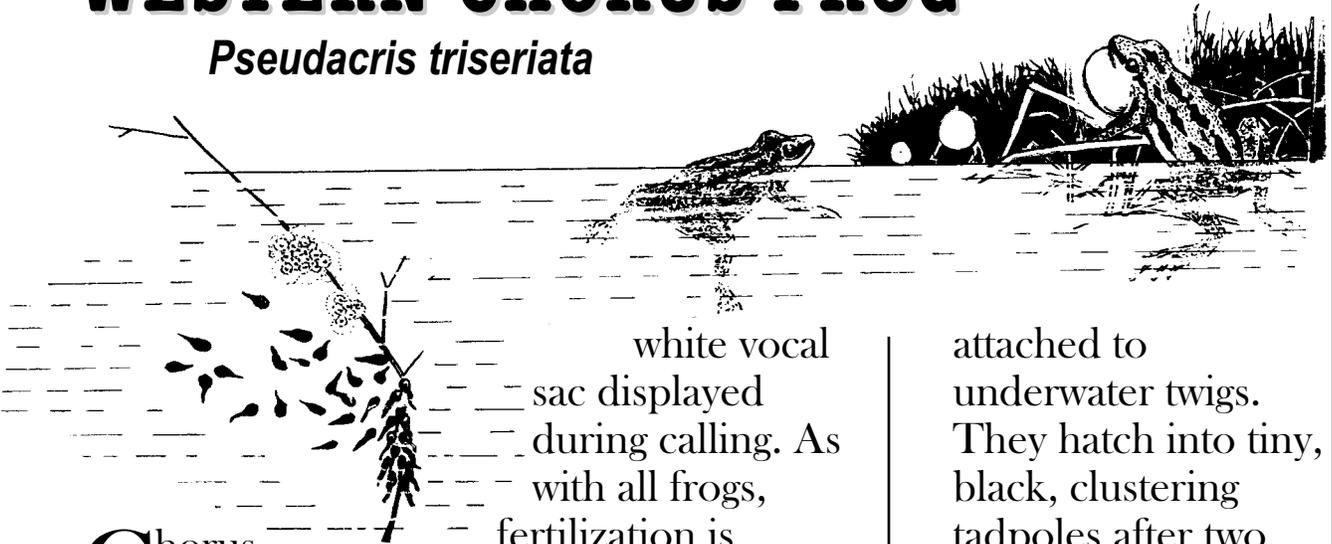
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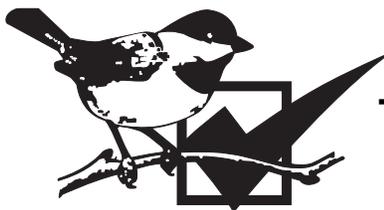
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WESTERN CHORUS FROG

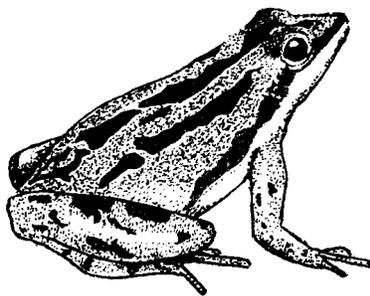
Pseudacris triseriata



Chorus frogs are small (1 and 1/2 inches) and often only seen during spring breeding. Males move, early in spring, to flooded fields or ditches to begin calling for females. The female is attracted by the call and finds the calling male by sighting the shining

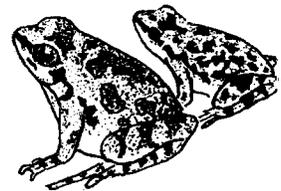


white vocal sac displayed during calling. As with all frogs, fertilization is external. Most



Kansans are familiar with their tinkling call from roadside ditches, but seldom see the frog producing the sound. The transparent egg masses are

attached to underwater twigs. They hatch into tiny, black, clustering tadpoles after two weeks. Two months later, the tadpoles change into little frogs. Two other chorus frogs are found in southern Kansas; the larger Strecker's chorus frog and the spotted chorus frog.



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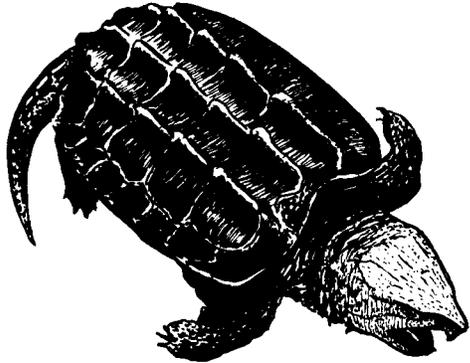
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SOMETHING WILD!

By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.

ALLIGATOR SNAPPING TURTLE

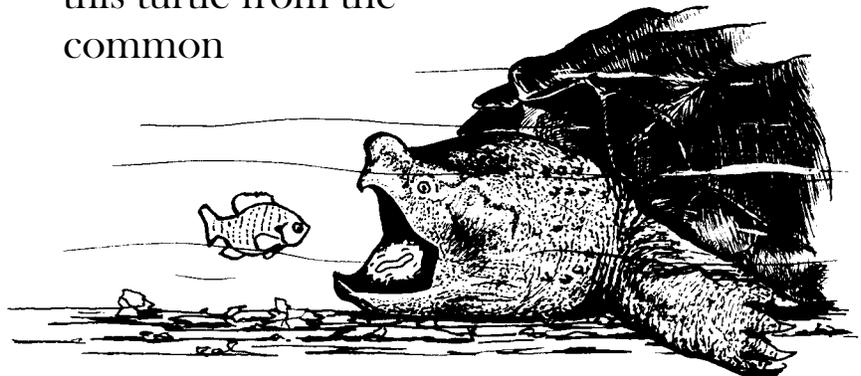
Macrochelys temminckii



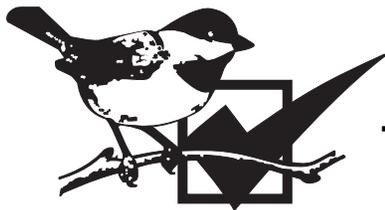
This is the world's largest fresh water turtle. Its straight-line shell length is over two feet and it can weigh more than 200 pounds. It occurs in lanes, oxbows, and deep rivers from east Texas to west Georgia, and north

to Indiana. In Kansas it is very rare, found only in the southeast quarter of the state. Three prominent ridges and a long, hooked beak differentiate this turtle from the common

snapper. Alligator snappers will lure fish within reach of their jaws with a fleshy, wriggling, worm like tongue.



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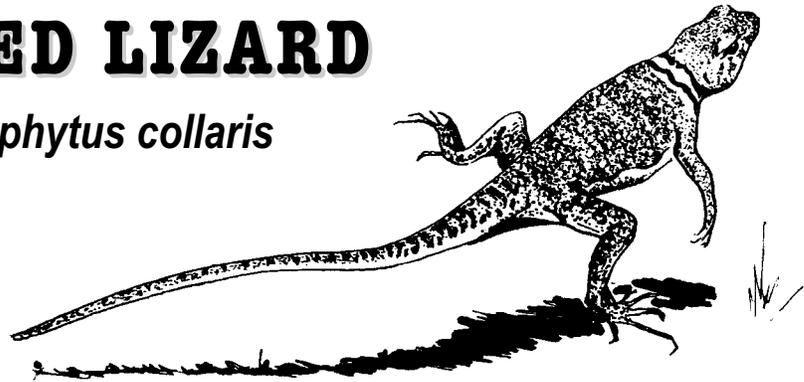
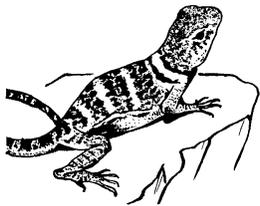
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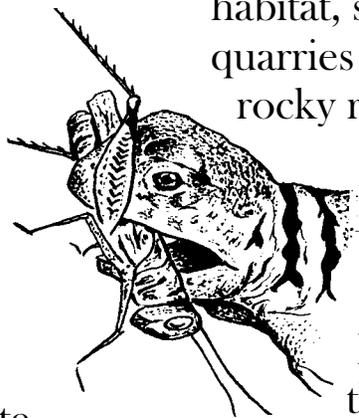
COLLARED LIZARD

Crotaphytus collaris



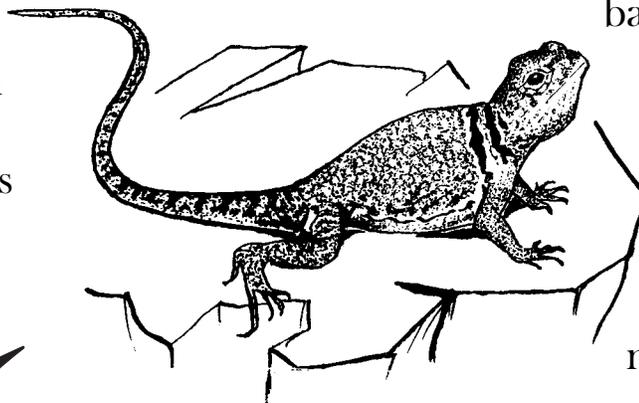
Collared lizards are the largest and most colorful of the Kansas lizards. Their body coloration includes blue, green, and orange, along with a bold black and white collar, from which they receive their name. Males are more colorful than females. Collared lizards occur across the state wherever

there is suitable habitat, such as rock quarries and open, rocky ravines.



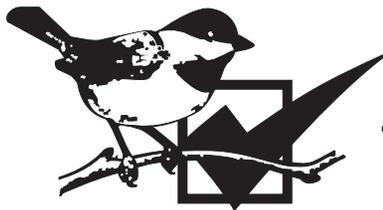
They spend most of their time on top of large rocks that offer a good view of the terrain.

The collared lizard has powerful jaw muscles, which are useful for capturing and eating their favorite food - grasshoppers. When escaping from predators, this lizard will often run only on its back legs, using its tail for balance.



Baby collared lizards hatch from eggs from mid to late summer and are strikingly marked.

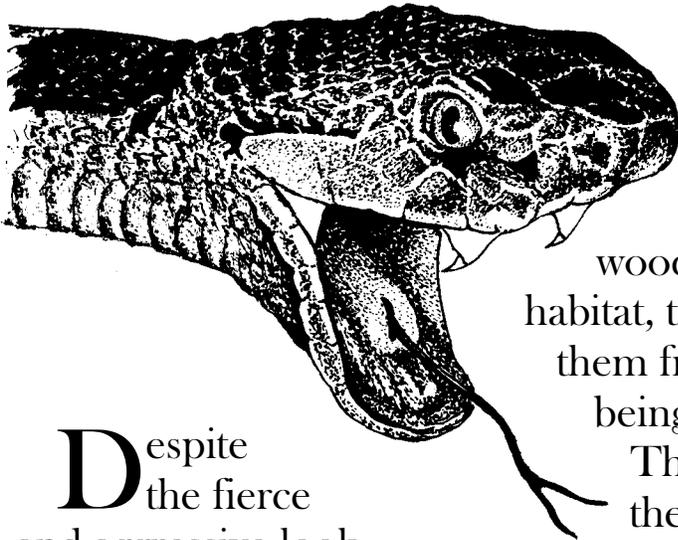
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COPPERHEAD

Agkistrodon contortrix

Despite the fierce and aggressive look in this drawing, copperheads are rather mild-mannered snakes. They prefer to lie still when approached, depending on their protective color pattern, which blends perfectly into the leaf litter that covers their rocky,

wooded habitat, to keep them from being seen.

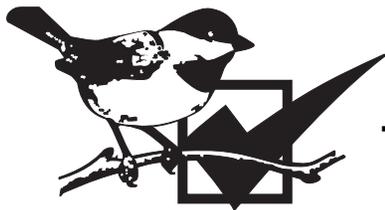
The top of the head is copper colored, while the body is a light brown with chestnut bands. These bands are narrow through the mid-back of the snake and wider on the lower sides.

poison from these fangs paralyzes the snake's prey. The female gives live birth to two to ten young in August or September.

In Kansas, copperheads are found mainly east of the Flint Hills.



The fangs are two hollow teeth that can unfold from the front of the upper jaw. The



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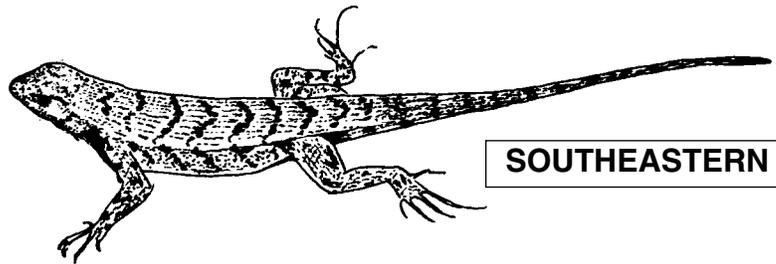
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EASTERN FENCE LIZARD

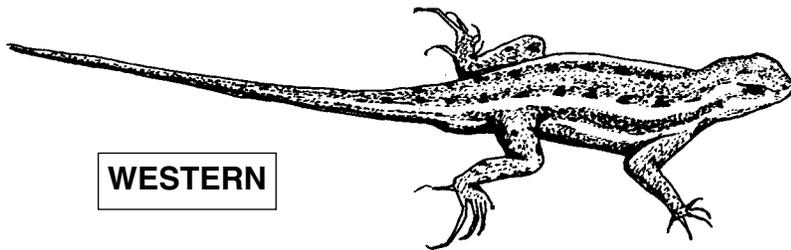
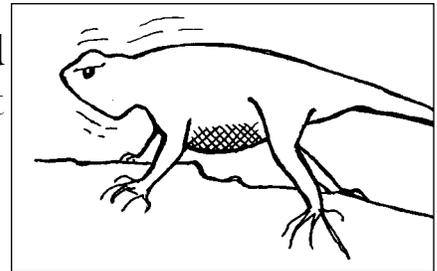
Sceloporus undulatus

Two subspecies of this lizard occur in Kansas - one in the extreme southeast corner of the state and the other in the western half of the state. Their habitat includes brush and trees in the east and dry areas in the west. They feed upon a variety of



SOUTHEASTERN

designed to attract females. Like

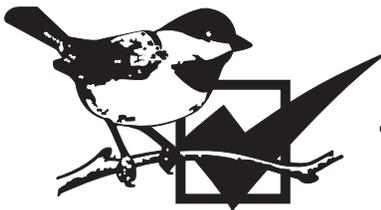


WESTERN

many lizards, they have the ability to lose a portion of their tail to an attacking predator. The lost portion will regenerate, but will look different in appearance from the original tail.

small insects during daylight. The territorial males display their blue belly patches in a characteristic bobbing or

pushing behavior

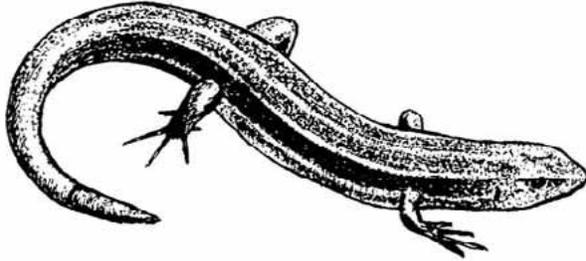


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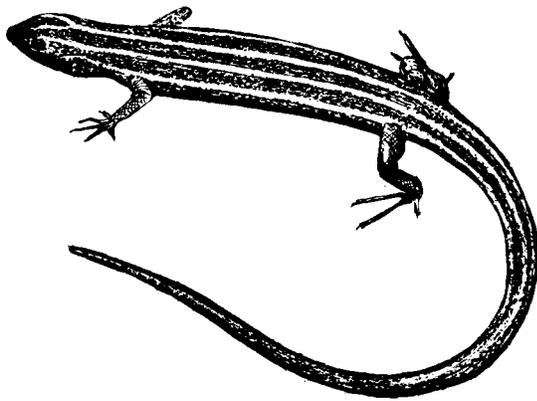
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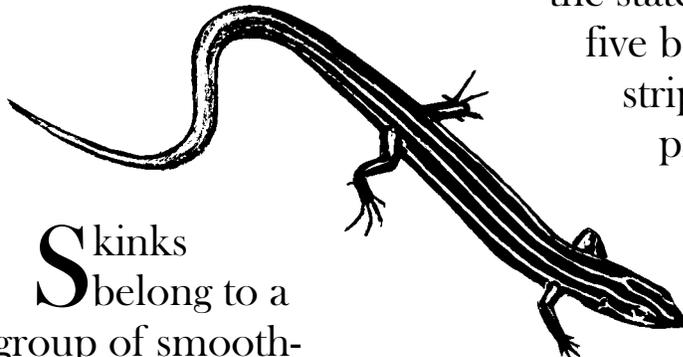
FIVE-LINED SKINK

Eumeces fasciatus



lined skink is the most common and is found under or around rocks and logs in the eastern third of the state. The

brown stripes on each side of their bodies, and red cheeks during the mating season.

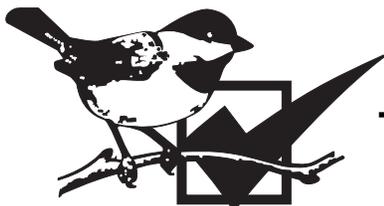


five body stripes are present in the young and the

Young skinks have a brilliant blue tail, which may attract predators. The tail breaks off with the slightest pull, leaving the predator with a mouth full of tail as the skink skips off to safety. After a short time a new tail will reappear.

Skinks belong to a group of smooth-scaled, short-legged lizards of which several species occur in Kansas. The five-

female, but the adult males lose the center one on their mid-back. The males also have broad, dark



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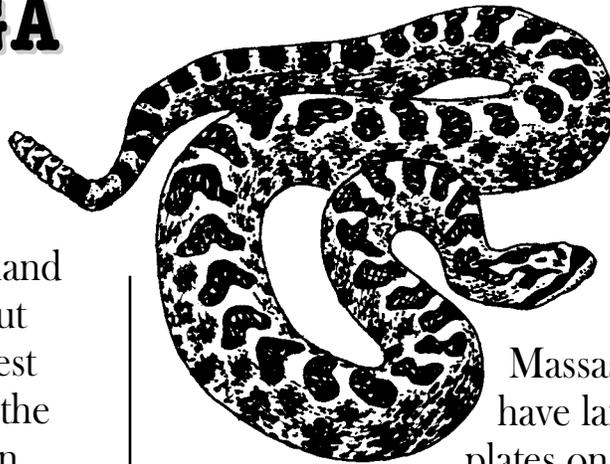
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MASSASAUGA

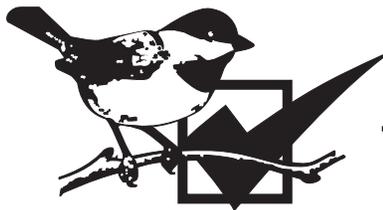
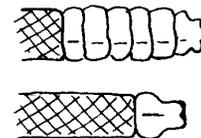
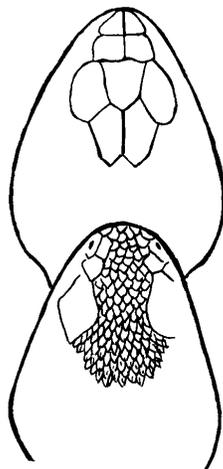
Sistrurus catenatus

These small rattlesnakes are rather common in their rocky, grassland habitat. They occur throughout Kansas except for the northwest quarter of the state. They are the only poisonous snake found in some counties. They are frequently found under hay bales and around reservoirs and wetlands. Their rattling sounds like a grasshopper or bee and can be difficult to hear. They are small snakes, seldom longer than two feet. There are two groups of rattlesnakes: "pygmy", and "large"-based on general body size. Representatives of each group may be larger or smaller than the other. Most species of the pygmy rattler



(including the

Massasauga) have large, paired plates on top of their heads. The large rattlers (*Crotalus*) have the top of their heads covered with small scales. Massasaugas give live birth to eight to nine young in August or September. The number of segments of the rattle does not indicate the snake's age; one segment is normally added at each skin shedding. Newly born rattlers have a "button" at the end of their tail.



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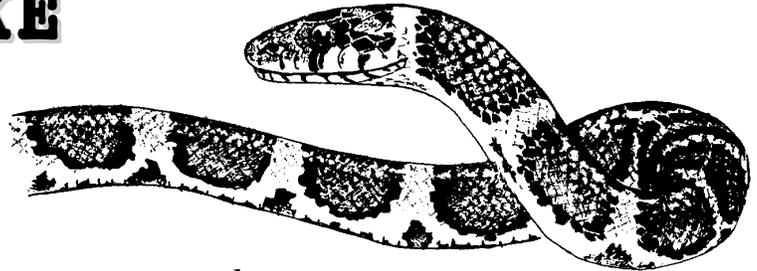
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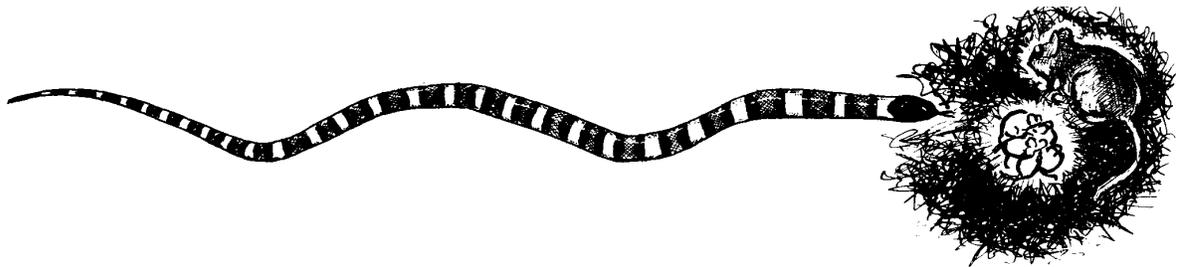
MILK SNAKE

Lampropeltis triangulum

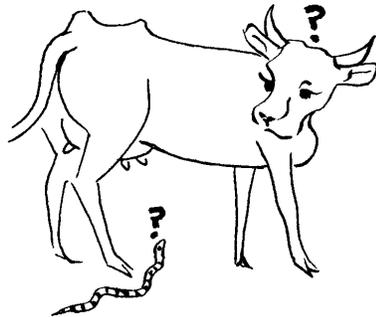


Although this spectacular red, yellow, and black snake is fairly common in rocky areas throughout the state, it is so secretive that most people have never seen one. "Milk snake" is a misnomer; it never feeds on milk. It is a member of the Kingsnake

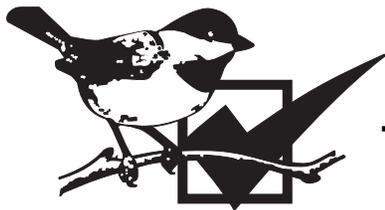
snake (not found in Kansas). Their color bands are similar, but the adjacent colors are different in their arrangement. Just remember this old saying: "Red and yellow can kill a fellow - red and black, venom lacks."



family. The milk snake is commonly confused with the poisonous Coral



Milk snakes are harmless and mainly feed upon small rodents.



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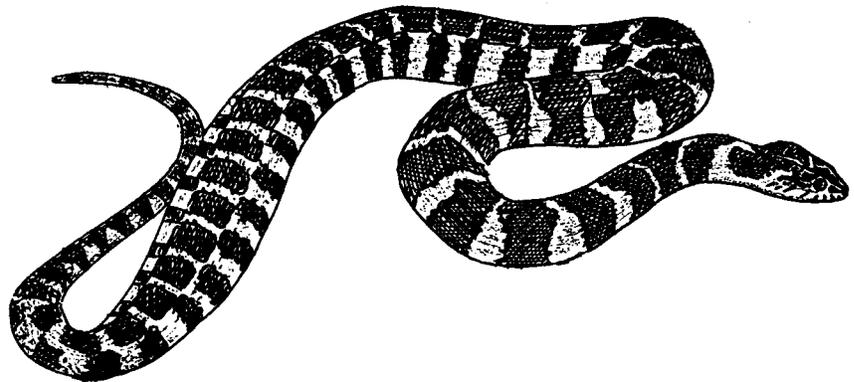
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NORTHERN WATER SNAKE

Nerodia sipedon

There are several species of water snakes in Kansas, all of which are often misidentified as the poisonous cottonmouth. This snake is not venomous as indicated by its round eye pupil. The poisonous snakes in Kansas have "cat eyes" or elliptical pupils. Northern water snakes are found mainly in the

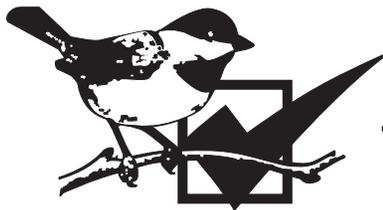
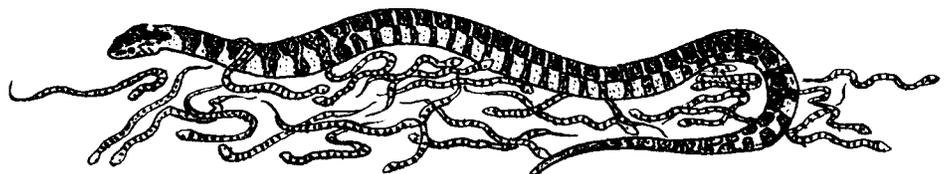


eastern three-quarters of Kansas, around the riffles and rocky areas of their aquatic habitats. These snakes have a bad temperament and will bite when handled. They also can give off a very foul odor.



Northern water snakes give birth to live young, as many as forty, from August through October.

Northern water

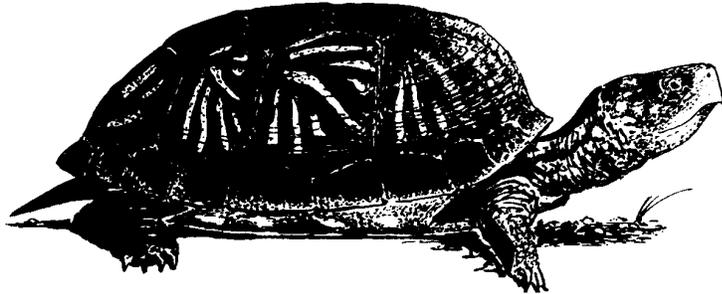


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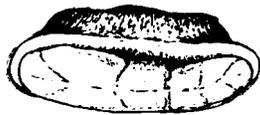
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.



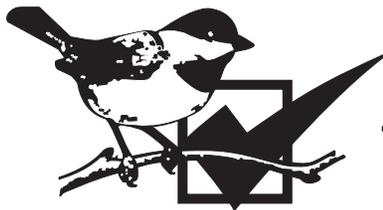
ORNATE BOX TURTLE

Terrapene ornata

This is the most abundant and recognizable dry land turtle in the state. It shares the southeast fifth of the state with a



close relative, the three-toe turtle. The yellow strips on both the upper shell (carapace) and the lower shell (plastron) identify



this species. Although not aquatic, it can swim and will spend hot,



summer days half submerged in shallow pools. This turtle can be easily tamed and trained to

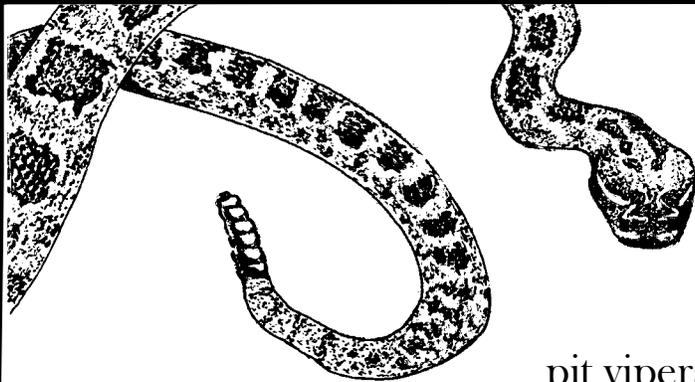
come to a given spot at the same time each day to be fed. A unique hinge arrangement allows the lower shell to close firmly against the upper shell, protecting the turtle against predators, such as coyotes and dogs. Ornate box turtles feed upon both animals (grasshopper and beetles) and plants. They can become a nuisance in gardens because they love cantaloupe and do not mind taking triangular bites out of a ripe tomato.

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SOMETHING WILD!

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WESTERN RATTLESNAKE

Crotalus viridis

CAUTION: POISONOUS SNAKE

Found in the western half of the state, this snake can reach a length of five feet, but three feet is more the norm. The color of the snake can be from green to a brownish gray, with a pattern of light-edged dark blotches down the back and lighter, alternating blotches along the sides. Kansas poisonous snakes are members of the group called

pit vipers, and have a heat-sensitive pit that lies between the nostril and the eye. This pit is used to sense warm-blooded prey. No non-poisonous

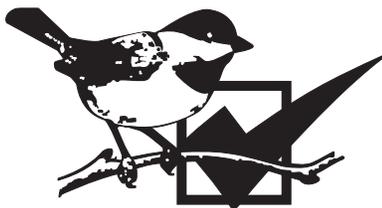
unique structure among snakes. The cross-section drawing below shows how the segments are loosely put together. One segment is added every time the skin is shed. This will vary in frequency, depending on the time of the year and the health of the snake. Aging a snake is not possible by counting the number of segments in its rattle. Also, segments can wear or break off.



snake has such a facial pit. Also note the elliptical pupil of the eye; another indication the snake is poisonous. The rattle is made from a horn like material, a



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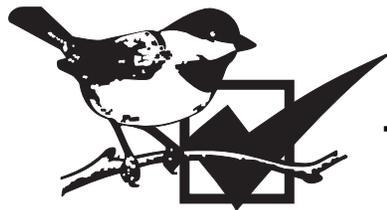
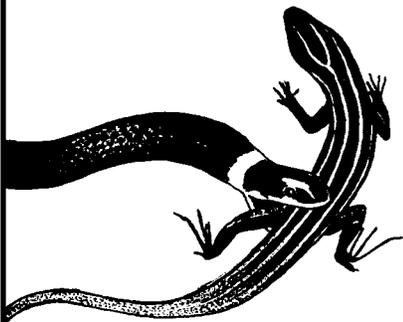
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PRAIRIE RINGNECK SNAKE

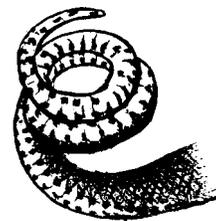
Diadophis punctatus

This attractive, little snake seldom reaches more than fifteen inches long. Although it is rather common,



most people have never seen one because of its secretive life under rocks, logs, and other cover. Ringneck snakes are slate-gray on the back with a black-spotted, yellow belly. The neck gives the snake its name. This snake is harmless and feeds mainly on a variety of invertebrates, as

well as small snakes. The underside of the



tail is a vivid red. In times of danger, the tail is coiled with the underside turned upwards. This is used as a deterrent to predators.

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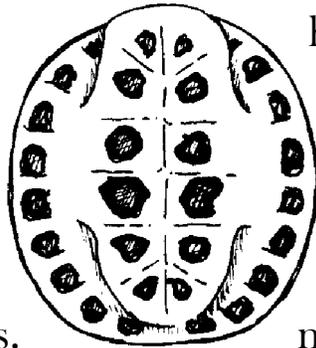
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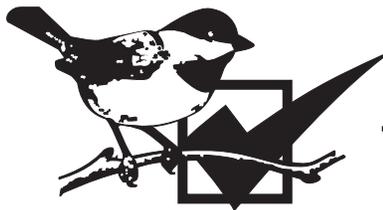
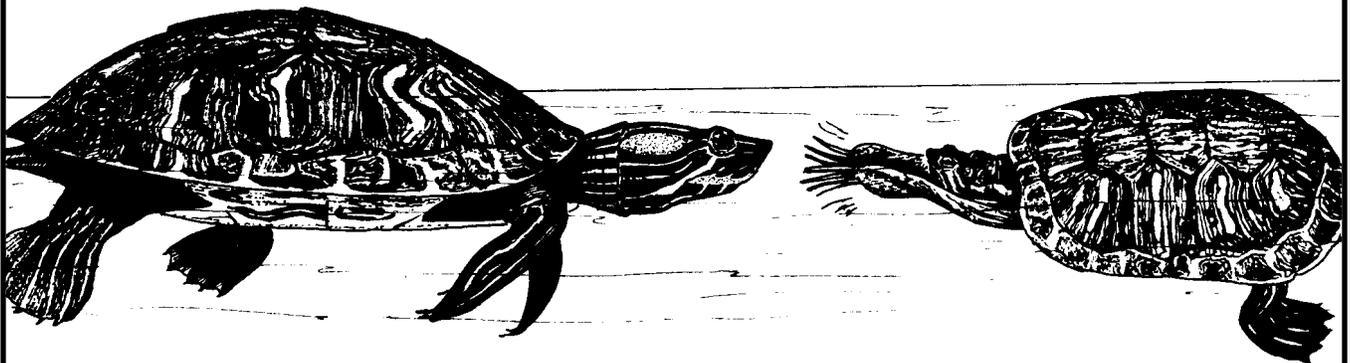
RED-EARED SLIDER

Trachemys scripta

Red-eared sliders are common in rivers, ponds and wetlands in all except the northwest fourth of Kansas. Females are larger than the males. When courting, the male swims backwards in front of the female and extends his forelegs towards her. With his extra long claws close to the female's nose,



he waves them rapidly, as if to hypnotize her. The plastron (undershell) is marked with dark blotches or circles (one to each plate) on a yellowish background. Do not paint the carapace (upper shell) of baby turtles. It prevents shell growth and can kill them.

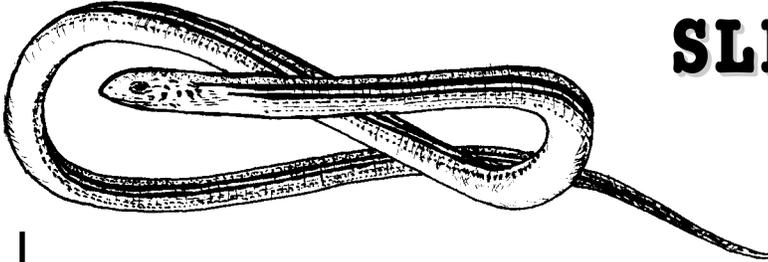


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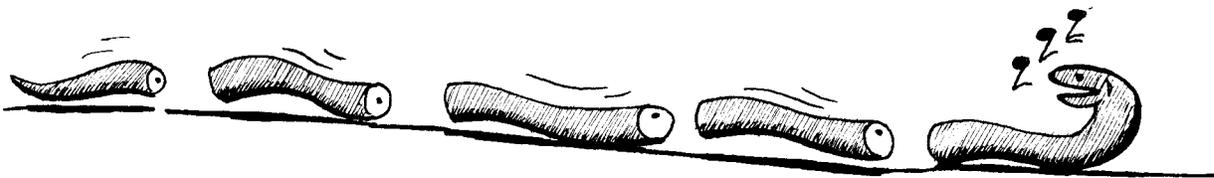
SLENDER GLASS LIZARD

Ophisaurus attenuatus

The glass lizard is often called the “glass snake” because it lacks legs. Like many other lizards, it has the ability to break off a

part of its tail when attacked by a predator. Because the slender glass lizard’s tail is about 2/3 the length of its body, it can be

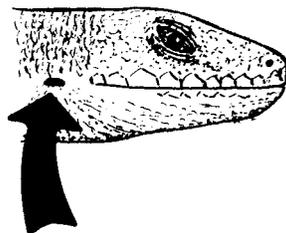
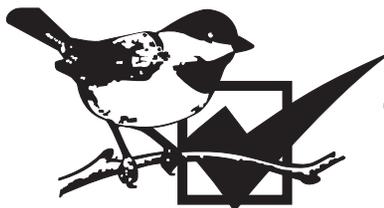
broken into numerous pieces. An “old wives’ tale” states, “when the danger has passed, the head end gives a signal, causing the



separated parts to join together again to form a whole individual.”

lizards are found in the grassy areas of the eastern half of Kansas, where they primarily feed on insects. A slender glass lizard can attain a length of three feet.

lizards are found in the grassy areas of the eastern half of Kansas, where they primarily feed on insects. A slender glass lizard can attain a length of three feet.

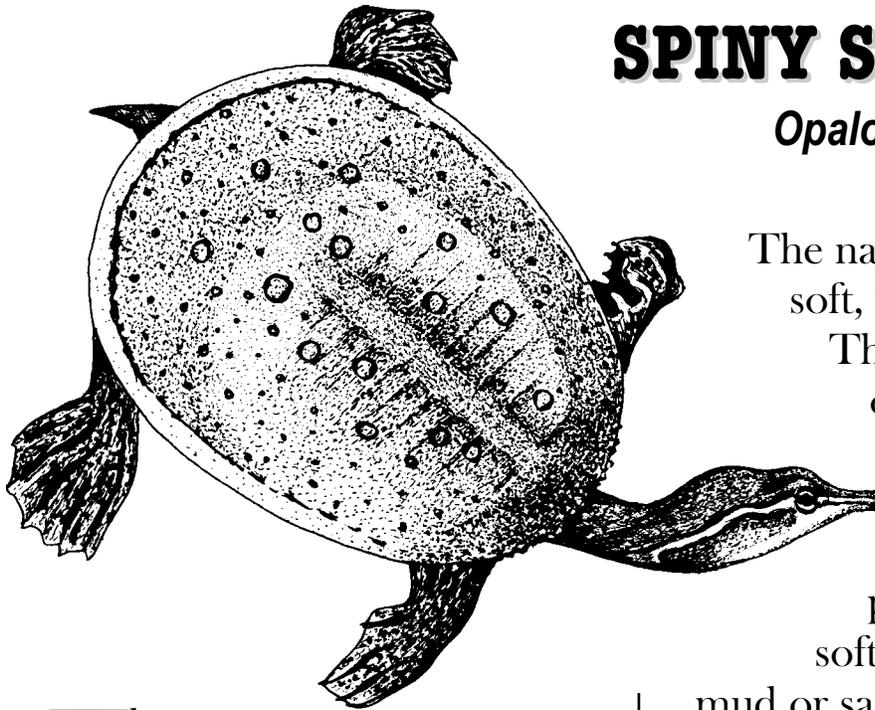


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SPINY SOFTSHELL

Opalone spiniferas

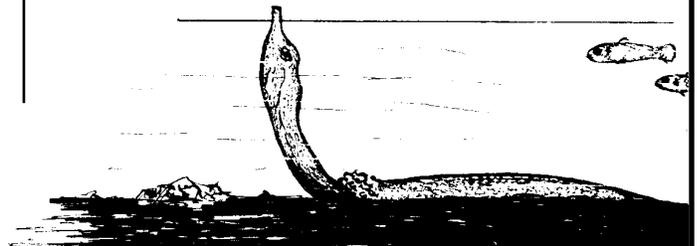
The name comes from their soft, pliable, leathery shell.

There is a series of bumps or spines on the front edge of the shell. The shell's shape and color resembles a pancake. Often, softshells lie half buried in

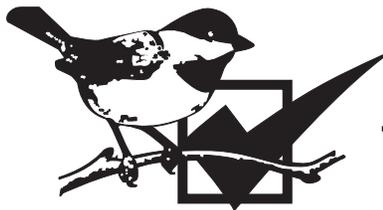
mud or sand in shallow water. With their long neck they can extend their snout above the surface for a breath of air.

Be very aware of their extremely long neck and strong, sharp jaws. These turtles can give one a very nasty bite.

These fairly large turtles are distributed over most of the state. They prefer soft bottom rivers and streams, but can be found in some lakes. They often can be observed basking on the bank near the water's edge. Spiny softshells eat a variety of food items and are particularly fond of crayfish.



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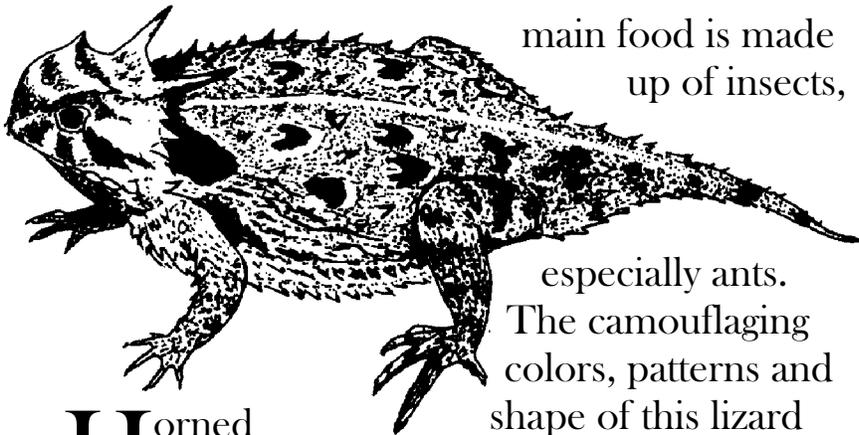
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TEXAS HORNED LIZARD

Phrynosoma cornutum



Horned lizards are often called horned “toads” or horned “frogs.” Both names are incorrect, for this animal is a reptile, belonging to the same lizard family as collared lizards, fence lizards and the large, green iguanas. Their

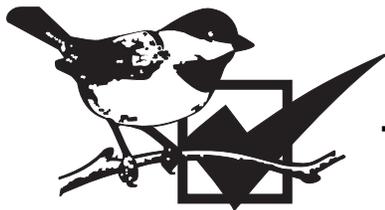
main food is made up of insects,

especially ants.

The camouflaging colors, patterns and shape of this lizard make it difficult to see in its open, gravelly habitat. The female Texas horned lizards, after mating, can lay up to twenty-three to thirty-seven eggs.

During a rare occurrence, when the lizard is under great stress, the blood pressure in its

body can reach a point where blood is expelled from its eyes in a fine mist of droplets. There is no evidence that this activity would deter a predator from attacking it. Although Horned lizards are quite docile, they are extremely difficult to maintain in captivity.



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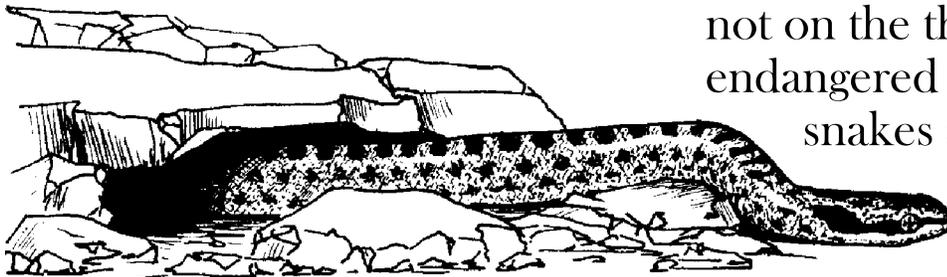
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NIGHT SNAKE

Hypsiglena Torquata

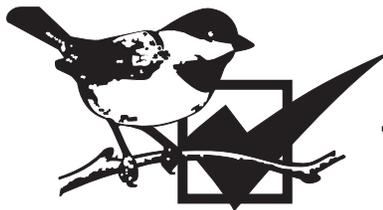


not on the threatened or endangered species list, these snakes are of special concern because of their low

These small snakes (16 inches) occur in the Red Hills area along the Oklahoma border. They are found in canyons under rocks. Very little is known about their natural history, other than once a year they lay two to six eggs. Although

numbers and restricted range. Night snakes have enlarged teeth in the rear of the upper jaw and their saliva may have a toxic effect on their prey, mainly lizards. There is no evidence that they are a threat to humans.

Their elliptical pupil indicates a nocturnal existence.



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SOMETHING WILD!

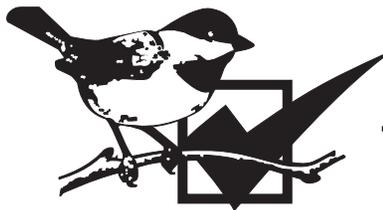
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.

WESTERN HOGNOSE SNAKE

Heterodon nasicus

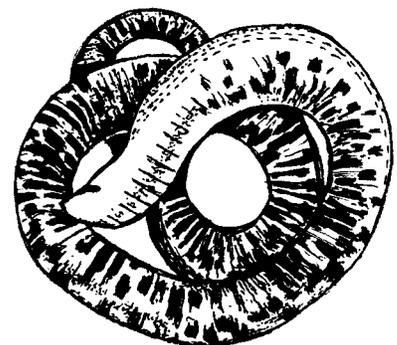
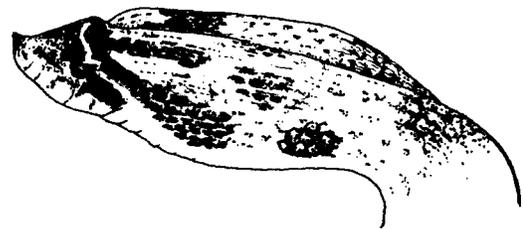
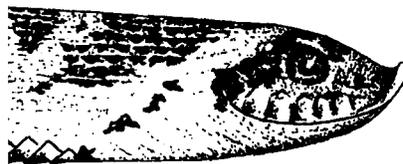


The name comes from the upturned snout, which helps this snake in pursuing its favorite prey - toads; usually hidden when the hognose is most active. When detected, the toad will inflate itself with air to avoid being eaten, but the hognose has a pair of extra long teeth in the rear of its jaw



that can puncture the toad. When startled, this harmless snake can act like a Cobra, spreading its "hood" and striking with a closed mouth. If this bluff fails, the snake curls upside down and plays dead. The hognose prefers a habitat with soft and

sandy soils. Many people believe the hognose is poisonous, and that even its breath is venomous. One look at its rounded pupils tells you it is not.



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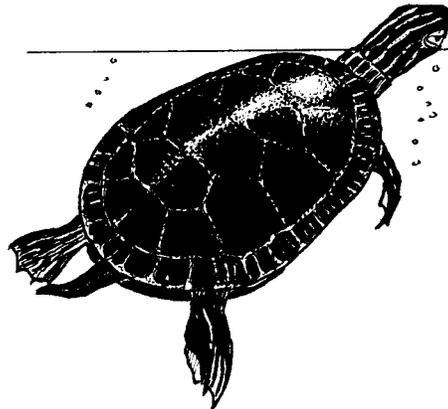
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WESTERN PAINTED TURTLE

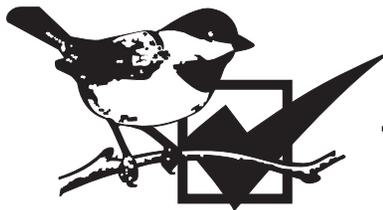
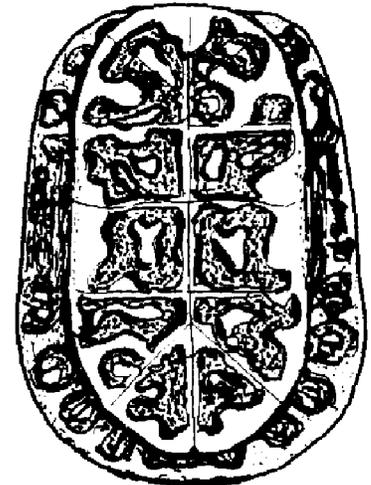
Chrysemys picta



A very common turtle in Kansas ponds, lakes, and slow moving streams and rivers, they are often seen basking on logs. Because their shell lacks height, they are sometimes mistaken for softshell turtles. Painted turtles are

so named because of the red and black pattern on the plastron (lower shell). These turtles are omnivores, eating plants and living as well as dead animals. Males are smaller than females and have long claws on their front legs. A pretty pattern of yellow stripes is found on their face and neck. Western

painted turtles hibernate under the mud in winter.



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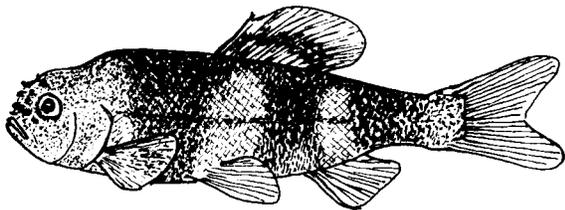
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FATHEAD MINNOW

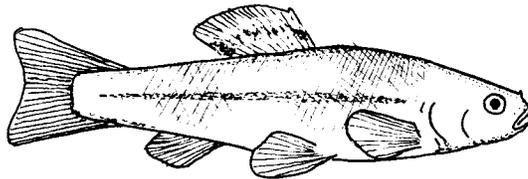
Pimephales promelas



The fathead minnow is common throughout the state.

It is three inches long, greenish in color, with a faint, dark stripe along the side and sometimes across the dorsal fin. It is extremely hardy. The male, during late spring mating season, takes on a very different

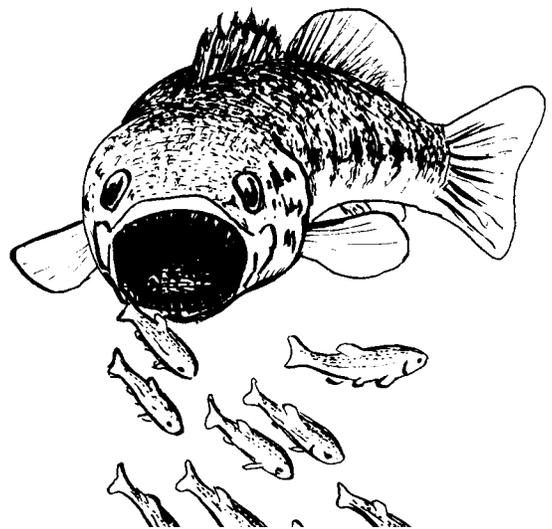
look. It acquires a fatty bulge,



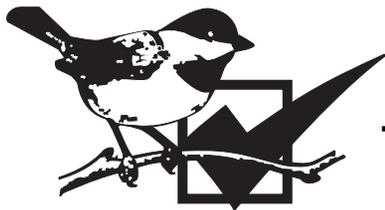
just behind the head, on its back. The body patterns consist of wide, dark and light bands. A number of "nuptial tubercles," used in courtship, develop on the front of the head.

Fatheads are a favorite forage fish (food) for larger fish.

They are often raised and stocked in ponds as food for game fish.



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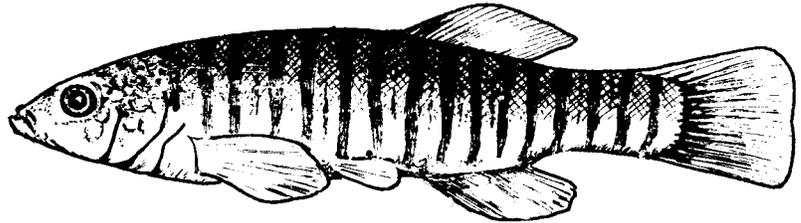
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KILLIFISH

Family Cyprinodontidae

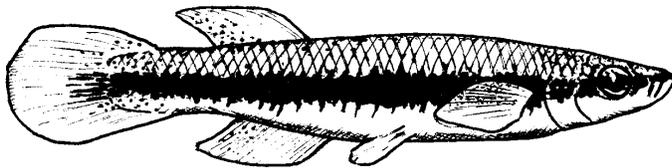
Killfishes are found in the United States inland freshwaters and along the coasts in brackish or salt water. There are many species; most are small with flashy color patters. The two species in Kansas are about three inches in length.



PLAINS KILLIFISH

Fundulus zebrinus

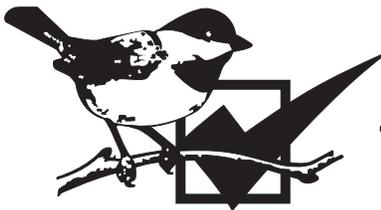
This fish is found, sometimes in large numbers, throughout the western half of Kansas. It is very tolerant of saline and alkaline water, and may even prefer it. In some western waters, it may be the only species present.



BLACKSTRIPE TOPMINNOW

Fundulus notatus

An inhabitant of small, clear streams in the southeast quarter of the state, it is often found in groups at the water's surface. A prominent, pale spot on top of its head helps to identify this species. Blackstripes are very good aquarium fish.



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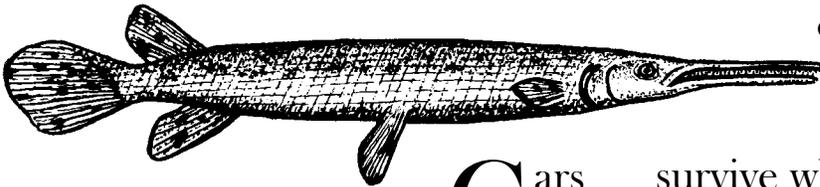
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LONGNOSE GAR

Lepisosteus osseus

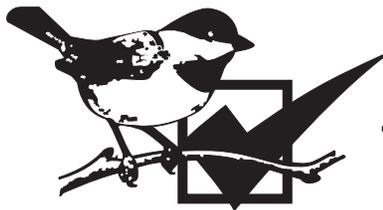
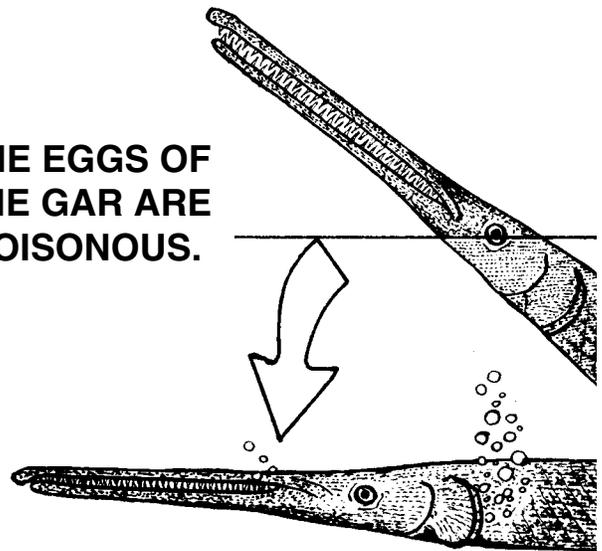


Gars are primitive, long bodied fish with an armor of hard scales. The scales have been used as jewelry. The longnose gar is an inhabitant of most rivers and creeks in the eastern half of the state. They can reach a length of five feet and weigh more than 30 pounds. The snout is lined with many sharp teeth, enabling them to feed on other fish. Gars have a functional lung as well as gills. They can gulp air from above the water's surface and burr it

out, retaining the oxygen in the air.

This helps them to survive when the oxygen content of the water becomes low.

THE EGGS OF THE GAR ARE POISONOUS.



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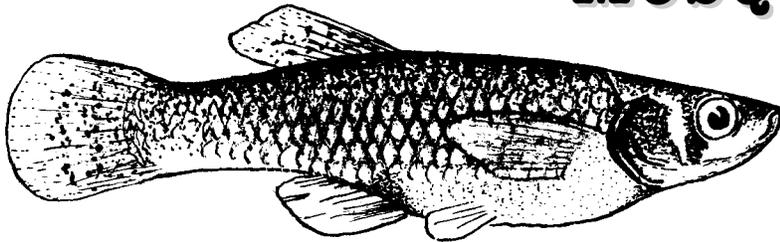
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MOSQUITOFISH

Gambusia Affinis

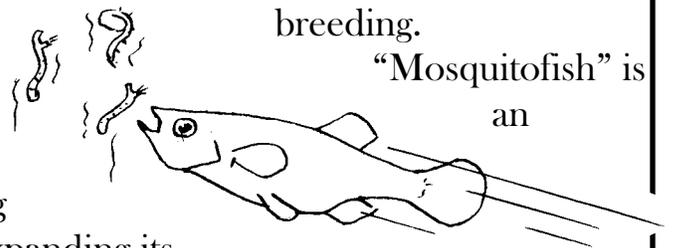


These are tiny fish (females are less than two inches in length) with round tails and silvery to olive colored bodies. To assist in feeding at the surface, the top of the head is flattened and the mouth is set at an angle. The mosquitofish is not native to Kansas. It was accidentally introduced into a number of stream and rivers systems in the southern and eastern quarters of

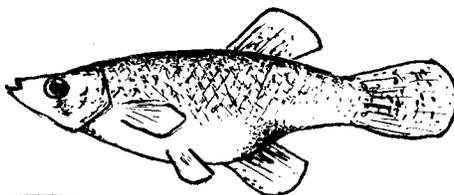
the state. The colder weather of northern Kansas will be a limiting factor for expanding its range. These fish are livebearers, the only Kansas fish that does

anal fin which is used in breeding.

“Mosquitofish” is an

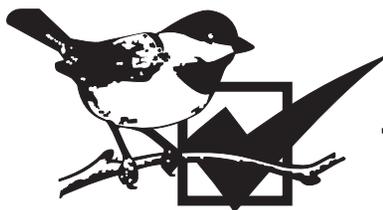


appropriate name for these tiny fish, for they feed upon mosquitoes avidly when they are present. These fish have been stocked into many aquatic habitats as a mosquito control measure. Large fish will feed upon these tiny fish, often making restocking a necessity.



not lay eggs.

Female may have several broods per season. The male is smaller than the female and has an elongated



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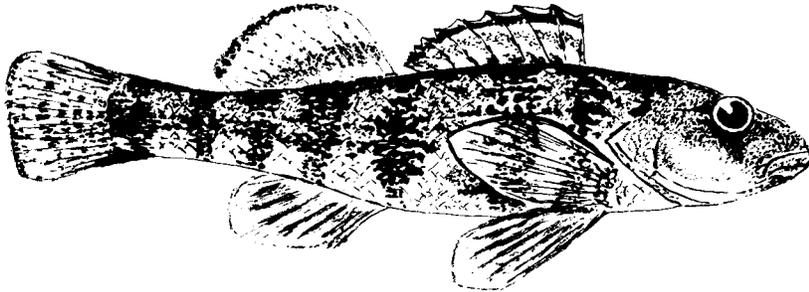
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ORANGE-THROAT DARTER

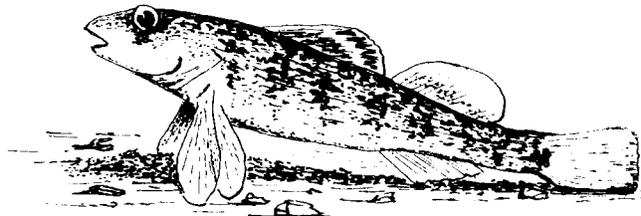
Etheostoma spectabile



One of the most beautiful fishes of Kansas, but rarely seen because of its small size of two inches or less.

The breeding male exhibits a rainbow of colors; blue, red, and orange. They occur over much of Kansas, in the riffles of small streams, but are most abundant over the eastern third of the state. Darters spend much of their time on the bottom of streams. They use their pectoral and pelvic fins as front supports and their tail

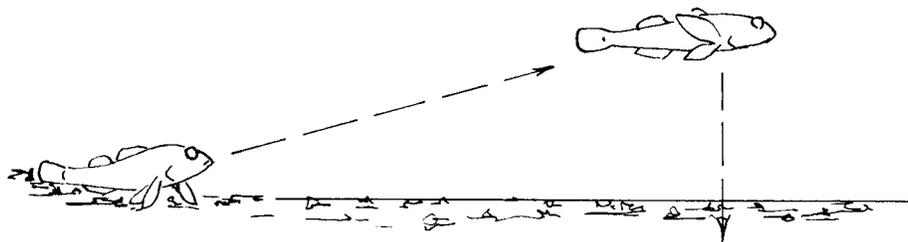
as the rear member of the tripod. This behavior makes it appear like the fish has front



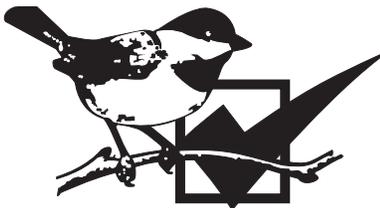
legs. To successfully live in an aquarium, they require well aerated water with a temperature

below 70 degrees F. and live food. The males are very territorial during the breeding season and will not allow other males to enter their claimed space. Darters obtained their name from their movement; suddenly

darting upward and forward and slowly floating back to the bottom.



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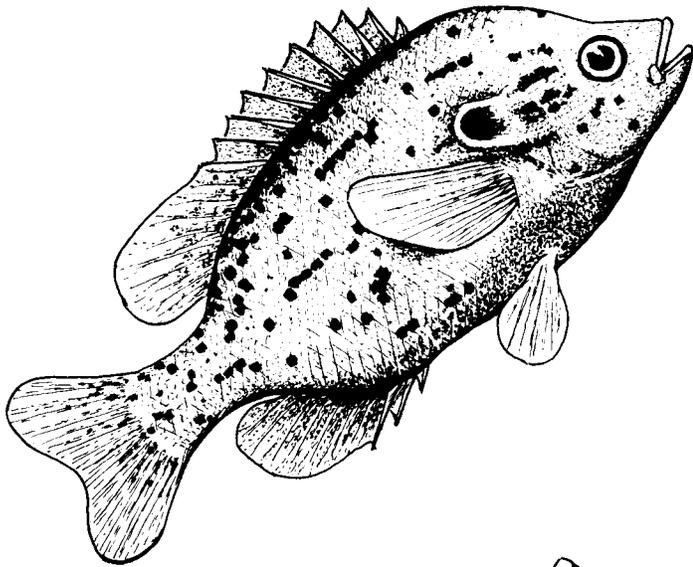
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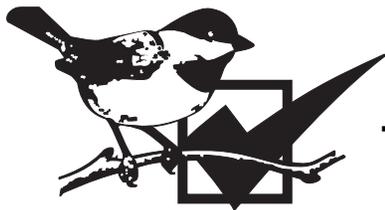
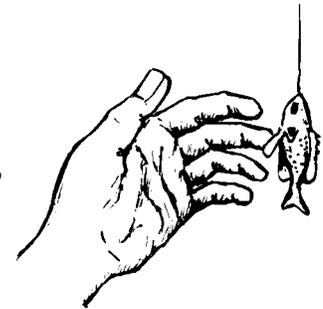
ORANGESPOTTED SUNFISH

Lepomis humilis

Its tolerance for water fluctuations and bottom types accounts for the orangespotted sunfish being one of the most abundant sunfish in Kansas. The male is very colorful in the breeding season with its orange head, breast and fins. Square, red spots, sometimes in short row, are also scattered on its sides. A distinguishing feature of the orangespotted sunfish is its long ear flap (the operculum extension) with its black center and wide, white margin. Their food consists almost entirely of insects. Orangespotted sunfish are not considered large enough (maximum size about four



inches), by most anglers, to be a game fish. Most often they are caught on bait intended for other fish. They do serve as a forage fish for other game species, such as largemouth bass and catfish.



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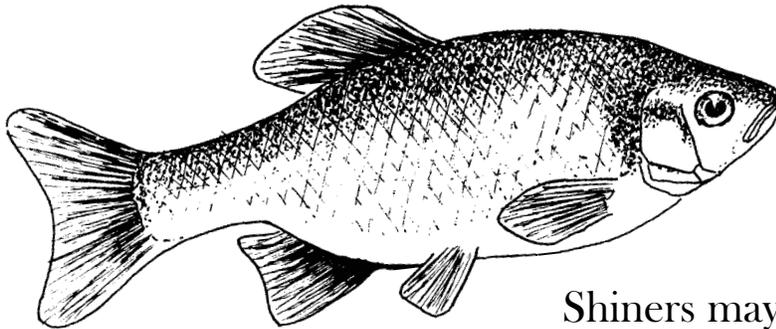
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RED SHINER

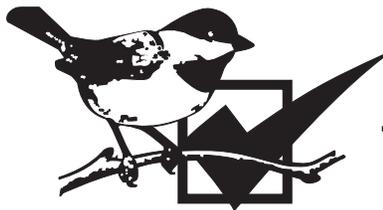
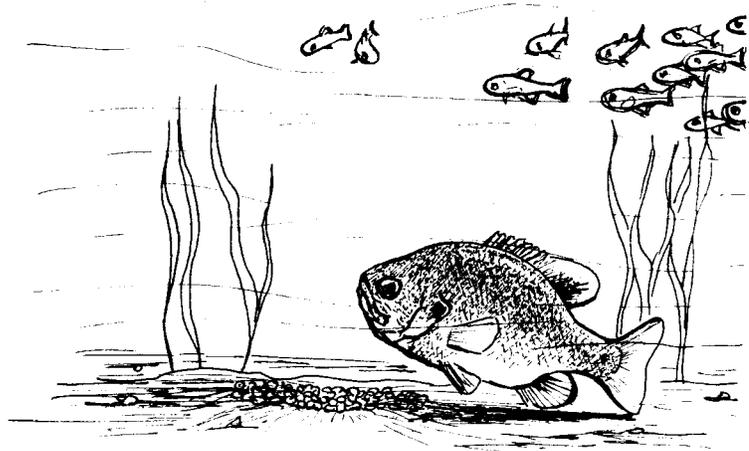
Cyprinella lutrensis



These small, silvery minnows are widespread and abundant throughout Kansas. They serve as a forage fish for many predator fish. During the mating season, the male becomes silvery-blue with bright red-colored fins and tail. Eggs are often laid in the nest of other fish.

Shiners may congregate above a nest of green sunfish. They dart down to deposit their eggs in the nest when the male

is distracted from the nest site. Young shiners can also become food for the newly hatched green sunfish.



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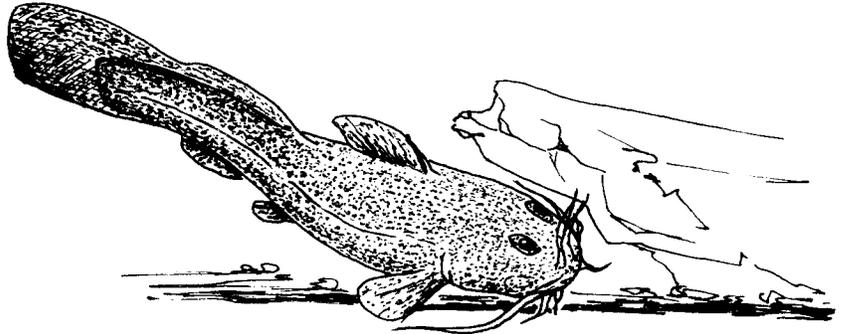
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STONECAT

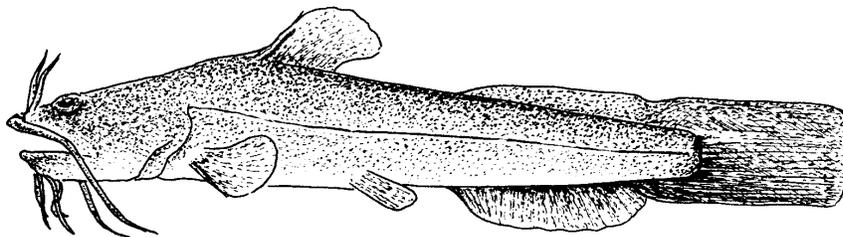
Noturus flavus



Stonecats are small catfish that are often mistaken for bullheads. They can

be distinguished from bullheads by their fatty, dorsal fin and tail. The bullhead has a separate dorsal fin

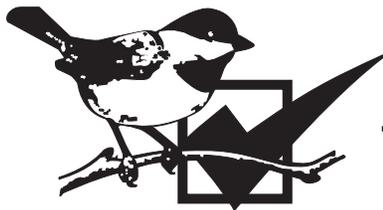
the eastern third of Kansas. They reach a length of four to eight inches.



be distinguished from bullheads by their fatty, dorsal fin which is attached to

and tail. These fish are fairly common in the rocky bottoms of the larger streams of

Stonecats feed upon invertebrates found along the bottom of streams and ponds. Their very sensitive whiskers aid in the detection of food.



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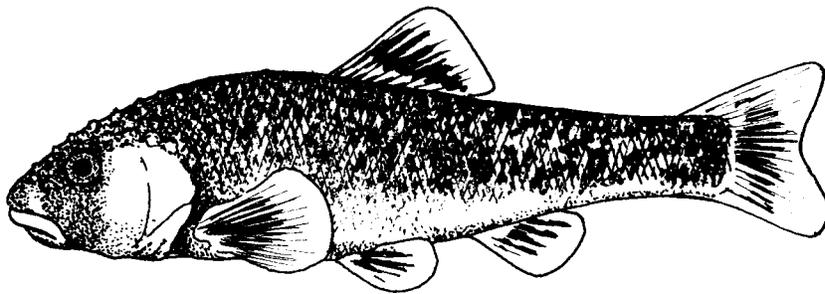
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STONEROLLER

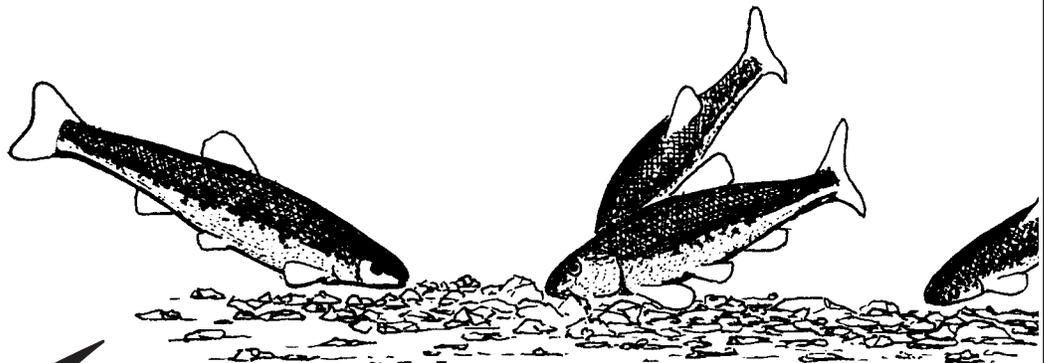
Campostoma anomalum



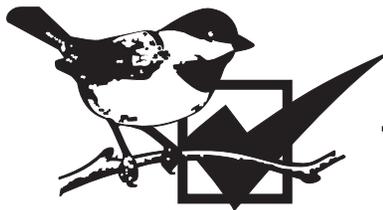
Stonerollers occur over the entire state, but are more abundant in the eastern half. They prefer small streams with clean water and gravel riffles. These small minnows (maximum seven inches) are herbivores, feeding on algae and bottom plant material. The habit of groups of stonerollers grazing in and among small rocks and

stone, often flashing their white undersides, gives them their common name.

Breeding males are distinguished by the dark blotches in their brightly colored fins. They also acquire a number of bumps on their head known as "Nuptial Tubercles." They serve as an important forage food for other fish.



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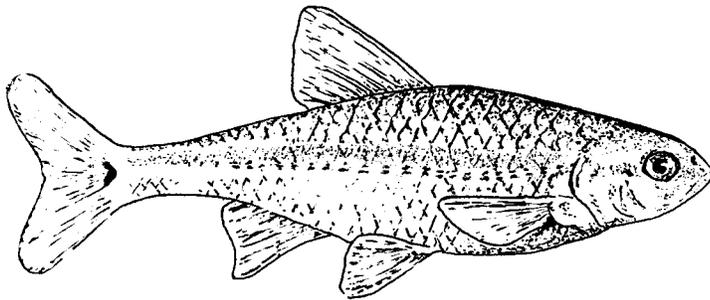
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There are state and national lists of plant and animal species which recognize the precarious status of these populations. Without public awareness and intervention, these species will become extinct. Such species are grouped into either Threatened or Endangered (the latter the more serious). Two "threatened" Kansas fishes are present here; both are small minnow types.

TOPEKA SHINER



Notropis topeka

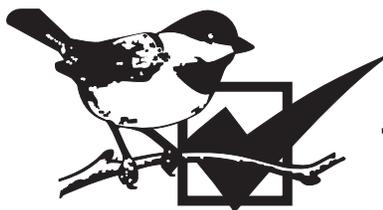
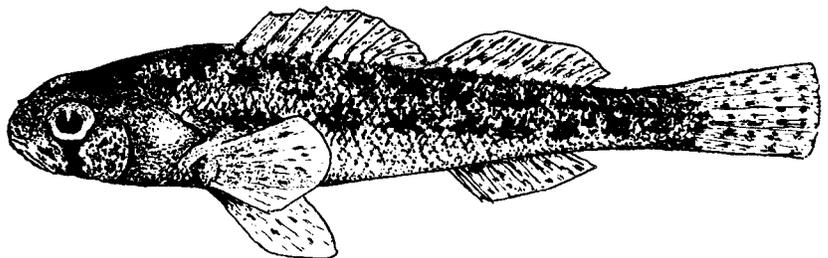
Once widely distributed throughout Kansas, these small, silvery fish are now restricted to the northeastern quarter of the state. They prefer clear, permanent pools in the upper reaches of streams.

Breeding males show a red line in their fins. Spawning is from late June to August. The breeding male closely resembles the more common sand shiner.

ARKANSAS DARTER

Etheostoma cragini

These fish are restricted to the sandy, bottom springs in tributaries of the Arkansas River. Darters are named for their sudden forward and upward movements. They feed on a variety of insects.



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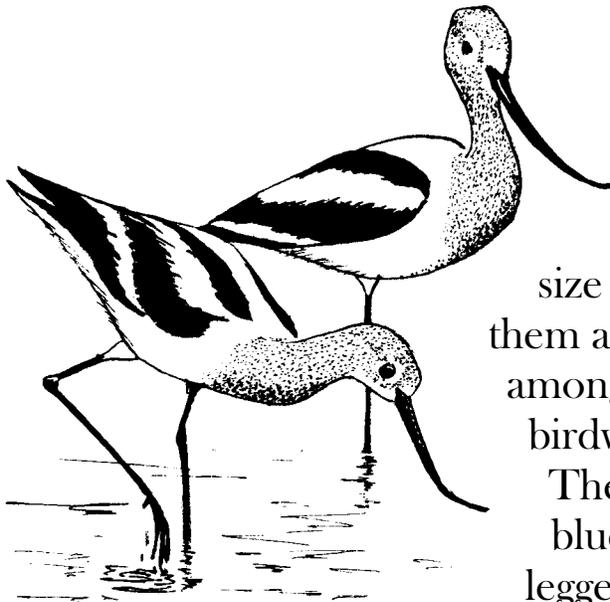
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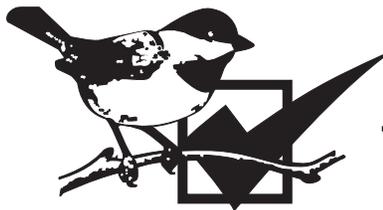
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AVOCET

Recurvirostra americana



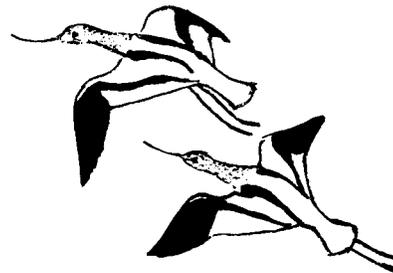
Avocets are common over the western half of the United States. They are among the most striking of our wading birds. Their attractive black and white pattern and graceful carriage,



along with their size make them a favorite among birdwatchers. These long, blue-gray legged waders, with their

peculiar long, upturned bill are easy to identify in wetlands, such as Cheyenne Bottoms. They are gregarious, often seen in large flocks,

swinging their long bill side to side through the water. They will readily use their displeased voice when disturbed. Breeding birds will have a tan head and neck.



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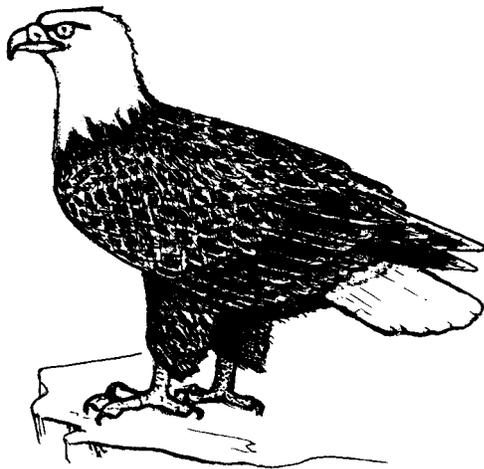
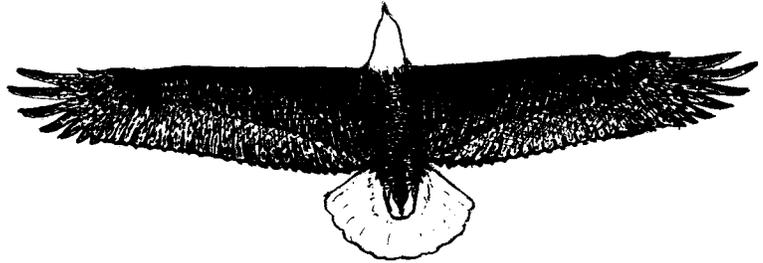
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BALD EAGLE

Haliaeetus leucocephalus

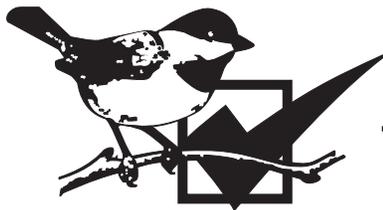


The bald eagle is only found in North America. The widespread use of DDT, and habitat destruction combined to making this once common

bird a rare sight. Federal protection and a public awareness program have contributed to the restoration of the bald eagle over much of its former range.

Adult eagles can be easily identified by their white head and tail feathers. Food consists of fish, carrion, and occasionally small mammals. The great seal of the United States, featuring the

bald eagle, has remained unchanged since its adoption in 1782. Eagles, unlike vultures, use straight, flat wings to soar.



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BARN SWALLOW

Hirundo rustica



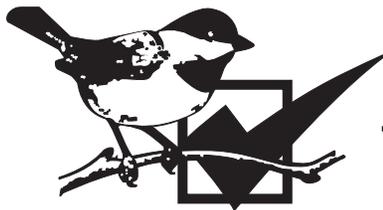
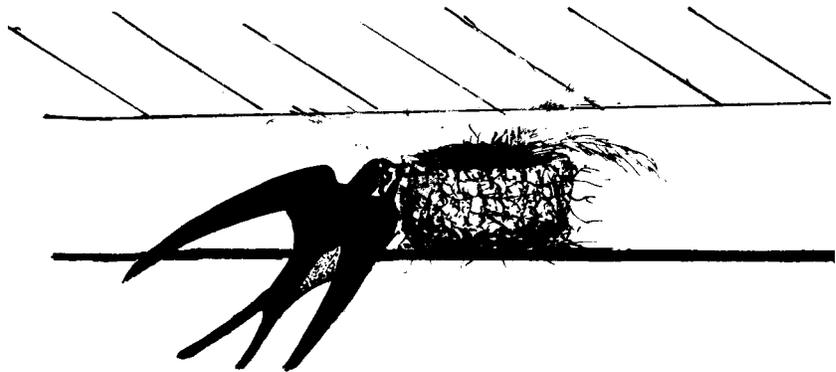
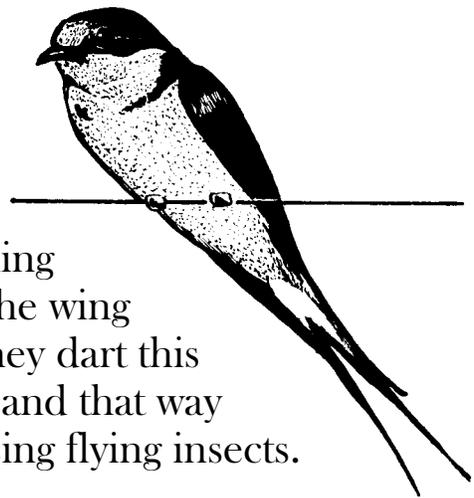
Like a number of other birds,

the barn swallows have given up their former life style in order to live more closely with man. Barn swallows now build their mud nests on beams in barns, sheds, or front porches. The nests are often lined with feathers from other birds, especially poultry.

Their long, forked tail, metallic blue back and wings, and rusty colored throat help to identify this lovely bird.

Swallows are very graceful flyers, often

feeding on the wing as they dart this way and that way chasing flying insects.



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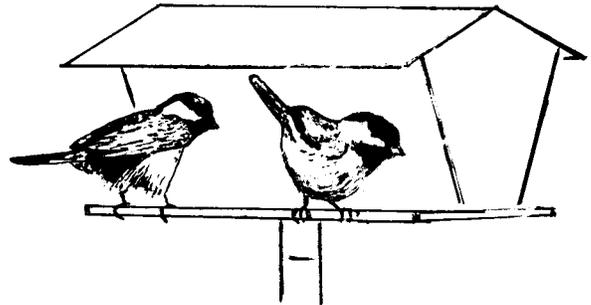
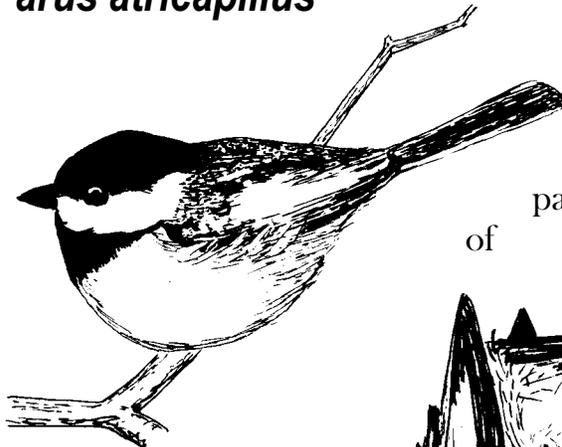
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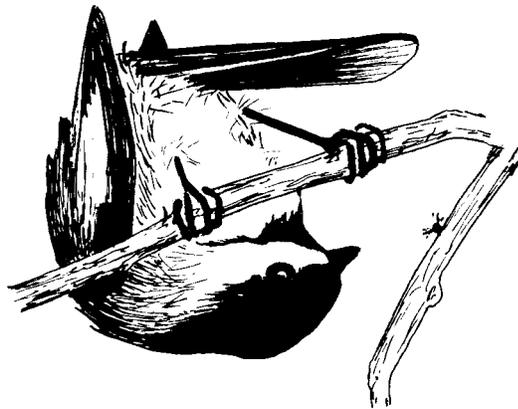
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BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE

Parus atricapillus



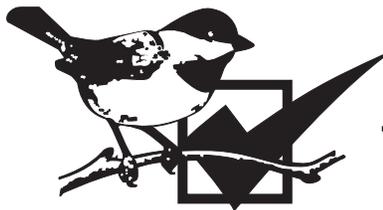
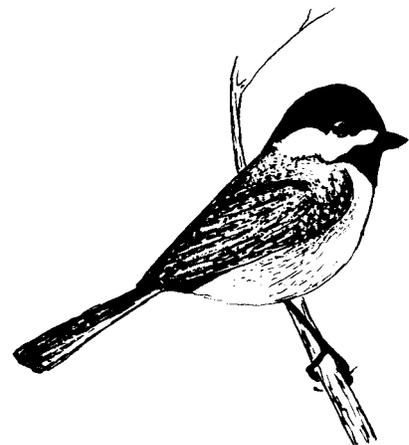
pattern
of



The lack of white on the wings of the Carolina chickadee will help you to identify it from the more common black-capped chickadee.

This handsome black and white patterned fellow is common visitor to winter bird feeders. Its constant “Chick-A-Dee-Dee” call is a familiar sound in woodlands and parks. It is no wonder this bird was chosen as the symbol for the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks non-game wildlife program. The strikingly bold

this charming little bird makes it easy to identify. If you like acrobats, the chickadee can supply you with plenty of acrobatic moves. It never stops moving and is continuously changing its position as it feeds.



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SOMETHING WILD!

By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.

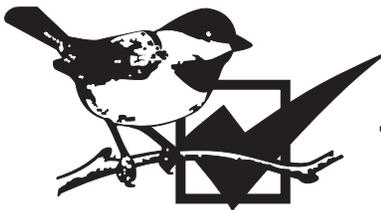
BLUE JAY

Cyanocitta cristata

One of our more familiar birds, this noisy fellow has been known to harass other birds, cats, dogs, and even humans. It has a melodious bell like call along with the familiar “pump handle” and “thief-thief-thief” calls.

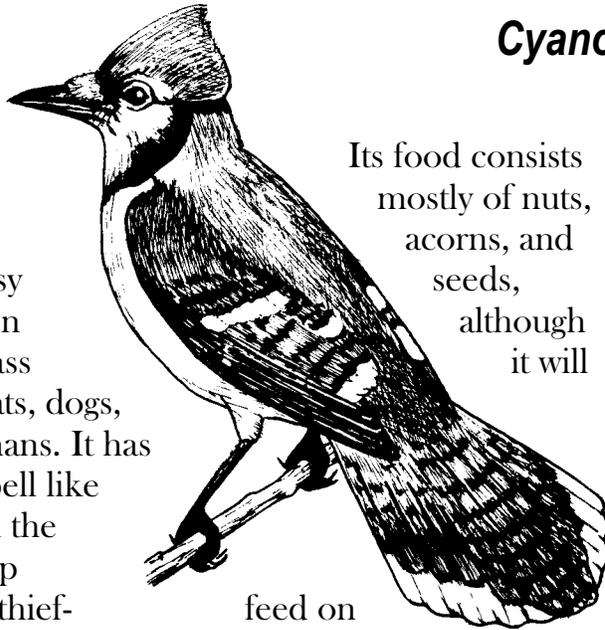
The blue jay belongs to the same family as the crow, raven and magpie, and shares many traits with them, including nest robbing.

Although generally unwanted at bird feeders because of its bullish behavior, its antics can be highly entertaining.



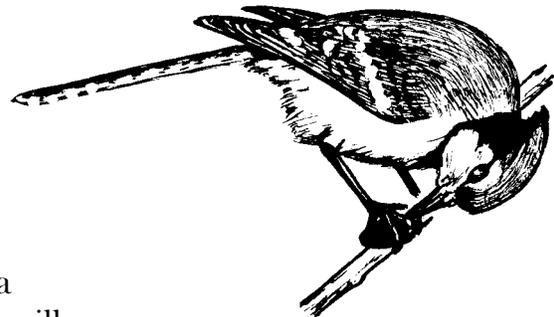
Its food consists mostly of nuts, acorns, and seeds, although it will

the covering with rapid woodpecker-like strikes of the bill.



feed on insects, mice, eggs, carrion and most anything available.

When removing the hard covering of a seed, the jay will hold the seed between a stationary object, such as a limb, and its toes, breaking off



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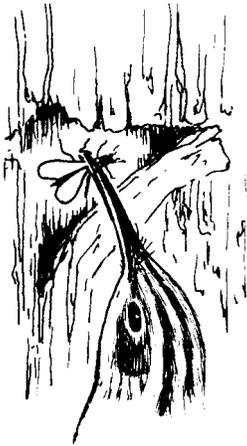
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BROWN CREEPER

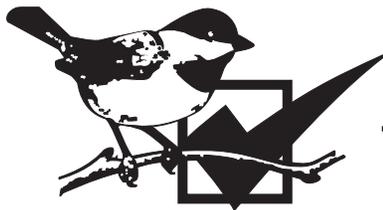
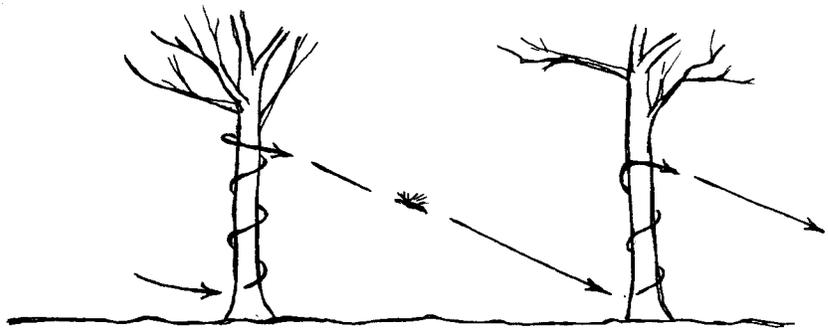
Certhia americana



A rather common visitor to Kansas in winter, this small, brown bird likes to work up and down tree trunks in its search for insect and larva hidden in the cracks of the bark.

Its stiff tail feathers serve as both a prop and balance device. Its four-noted, sweet song is only heard on its breeding grounds.

The flight pattern of this bird is one of its most noticeable characteristics. It ascends up a tree in a spiral pattern until it is one half to two thirds to the top; at this point it flies to the base of another tree and starts the whole process over again.



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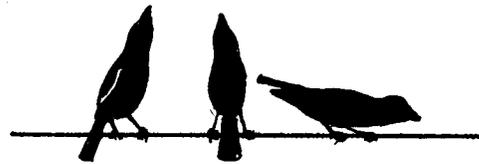
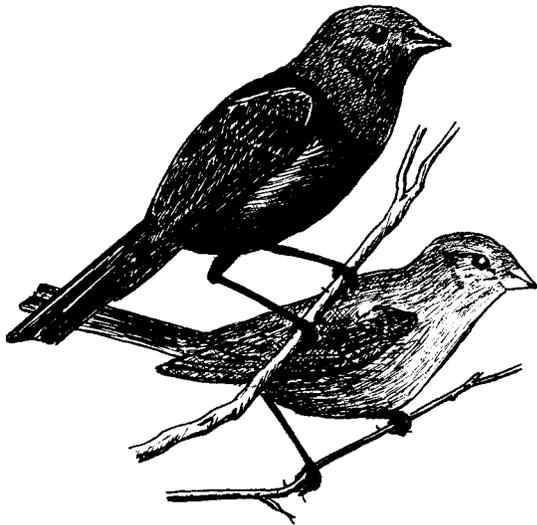
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BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD

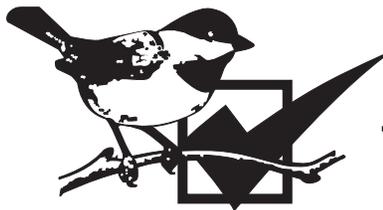
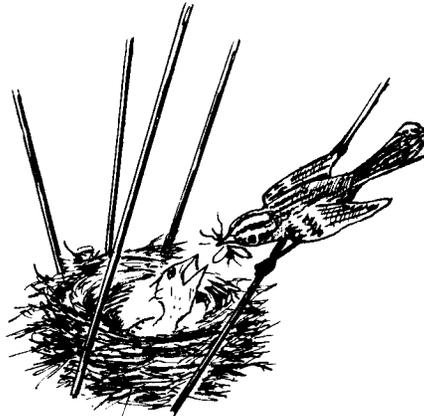
Molothrus ater



Cowbirds are abundant in Kansas, especially around feedlots and farms. The name comes from their association with cattle. They feed on the insects that are displaced by the movement of cattle. As an insect eater,

cowbirds are very beneficial. However, cowbirds will lay their eggs in the nest of the other

birds. The adoptive parents hatch and raise the intruder at the expense of their own brood. A characteristic pose of the cowbird, when perched, is to have its bill pointed almost straight up.



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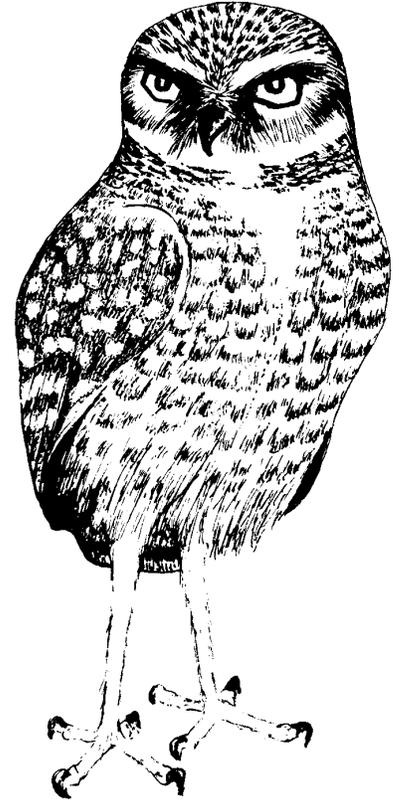
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BURROWING OWL

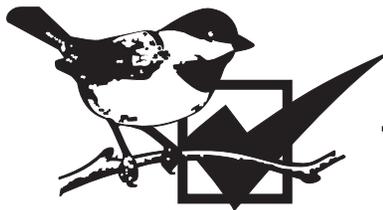
Athene cunicularia

These small, long legged, sandy-colored owls are mainly terrestrial, living in the burrows of various mammals, especially prairie dogs. They can excavate their own burrow in the right soil conditions. Their greatest enemy is the poison man uses to eradicate prairie dogs. When prairie dog colonies are eliminated, so are burrowing owls. Their populations have been declining in recent years. Burrowing owls are also found in South America. Prairie dogs do not occur in South

America, so the owls use the burrows of the viscacha, a rodent which is an ecological equivalent of the prairie dog. When excited, these owls will frequently bob and bow up and down in or near their burrows. They also can imitate the warning rattle of a rattlesnake. Burrowing owls will feed on almost anything they can catch; including insects, lizards, birds and small snakes and mammals. Burrowing owls rank second, behind the barn owl, in their economic



importance to man. Six to twelve eggs are laid in the burrow in early spring. The newly hatched young stay very close to the burrow's entrance while the parents hunt for food.

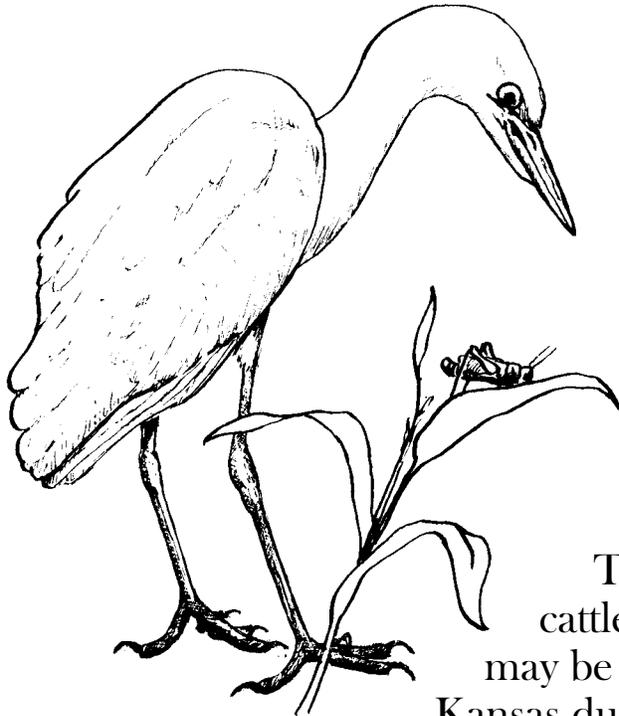


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CATTLE EGRET

Bubulcus ibis

been moving north ever since.

Today, cattle egrets may be seen in

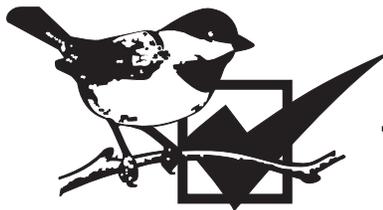
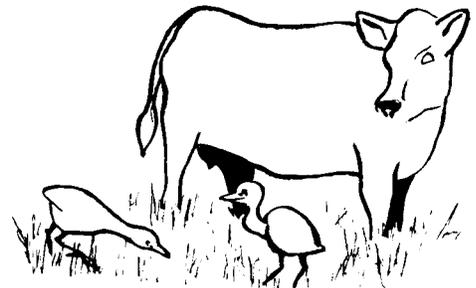
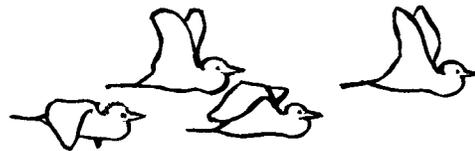
Kansas during the warmer parts of the year.

They are small white herons and may be seen among cattle in pastures and barnyards.

Insects are the mainstay of their

diet. Egrets are seen near cattle because they feed on the insects that are disturbed because of the movement of the cattle.

In films of Africa, you have seen white birds around large animals; sometimes standing on the back of a rhino. Several years ago, these birds got across the Atlantic to South America. They have



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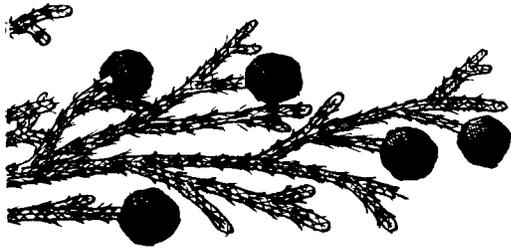
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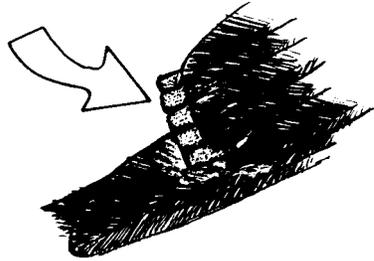
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CEDAR WAXWING

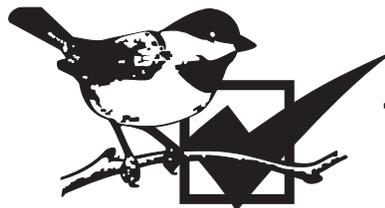
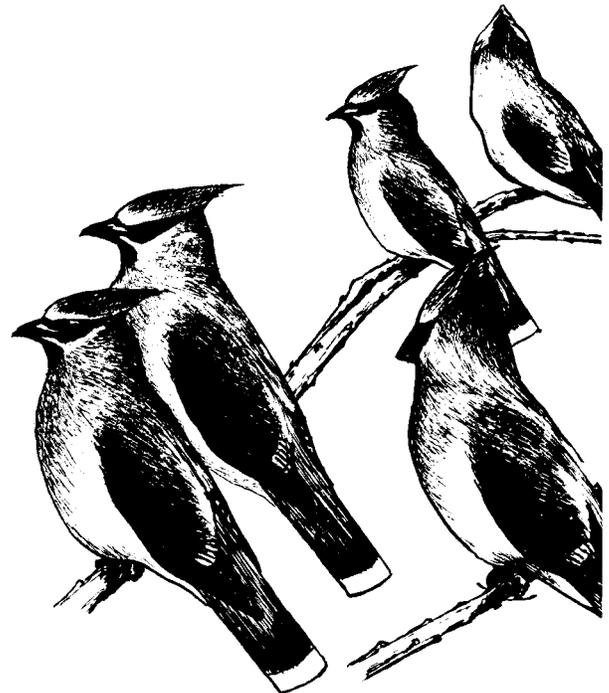
Bombycilla cedrorum



This sleek bird, having the appearance of being made out of plastic, is commonly seen in Kansas during late fall and winter. It is easily identified by its reddish-brown color, black mask and crest, and yellow tipped tail band.



diet. The term “waxwing” comes from the odd red, waxy secretions at the tips of the secondary wing feathers.



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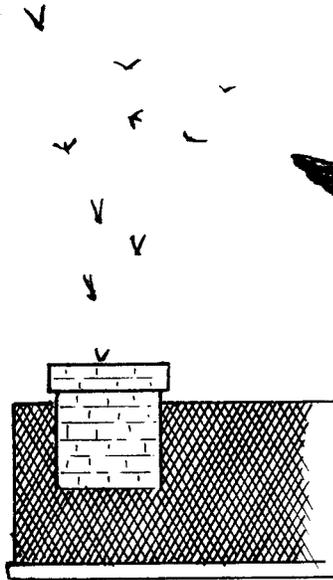
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CHIMNEY SWIFT

Chaetura pelagica

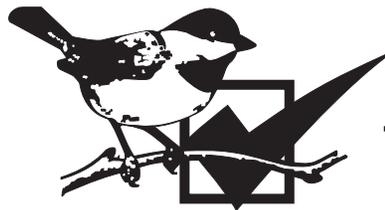
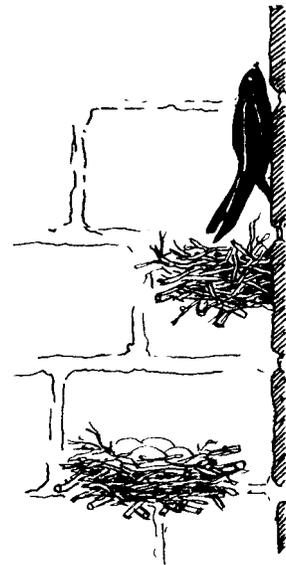


Once, these small birds nested in hollow trees. Now chimneys provide a handier site. The nest is made of small sticks, held together and attached to the wall of the chimney by sticky saliva.

Chimney swifts are colonial birds; a considerable number of birds may roost in the same chimney. An interesting sight is to watch, at



dusk, swifts funneling down a chimney to roost. The spines on the tail of the chimney swift assist in holding the bird to their vertical perch. Their main food is flying insects.



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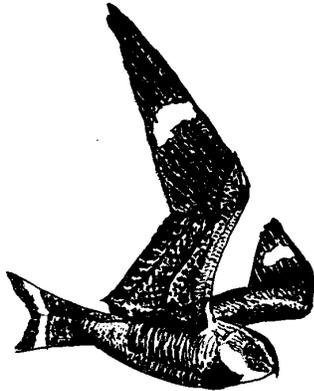
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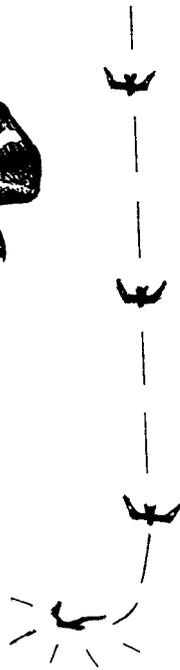
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COMMON NIGHTHAWK

Chordeiles minor



During the summer months, in the early evening hours, look overhead and you might see nighthawks. Look for a bird with long, pointed wings with a white wing stripes. Nighthawks belong to a group of birds known as “goatsuckers.” They are closely related to the poorwill, whippoorwill, and chuckwill’s widow. Unlike their relatives above, all named for

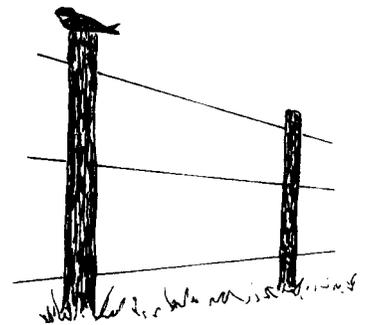
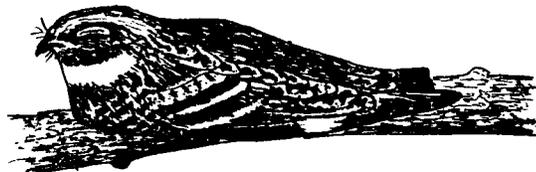
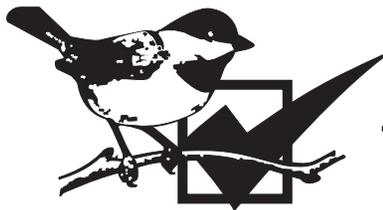


their distant call, the nighthawk’s call is only a nasally “PEEENT.”

Their tiny beak hides an amazingly large mouth. Sensitive bristles, at the base of the upper beak, aid in creating a very effective insect trap. Although their flight may appear erratic, they are just changing course to capture flying insects. An interesting aerial display, by the male, is to dive straight down towards the ground and pull out at the last second. The quick change in direction causes the wind to rush over the wings, creating a



loud, startling roar. Nighthawks sleep most of the day, resting lengthwise on limbs or on the top of fence posts. They construct no nest; instead, they place the eggs directly upon the ground. In cities, they often nest on the flat, graveled roofs of buildings. Adults will perform an “injured bird” act to lure predators away from the nest.



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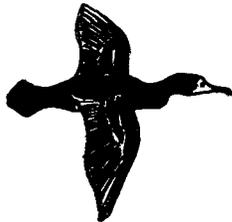
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DOUBLED-CRESTED CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax auritus

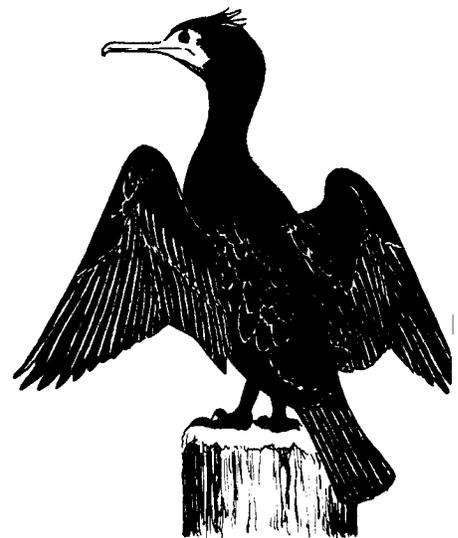


This large, dark-colored aquatic bird is commonly seen around large reservoirs. When in flight, it appears to have a kink in its outstretched neck. On water, the bird has a very low profile; often only the head is visible.

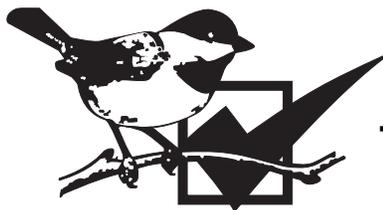


The cormorants can dive to great depths to feed upon fish. In

Japan, it is used to catch fish. The fisherman secures the neck of the bird so it can't swallow the caught fish. This allows him to reel the bird in along with its catch. Unlike ducks, the cormorant does not have special glands to water-proof its feathers. It must air dry its feathers and is often seen holding its wings out to dry.



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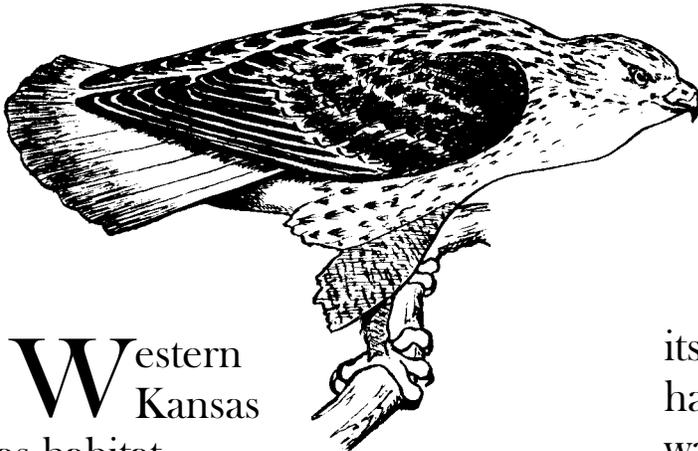
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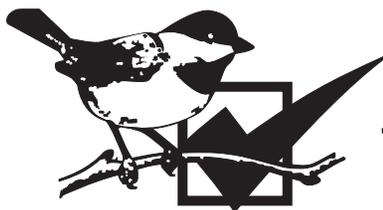
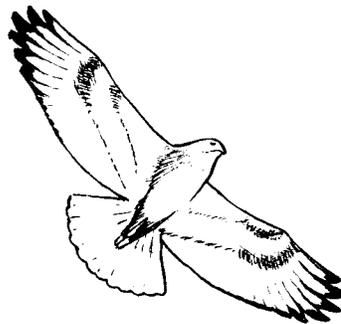
FERRUGINOUS HAWK

Buteo regalis



Western Kansas has habitat suitable for this splendid hawk. This grassland bird nests in a variety of locations; on the ground, among plies of rock, atop of haystack and on cliffs. This is a large bird, sometimes mistaken for an eagle, with a dark, reddish coloring above and white underneath. When hunting for rodents, the ferruginous hawk does not hover like

its closely related rough-legged hawk. It also has feathers all the way to the beginning of its toes.



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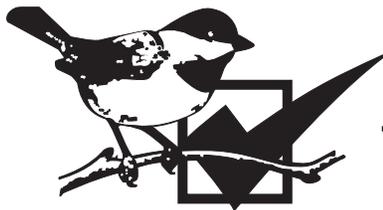
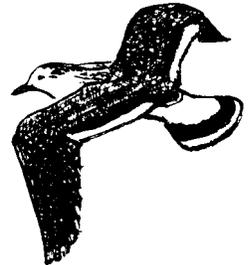
FRANKLIN'S GULL

Larus pipixcan



Are there gulls in Kansas? Yes, there are several species of gulls and one of the most common is the Franklin's gull. It is an inland gull which is omnivorous and eats most anything available. They are often seen in fields following farmers working their land; looking for the worms and insects being turned up.

Colonies of floating nests are built among reeds and other aquatic plants. Adults appear to have had their head dipped in an inkwell. First-year birds have darker wings than the adults and lack the completely black head. They also have a black strip that runs across their tail.



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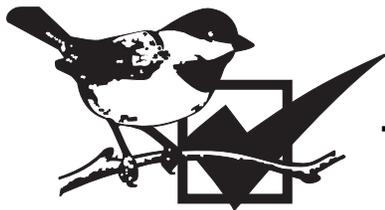
GOLDFINCH

Carduelis tristis

“Wild Canary” is one of the common names attached to this small, yellow and black patterned bird. The white on the wings and tail

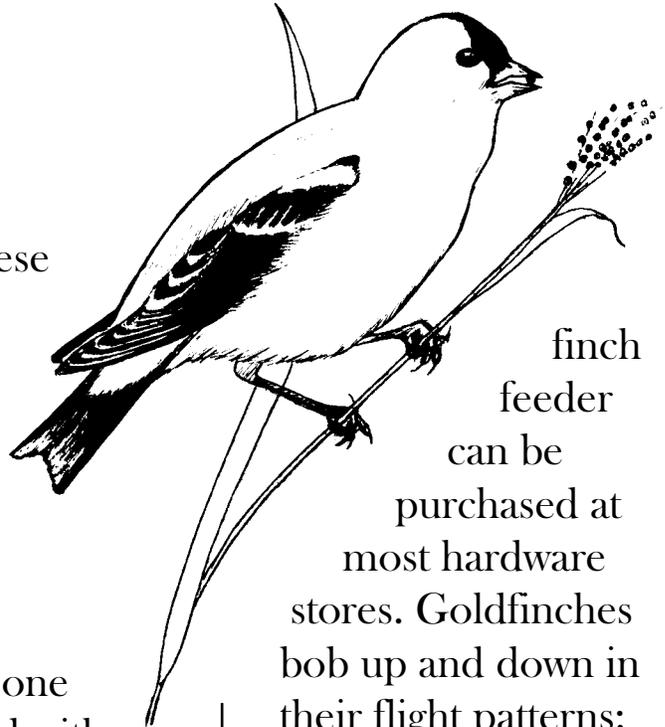


shows up when the bird is in flight. The bright-yellow bird is the male. He displays his eye catching coat during the breeding season and into summer.

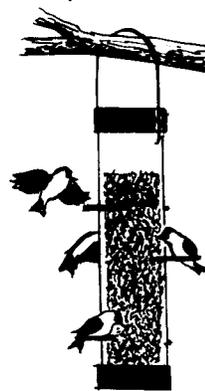


Later, these bright yellow feathers are replaced by the fuller greenish one associated with the female.

This bird is easily attracted to backyard bird feeders. It eats a variety of weed seeds, but seems to prefer the black seed of the thistle. The thistle seed and special



finch feeder can be purchased at most hardware stores. Goldfinches bob up and down in their flight patterns; acting like they are hesitant about where they are going.



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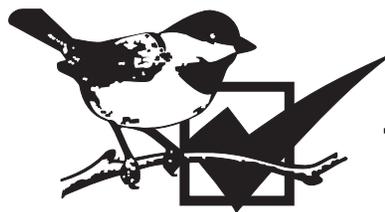


GREAT BLUE HERON

Ardea herodias

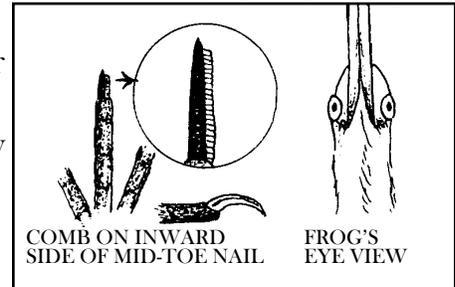
Incorrectly called cranes by many people, these large, shore-wading birds differ from cranes in a number of ways. Herons fly with their necks folded; while cranes have their necks extended in flight. Their wings are also in an arched position in flight, while the wings of cranes form a more flat surface.

These bluish-gray colored birds are often seen standing in roadside ponds or flying overhead



with a very slow wing beat. They mainly feed on frogs and fish. Their eyes are slanted downward, to help view what is below them without having to tilt their head. On the middle toe is a unique comb-like structure which

in early spring. They are



also colonial nesters.

These colonies are often located in sycamore or cottonwood trees, with as many as 20-30 huge nests at a single location. Upon returning to the nest, mated pairs greet each other with much bill clacking and



helps in the grooming of their feathers.

fancy posturing.

Herons are migratory, coming back to Kansas

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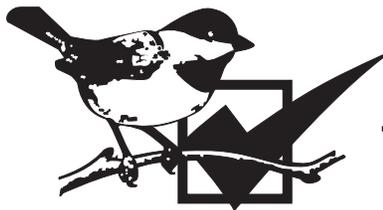
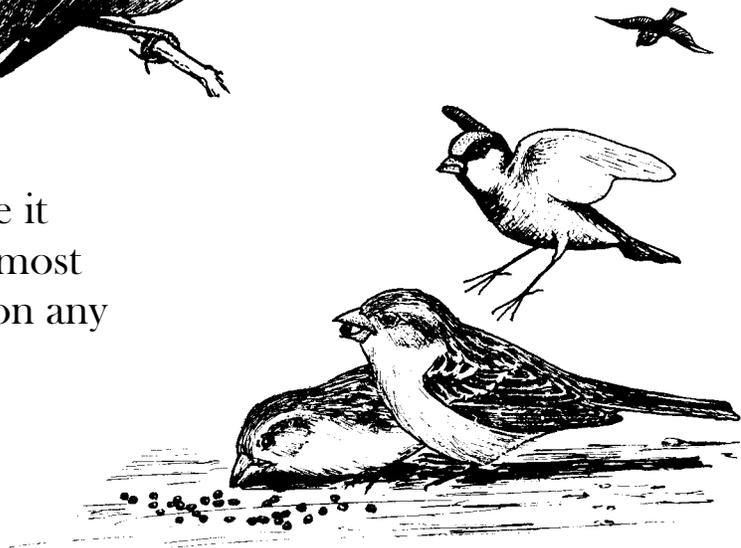
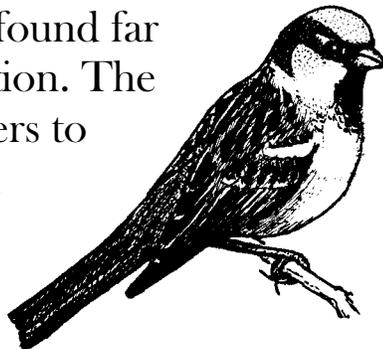
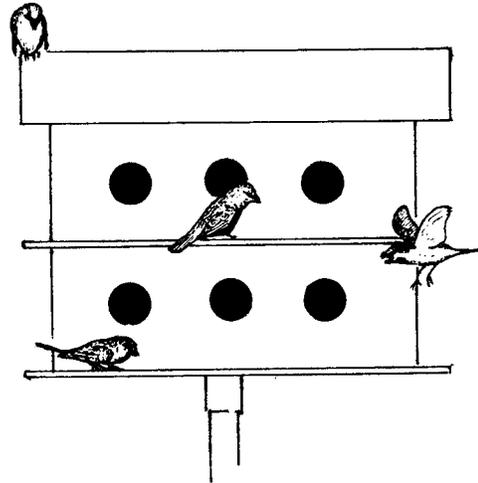
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HOUSE SPARROW

Passer domesticus

This European bird was first introduced in Brooklyn, New York in 1851. Today, this sparrow is common sight throughout the United States.

It has a strong association with man and is seldom found far from human habitation. The house sparrow prefers to nest in cavities of all sorts, especially birdhouses. It has a jump on other migratory birds for nesting sights since it stays through the winter in most areas and is ready to mate on any warm day.

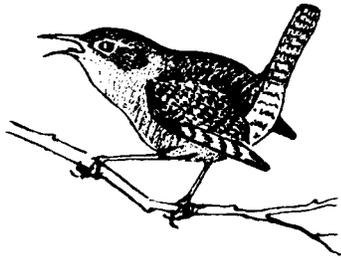


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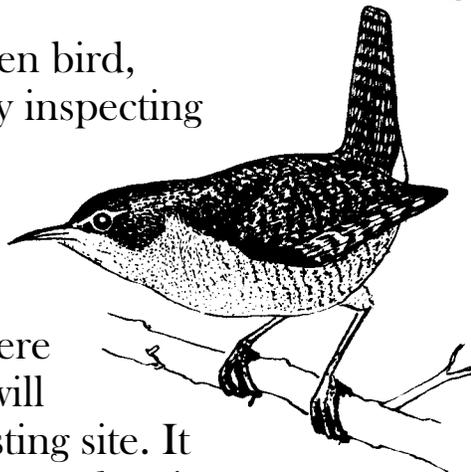


HOUSE WREN

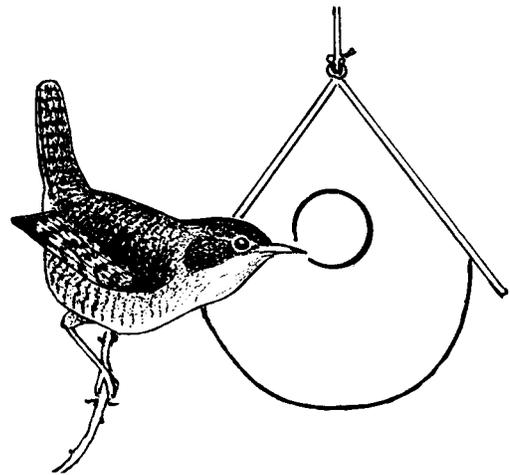
Troglodytes aedon

The house wren is found over the entire state of Kansas. This pert little fellow will establish its right to your backyard as his exclusive territory. Its arrival is often proclaimed as a sure sign of spring. The male will establish several nesting sites from which the female will make the final choice.

It is a great garden bird, noted for diligently inspecting plants for insects. Many people make great efforts to attract these birds, but there is no telling what will be chosen as a nesting site. It could be a hollow gourd, a tin

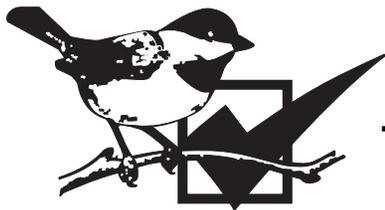


can or an expensive,



highly ornamented birdhouse.

Wrens seem to sing constantly; perhaps because they have a different song for territory defense, mating and nesting.



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LEAST TERN

Sterna antillarum

This once abundant bird of the coasts has experienced a sharp decline because of man's intrusion into its



habitat, especially its nesting sites. Inland, the tern uses the sandbars of broad rivers and salt flats for its nesting colonies. Two or three eggs are laid in open, shallow depressions in the soil and will incubate in about three weeks.

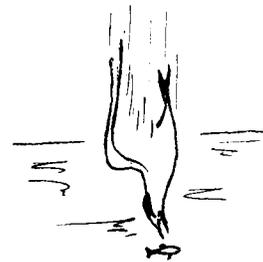
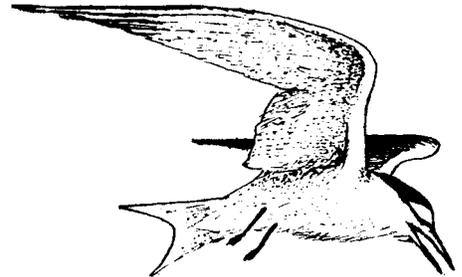
Tiny fish make up the bulk of its diet. The tern will hover above the

water, diving straight down upon sighting a fish. This behavior is different from gulls, which do not make such spectacular, head-first dives.

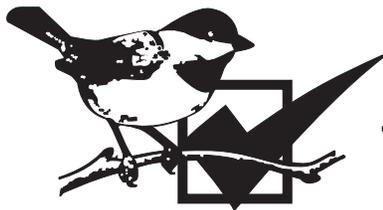
Least terns have the black cap and forked tail, like other terns, but are

smaller and have a white forehead.

Courtship bonds are strengthened through the male's gift of fish to the female. This will continue through the incubation of the eggs and care of the young.



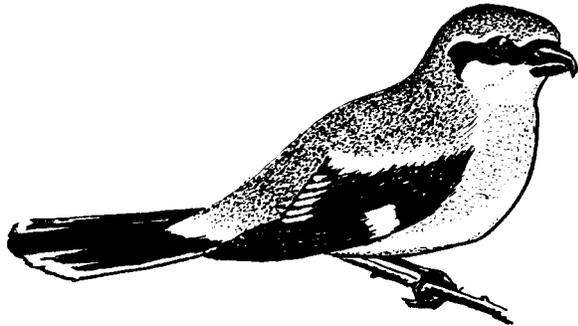
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LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE

Lanius ludovicianus

Shrikes are common in Kansas and can be seen in open areas on top of fence lines, telephone wires and brushy trees. They feed on a variety of animal life: large invertebrates, small mammals, song birds, and small reptiles. They show a considerable amount of white in flight. The black “robber mask” is a good identifying characteristic.

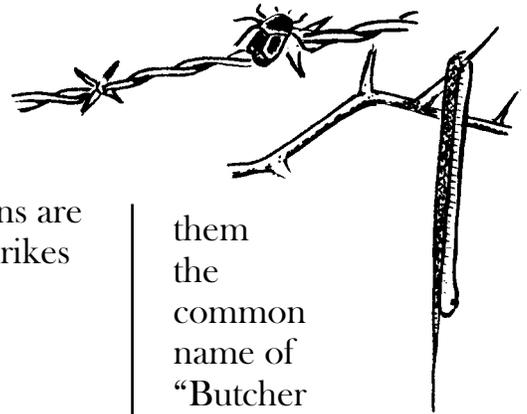
Shrikes can be confused with mockingbirds. They share a similar gray and

black color patterning and both display white in their wings and tail. Their flight patterns are quite different. Shrikes

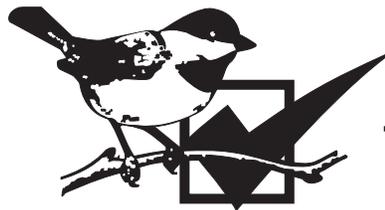


fly with a very rapid wing beat with an undulating flight pattern and often close to the ground. Mocking birds fly straight and with a slower wing beat.

The shrike’s habit of hanging their food from sharp objects has given



them the common name of “Butcher Bird.” It is not unusual to see a grasshopper or small bird stuck on a barbed wired fence or impaled on a thorn. This aids the shrike in holding his food items while he eats. The shrike also has perching feet and not the talons of the birds of prey.



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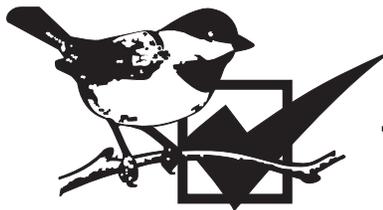
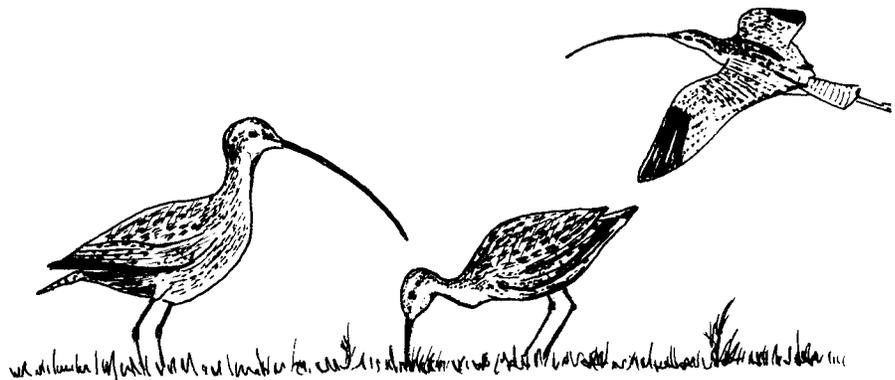
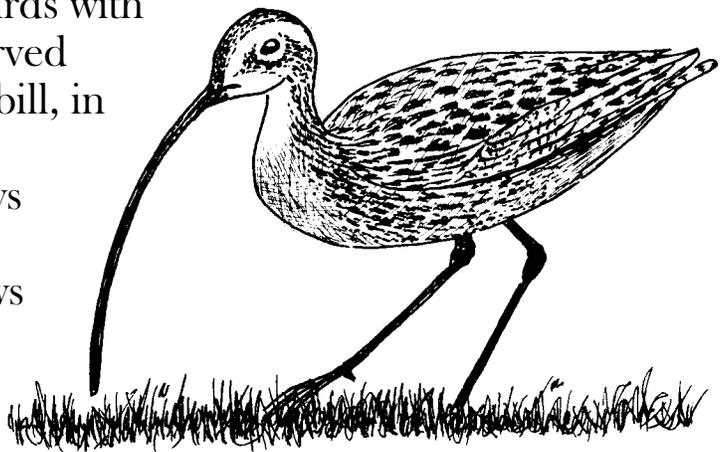
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW

Numenius americanus

Curlews are brown birds with long, downward curved bills. This unusually long bill, in such a large bird, makes identification easy. Curlews are commonly found on mudflats in moist meadows where they utilize their long bill to probe the soil for food. They will also feed on grasshoppers and other surface insects.

It once was feared the long-billed curlew was facing extinction, but it is presently making a comeback.



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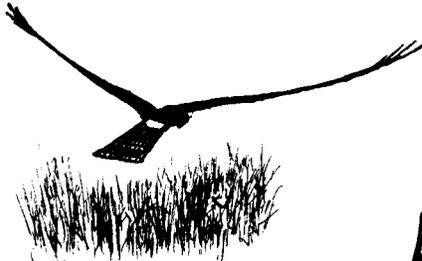
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NORTHERN HARRIER

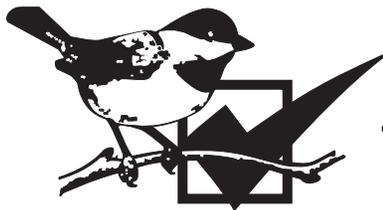
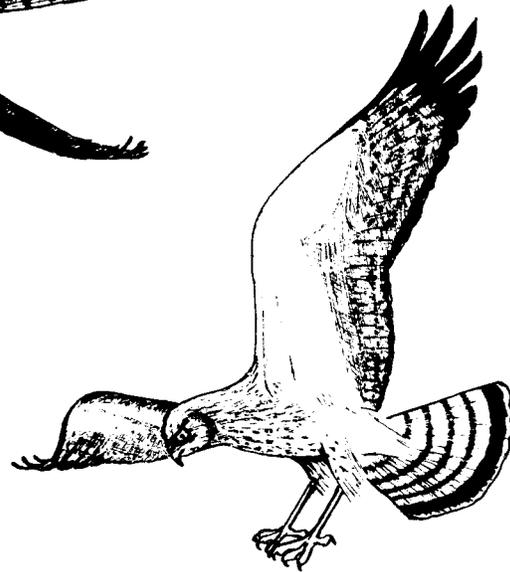
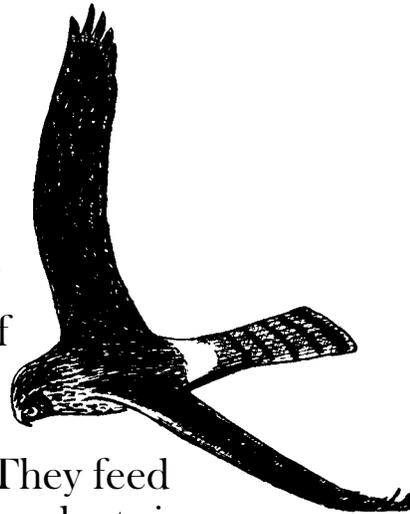
Circus cyaneus



This common hawk is also known as the marsh hawk. The name “harrier” describes its habit of coursing back and forth over a field like a hunting dog. They feed mainly on the small rodents in prairies and overgrown fields.

Two other features aid in the recognition of this species: a white rump patch and the habit of gliding with the wing ends higher than the body.

The female and young are dark brown, whereas the adult male is light blue-gray with black wing tips.



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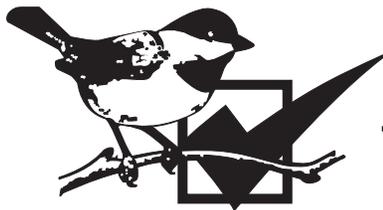
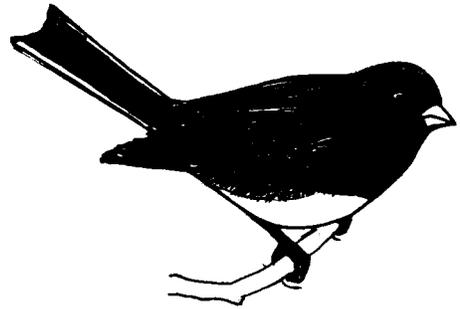
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NORTHERN JUNCO

Junco Hyemalis

This is a slate-colored bird with a black hood and white bell and beak. It is only a winter resident in Kansas, spending the nesting season further north. The juncos is normally a woodland bird, but in winter it is found in hedge rows, and yards, where it moves about with quick, hop like kicks.

The flashing of the outer, white tail feathers is very noticeable in flight.

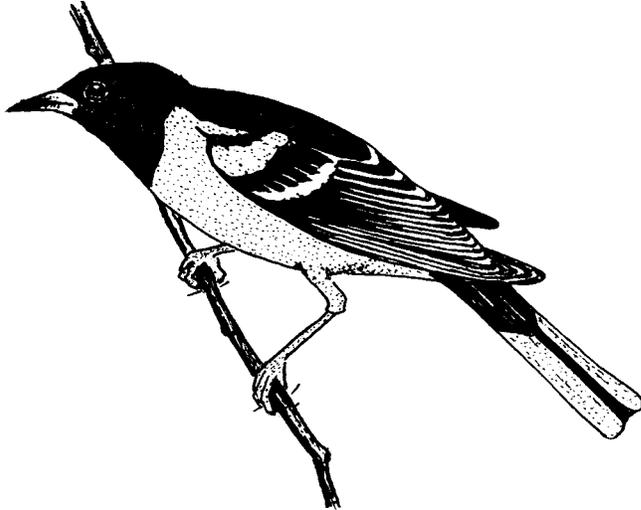


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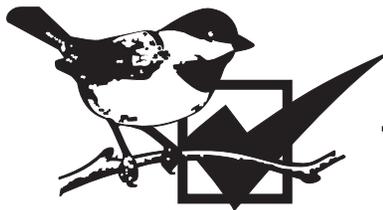
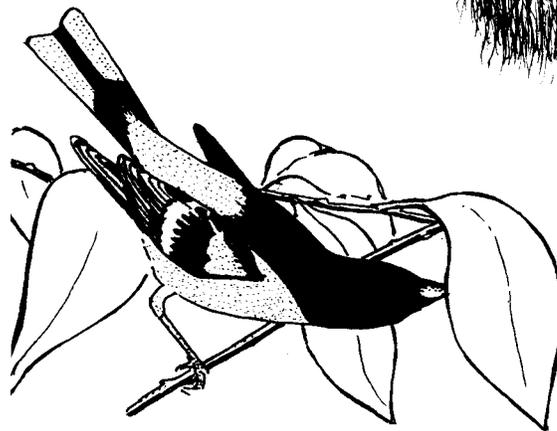


NORTHERN ORIOLE

Icterus galbula

This is one of Kansas' prettiest birds. Most people identify this bird by its yellow-orange and black coloring pattern and its sharp whistle call. It eats caterpillars and other insects found in backyard trees and orchids.

The nest is not usually seen until the leaves have fallen. Then the dangling summer home is plainly seen.



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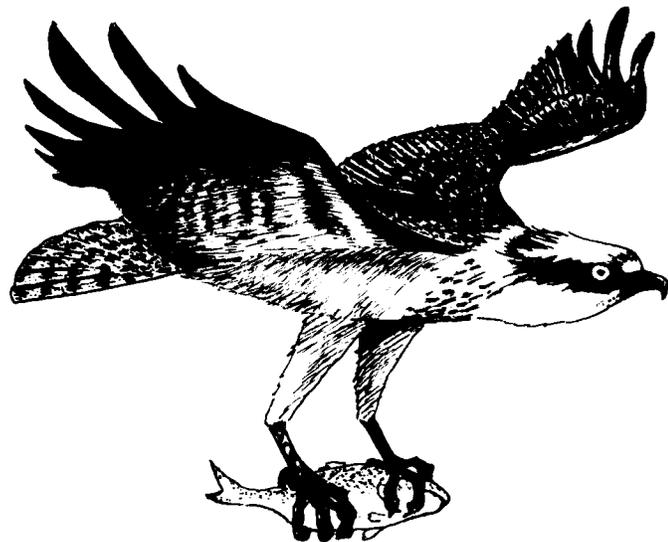
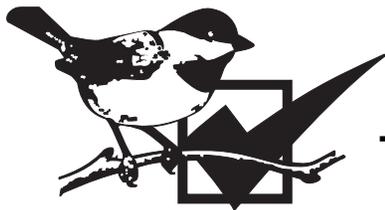
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.

OSPREY

Pandion haliaetus



Sometimes called fish hawks, ospreys are found along coastal areas, inland lakes and ponds. Recognition is easy; the bent wings are marked with black on top and with a brown pattern below. Most of the bird's underside is white; as is the head, except for its black mask. They have a wing span of up to six feet. Osprey's feet, with their rough calluses

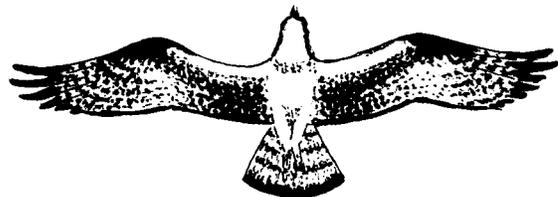


and long talons, are specially designed for catching fish.

Ospreys will dive for fish from a considerable height; plunging and catching the fish with its talons. In the air, the fish is usually carried head first.

Their nests are huge structures of sticks, often situated on the tops of

trees or telephone poles. Ospreys use the same nest year after year, increasing its bulk with each new layer. Small birds of various kinds often build their nests in the sides of the osprey's nest.

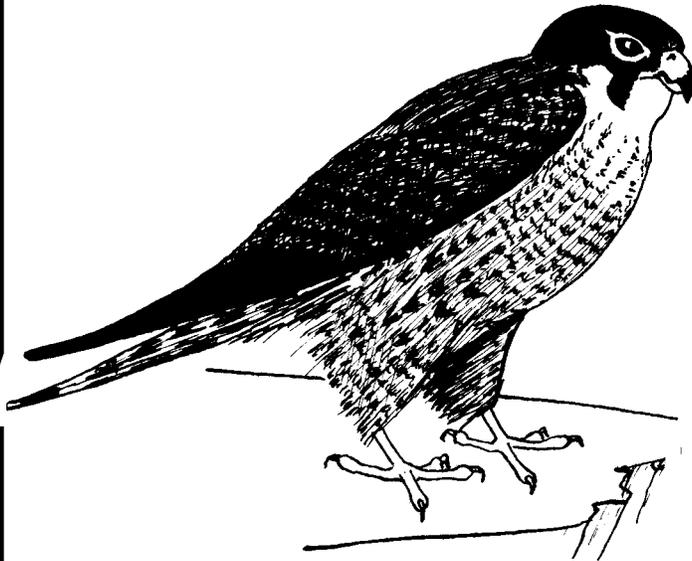


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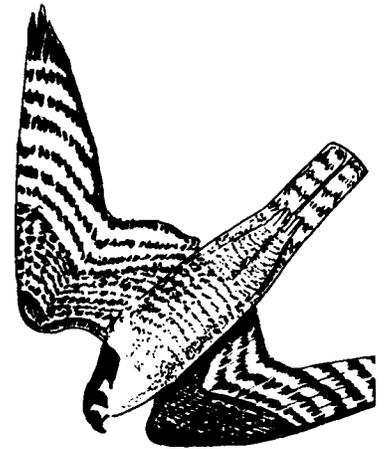
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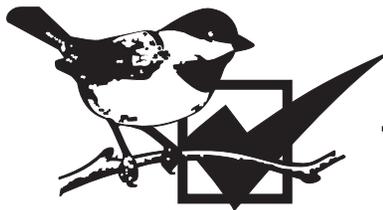
PEREGRINE FALCON

Falco peregrinus



This medium sized falcon has long been a prized bird for falconry (hunting game with birds). Also called the duck hawk, the peregrine is the swiftest and most deadly of our birds of prey, especially on ducks. Because of the peregrine's hunting ability and stately beauty, the U.S. Air Force Academy has made it their mascot and official insignia.

For years the peregrine has been on the endangered species list. It has made a remarkable comeback, largely due to its reintroduction into metropolitan areas. The tops of tall buildings offer ideal nesting sites and the abundant pigeons provide an excellent food source.



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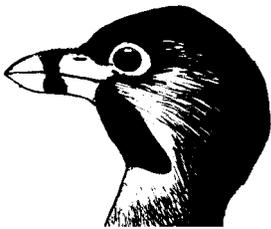
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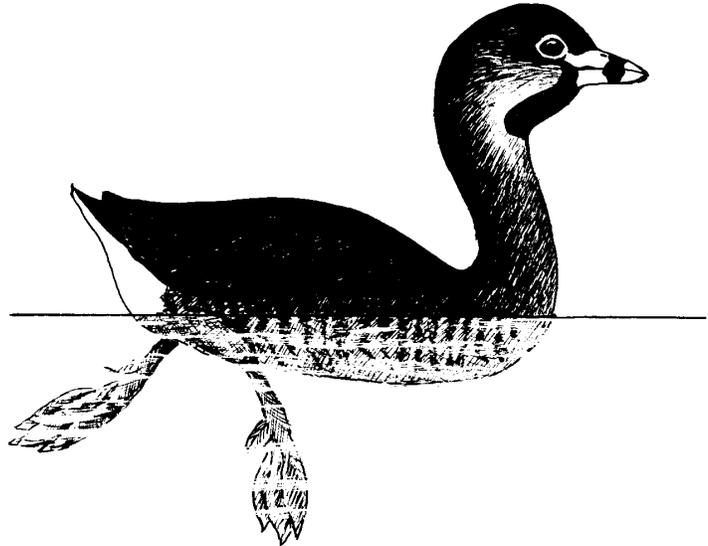
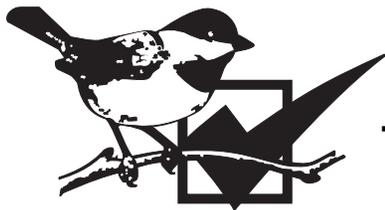
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.

PIED-BILLED GREBE

Podilymbus podiceps



This bird is a common sight on ponds, sloughs and marshes. The grebe is totally aquatic and one of the best of the swimming birds. Its feet are not webbed like that of a duck. Its lobed toes, along with its light body, make the grebe an excellent swimmer. The grebes will

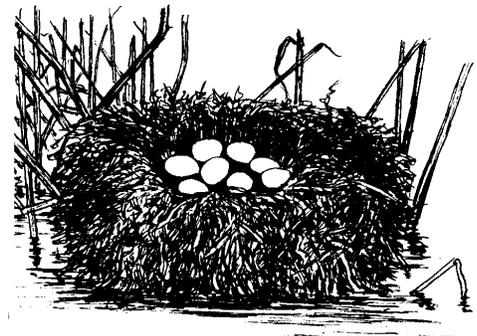


often swim with only its head above the water. It has a habit of suddenly disappearing beneath the surface and reappearing a good distance away.

This small, dark bird is quite solitary, but will associate with ducks.

The grebe's nest is a large mass of floating plant materials

anchored to plants. The eggs are covered with wet debris when not being incubated. The heat from the decaying plant matter keeps the eggs warm.



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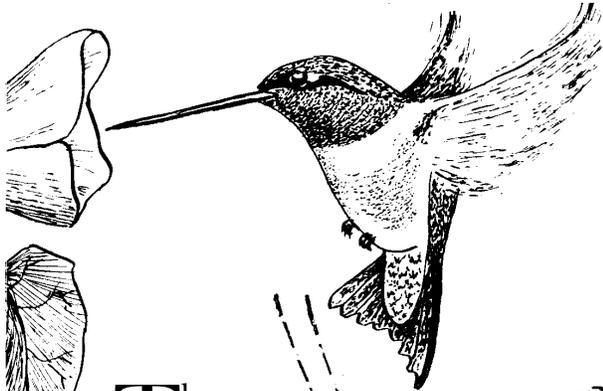
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RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

Archilochus colubris



The name comes from the sound caused by its rapid wing beat (75-80 beats per second) and the brightly colored red throat of the male.

They eat twice their body weight each day. Flower nectar is their primary food source. Their feeding habits aid in the pollinating of flowers.

The male utilizes a very unique courtship flight to attract the female. He flies back and forth in a pendulum shaped pattern as if he was attached to a string. Hummingbirds are also the only birds which can fly backwards.

Their nest is constructed from moss and lichens and is lined with

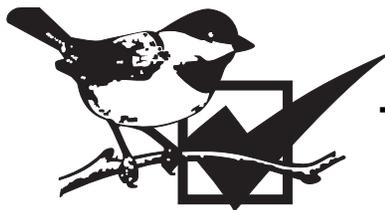


spider webs, dandelion down and fine grasses. A clutch consists of two eggs with an incubation

period of 16 days. Ruby-throated

hummingbirds do not breed in Kansas.

The Ruby-throated hummingbird's migration flight is over 2,500 miles. It includes a non-stop stretch over 600 miles across the Gulf of Mexico. They migrate through Kansas and are seen more frequently in fall than spring.



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SOMETHING WILD!

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SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER

Tyrannus forficata

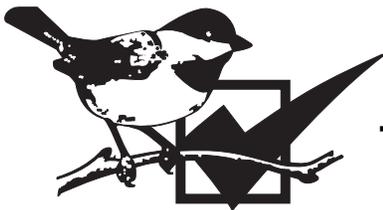
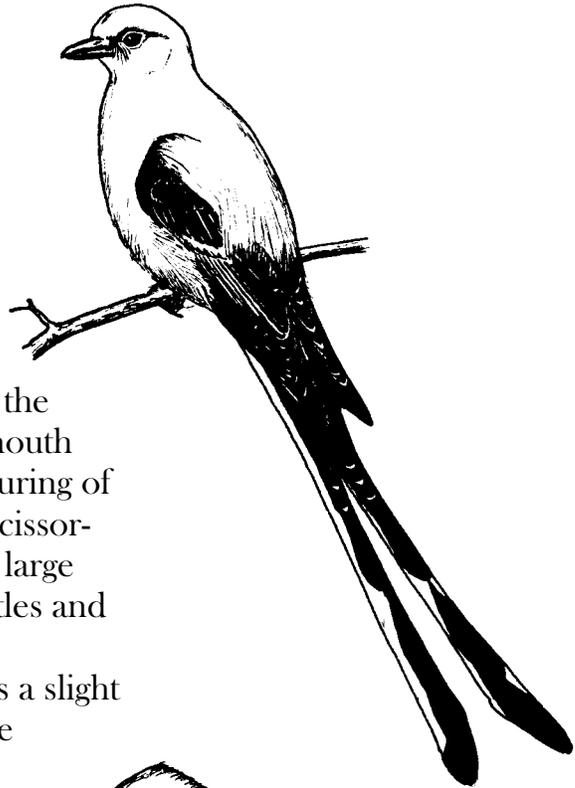
The flycatcher is one of Kansas most handsome birds. The peach colored patches on its side and under the wing add to the striking black and white body pattern. The long tail of the male easily allows one to identify it from the female. Scissor-tails are great aerial acrobats; diving about displacing their long, flowing tail feathers.

These birds are fearless; often attacking large hawks and crows and driving them from their vicinity.

Almost their entire diet is insects, most of

which are captured in the air. A series of bristles around the corners of its mouth aids in the capturing of flying insects. Scissor-tails also take a large number of beetles and grasshoppers.

This bird has a slight crest that can be erected, revealing a red crown line on top of its head. It appears that scissor-tails are extending their range northward.

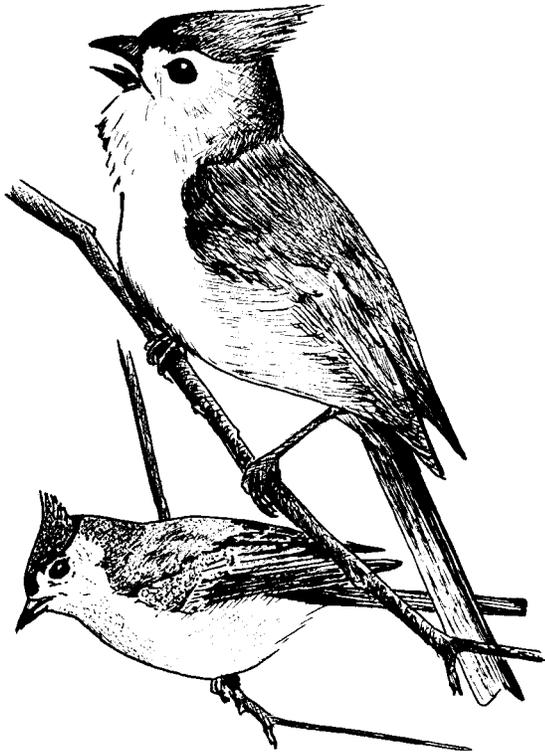


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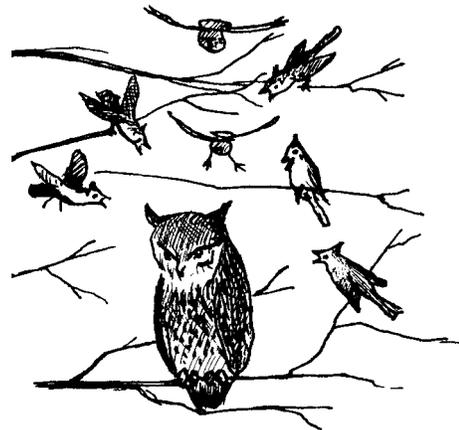
TUFTED TITMOUSE

Parus bicolor

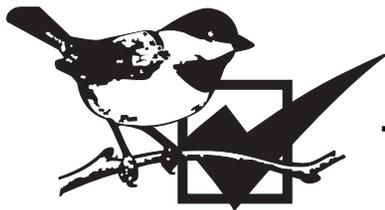
These birds are very tolerant of humans and curious. They can be called up by any unusual noise, such as clicking two small rocks together.

Harassing owls seems to be one of their favorite pastimes. The call of one bird brings others until a flock is present. The clamor can be heard at a great distance. The owl leaves when he can no longer take anymore of the harassment.

The tufted titmouse is a familiar sight at bird feeders and in wooded areas during Kansas' winter months. The titmouse is recognized by its gray dress, jaunty crest and its dark eyes in the center of its light colored cheeks. Their call is a clear and loud whistle, "Peter, Peter, Peter," that is repeated often.



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SOMETHING WILD!

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TURKEY VULTURE

Cathartes aura

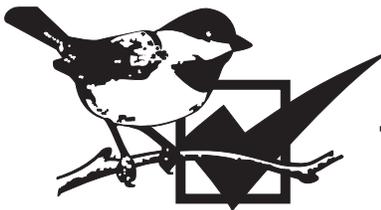


To most people, vultures (commonly called “buzzards”) symbolize death and repulsive eating habits. They do feed upon carrion (dead animals), but one must admire them for what they do best - flying. The next time you see a vulture, observe it for a while.

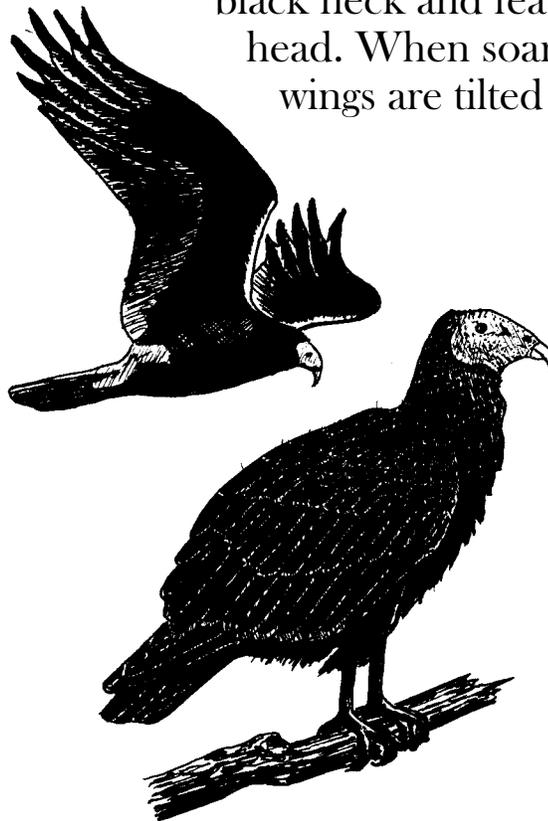
How often does it flap its wings? They can ride the warm updrafts, like few birds can, as they search the earth below for their next meal. They are the garbage crews of nature.

In Kansas, vultures migrate south for the winter. On

returning, they will



lay their eggs in hollow trees, rocky caves and deserted barns. No nest is constructed. One can recognize vultures by their large size, short, black neck and featherless head. When soaring, their wings are tilted upward.

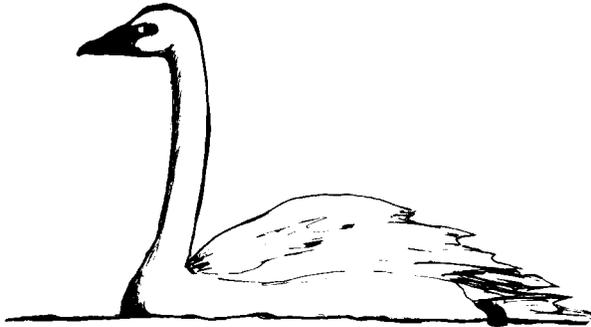


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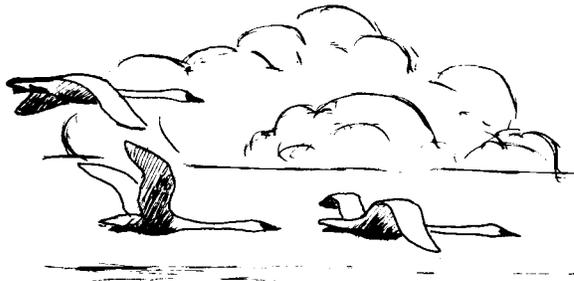
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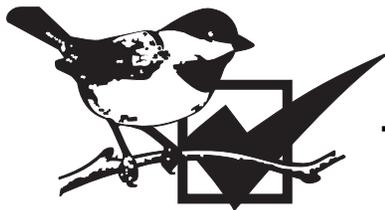
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.



Once common in Kansas, these magnificent birds are now rare winter visitors to our lakes and marshlands.



Because these birds are so large and aggressive, they have few predators. Birds of prey may take a few young ones, but the number is insignificant. Their remote breeding ground, in

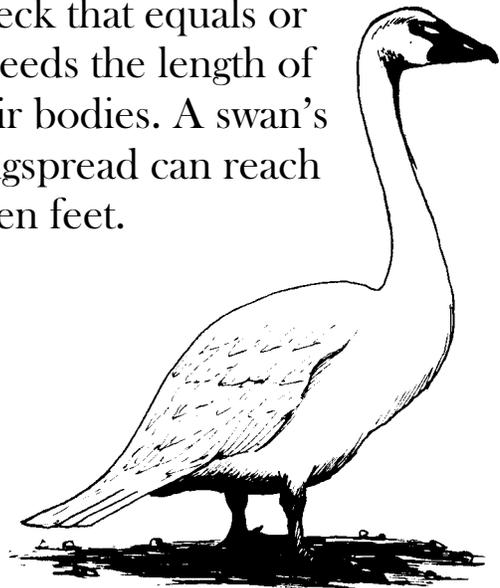


TUNDRA SWAN

Cygnus columbianus

northern Canada, also helps to ensure their stable population (about 150,000). Disease and severe weather are probably the leading causes of tundra swan mortality.

Wild swans have black bills and hold their necks erect, not curved like domestic swans. Unlike geese, swans have a neck that equals or exceeds the length of their bodies. A swan's wingspread can reach seven feet.

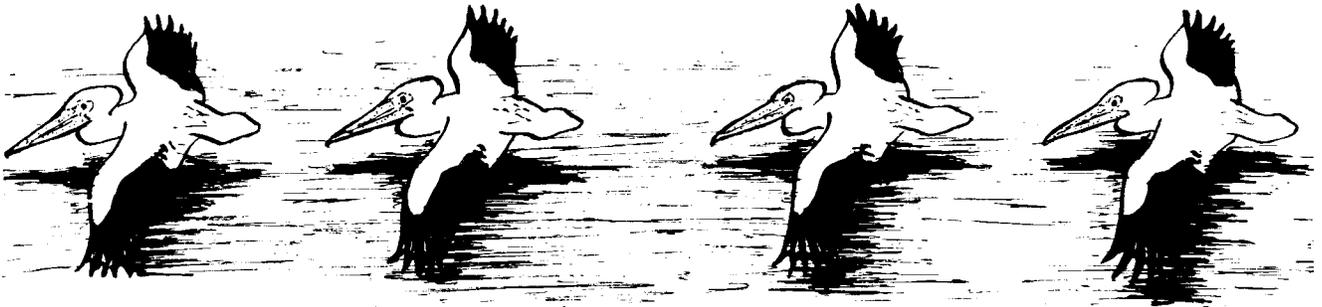


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WHITE PELICAN

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos

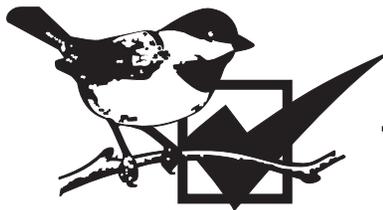
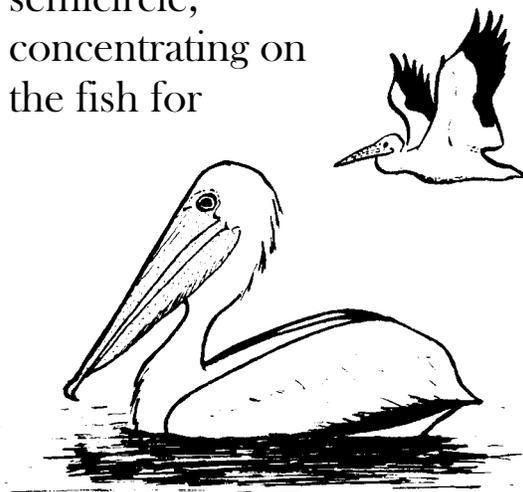
These very large, white birds are extremely graceful in flight. Pelicans often fly in a long, single-file line, skimming the water. You can see them performing, like synchronized dancers, near and above good size lakes and reservoirs.

Rather than dive

for fish from the air, several pelicans will feed on the surface by swimming in a converging semicircle, concentrating on the fish for

easier pickings.

Their breeding areas are flat islands in lakes of the northwestern region of the United States.

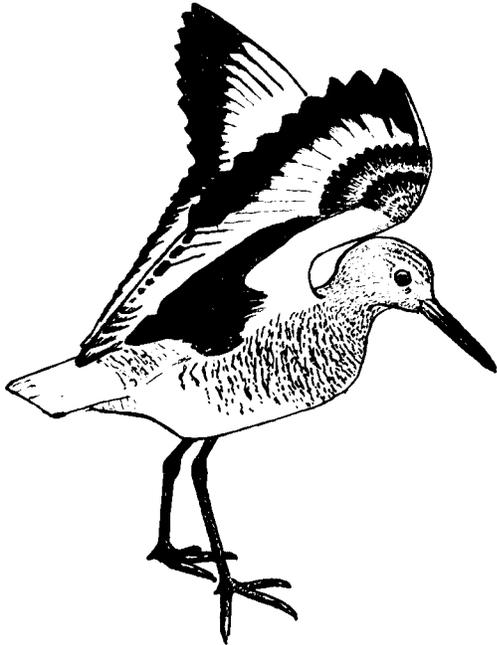


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WILLET

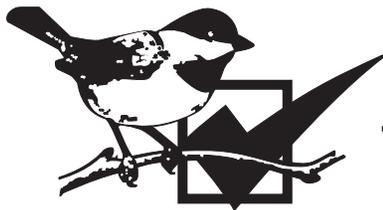
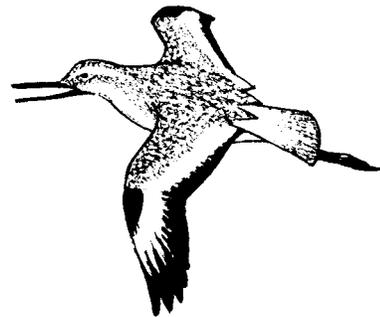
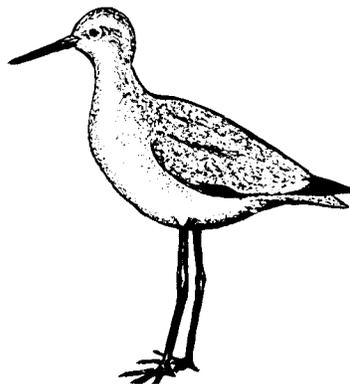
Catoptrophorus semipalmatus

in flight, the beautifully characteristic black and white wing pattern is evident.

Willetts are not as timid as other shore birds and are approachable. It is one of our noisiest birds and always appears to be screaming about something.

The willet is a bird of the beach, often seen at the edge of the surf. Inland, it is found around reservoirs and open salt flats. It is one of the largest members of the sandpiper family. Its heavy bill is used to probe for invertebrates.

It is a rather drab, gray colored bird, but



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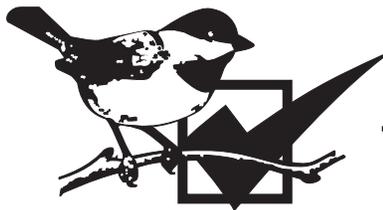
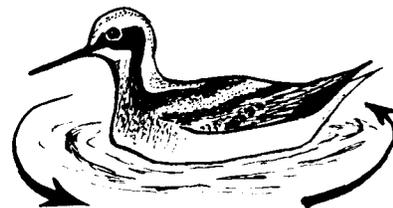
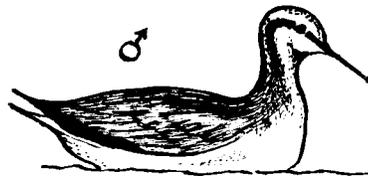
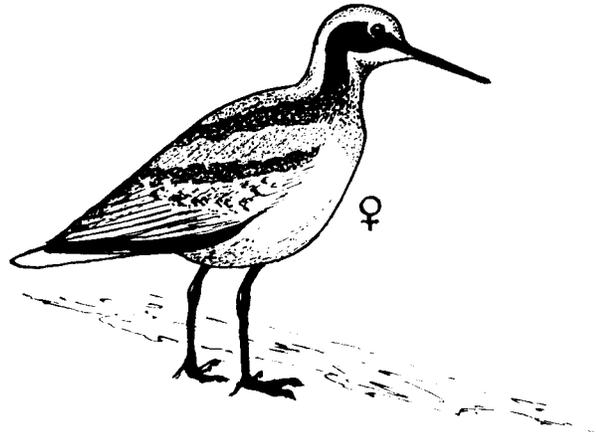
WILSON'S PHALAROPE

Phalaropus tricolor

In the phalarope's world, the female is larger and more highly colored than the male. Even odder yet, after the eggs are laid, she leaves the male to incubate and lead the young out to forage.

Phalaropes are shorebirds and are found, in small groups, around the shallow water of ponds, lakes, and reservoirs. They feed by spinning the water and stirring up the bottom mud along with the invertebrate populations upon which they feed.

The southern edge of its nesting range lies in western Kansas.



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YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER

Sphyrapicus varius

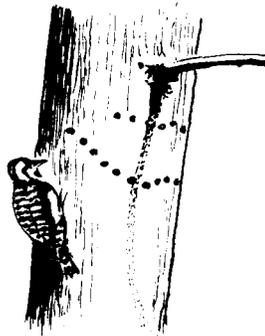
female's throat is white. It has two toes pointing forward and two pointing backwards, allowing it to maintain a better grip on the bark of trees. The stiff tail feathers are also used

consists of plant material: sap and sapwood, with some fruit.

Sapsuckers are migrants and are only winter residents in Kansas. They nest further to the north.

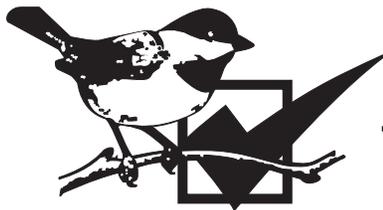
Sapsuckers drill holes of very orderly spaced rows in sap trees. Other birds are attracted to these holes, which provide them with sap and insects to eat. Because the sapsucker can drill many holes deep enough to reach the sap wood, causing sap to flow, it can be detrimental to young trees.

One of the smaller woodpeckers, this beautiful black and white bird can be identified by the long white stripe on its wing and its mottled back. The male has a red forehead and throat. The



as a brace.

Unlike other woodpeckers, more than fifty percent of its diet



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YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD

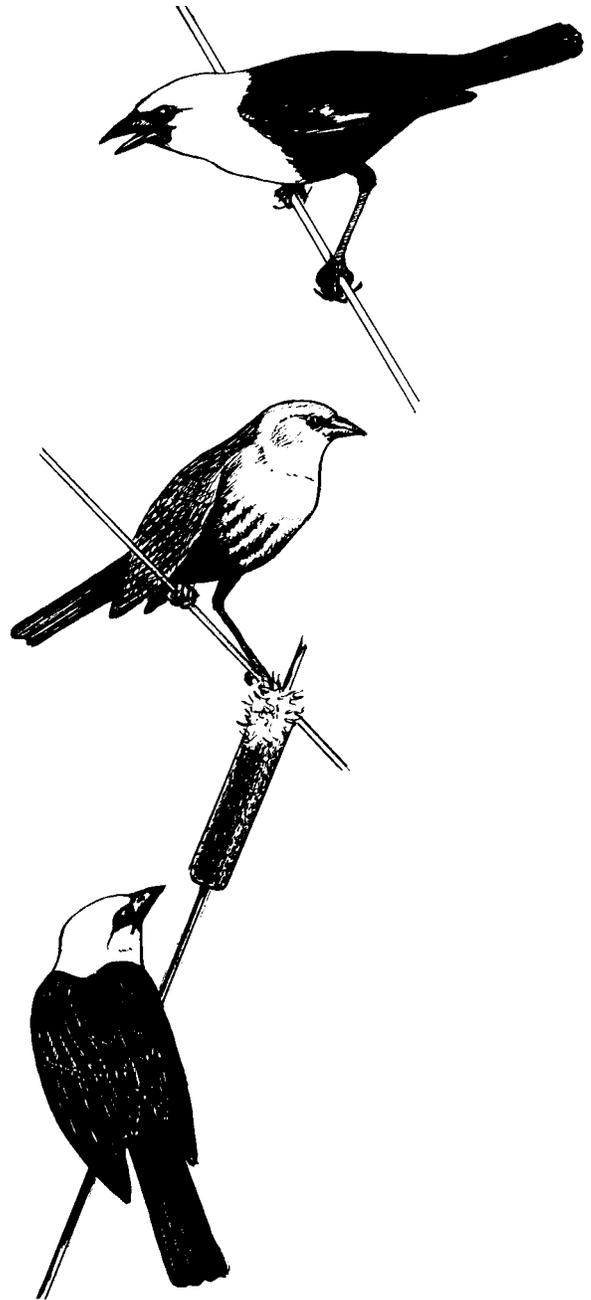
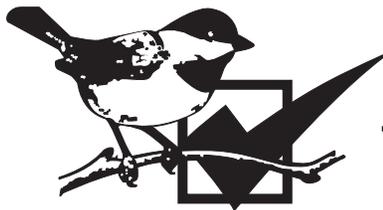
Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus



The male, with its yellow head and shiny black body, is one of the most striking of the blackbirds.

The female has to settle for a duller brown body pattern. Its kinship to the redwing blackbird is evident with the patches on its wings. However, on the yellow-heads, these patches are white and more visible in flight.

Yellow heads are abundant in central Kansas and can be seen in large flocks in cattail marshes, their favorite nesting site.

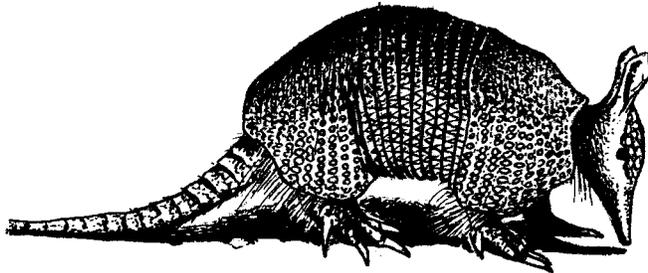


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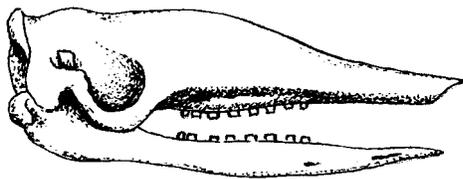
By Robert F. Clarke, Ph.D.



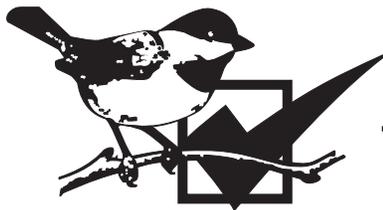
ARMADILLO

Dasyus novemcinctus

The armadillo has extended its range northward into Kansas. It is normally found in woodlands, where it digs burrows, foraging on insects

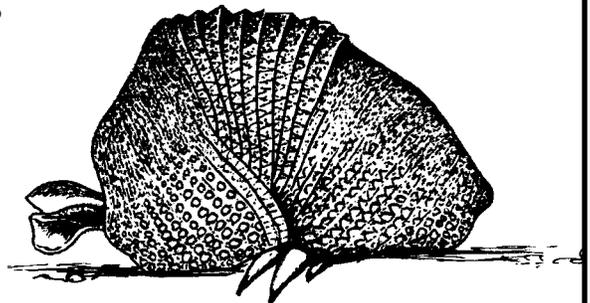
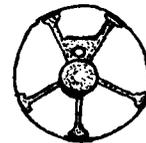
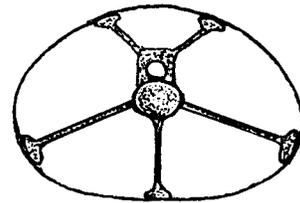


and other invertebrates. Armadillos belong to an order of mammals that includes sloths and



anteaters. Unlike the above toothless animals, the armadillos do have peg-like teeth. The armadillo is encased in armor. Note the struts used to support the armor plating in its tail. When threatened, it rolls into a ball, exposing just the hard armor shell and protecting its vulnerable legs, head, and under parts. Armadillos always give

birth to identical quadruplets.



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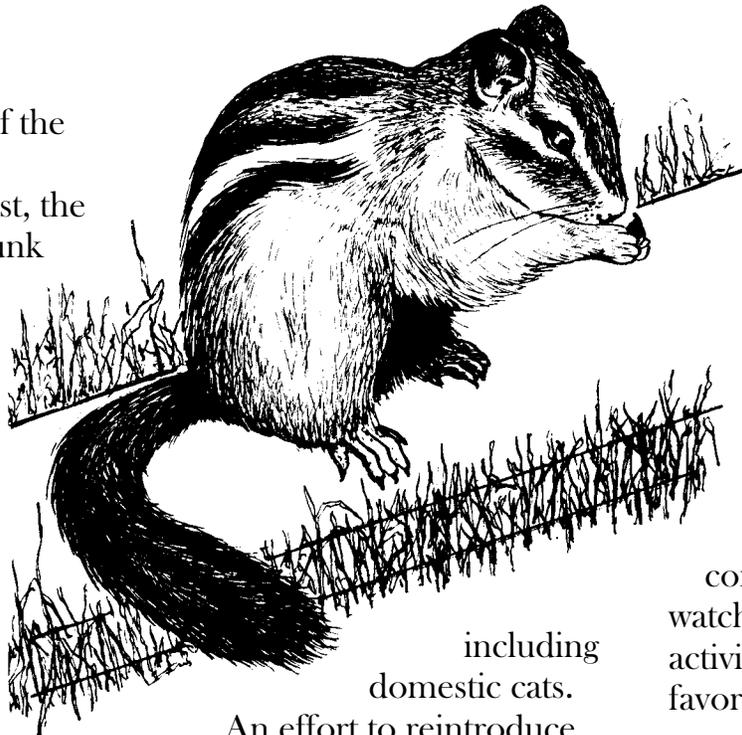
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EASTERN CHIPMUNK

Tamias striatus

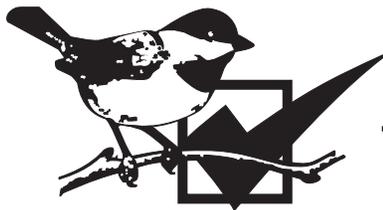
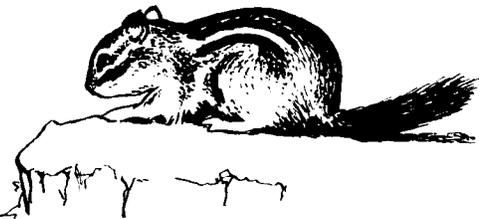
A native of the eastern deciduous forest, the eastern chipmunk can occasionally be found among the rocky ledges in the eastern woods of Kansas. They are the only chipmunk in eastern United States, compared to the numerous species located west of Kansas. Being diurnal (active during the daytime) they are exposed to a large number of predators,



is often stored in underground chambers. These chambers also serve as the nesting site for the four to five young born in April or May. Chipmunks are curious animals and will spend considerable time watching ongoing activities from their favorite lookout points.

including domestic cats.

An effort to reintroduce them to the more western parts of their range in Kansas has not been successful. Their food includes nuts, berries, seeds and invertebrates found on the forest floor. Food



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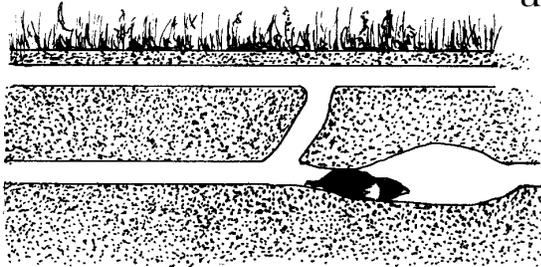
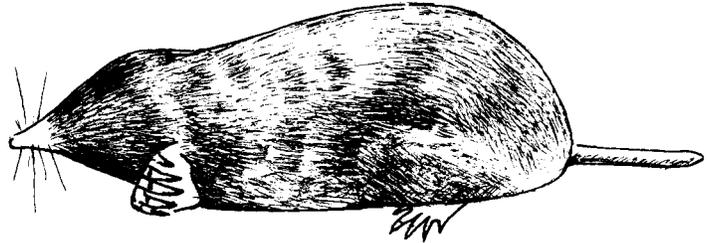
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EASTERN MOLE

Scalopus aquaticus



underground include large paws, strong claws on short arms, and hair that lies flat on the body in any direction

deeper tunnels which contain the nest.

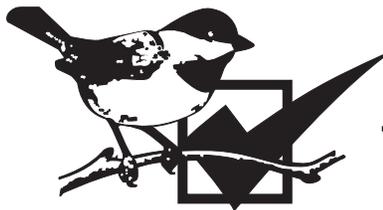
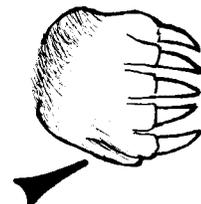
A special bone on the underside of each front foot aids in digging.

Their food consists almost entirely of earthworms and larvae of insects.

Moles occur across Kansas, but are rarely seen in the western half of the state. Most of their life is spent constructing tunnel systems. Their adaptations for living

(handy for backing up in tunnels). They do have eyes, but very poor vision.

The tunnel system consists of two types; burrows just beneath the surface, which are very noticeable, and a series of



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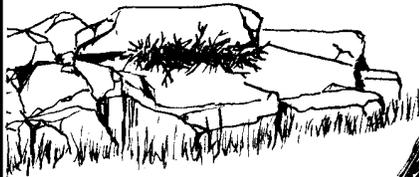
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EASTERN WOODRAT

Neotoma floridana



one taken. What in reality happens is their priorities change, and they drop what they had for their newly found

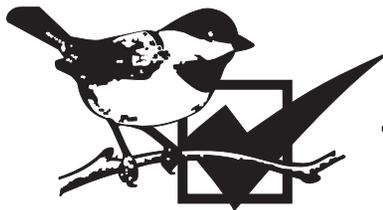
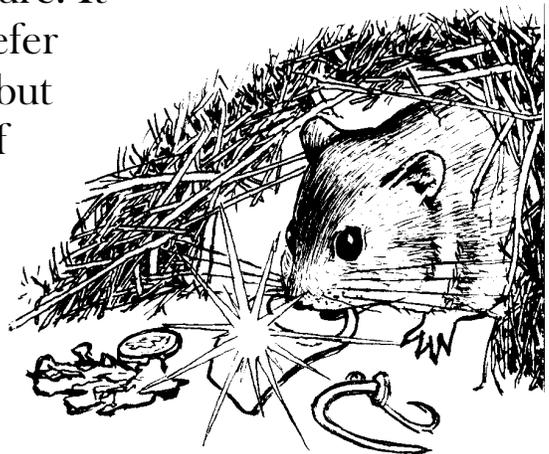
found in the crevices of rocks, cactus piles, hedge rows, and at the base of branches just off the ground, are built of sticks, grasses, and other assorted materials.

Each rat has its own den. The male and female only socialize at mating time.

Woodrats, found statewide, are well known for collecting all sorts of objects. Legend has it they will leave a gift in exchange for the

treasure. It is said they prefer shiny objects, but the contents of their nest reveals they do collect many non-shiny items.

Their nest,



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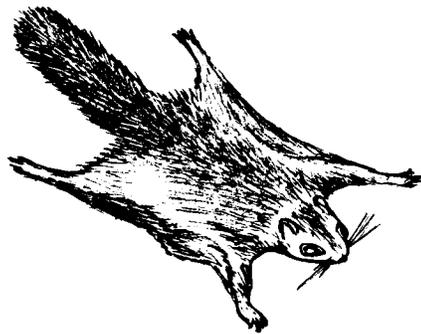
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FLYING SQUIRREL

Glaucomys volans



the feet. When the legs are spread and the tail flattened, a large planning surface is formed, allowing the squirrel to glide from tree to tree. This unique feature is not found in any other mammal in Kansas.

Being forest dwellers, flying squirrels are only found in the eastern portion of the state. Because they are nocturnal (only active at night), they are seldom seen.

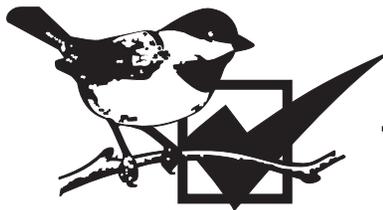
The best time to view them is at late dusk. They are a small

squirrel, only ten inches in length.

These squirrels have very thick, soft fur. The loose skin, along the edge of their body, is folded at rest. This loose body skin is attached at

Their large, luminous eyes, used to capture any light available, makes them quite appealing.

Flying squirrels utilize the holes in tree trunks and limbs as homes.



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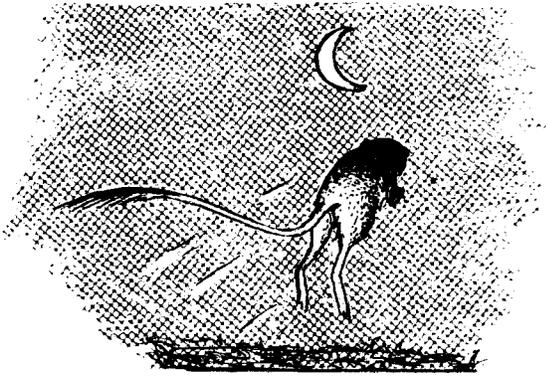
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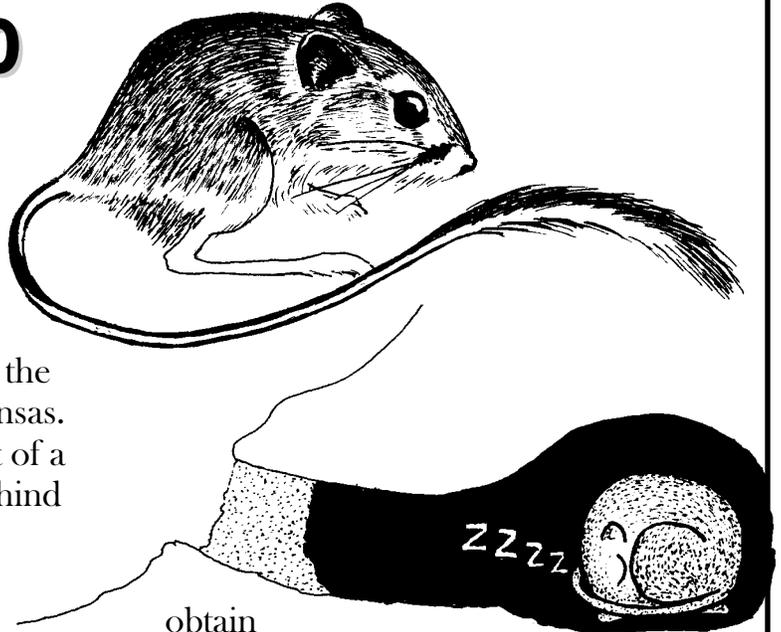
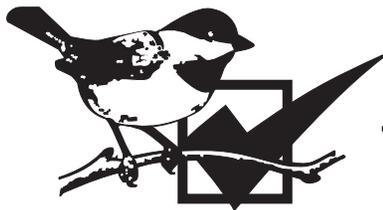
Ord's KANGAROO RAT

Dipodomys ordii

Kangaroo rats are found in the sandy soils of western Kansas. Their locomotion is similar to that of a kangaroo, using their long, strong hind legs for propulsion and the tail for balance. Seeds are their main food source.



The ability to conserve water is an adaptation for their existence in arid habitats. There are records of kangaroo rats never directly taking water. Instead, they recycle their body water and



obtain moisture from the food they eat.

Kangaroo rats are nocturnal. They spend the day sleeping in their burrows, which are sealed to keep predators out and humidity in. Their burrows are often along roadsides from which these ghostlike creatures emerge and bounce along in front of the vehicle headlights.



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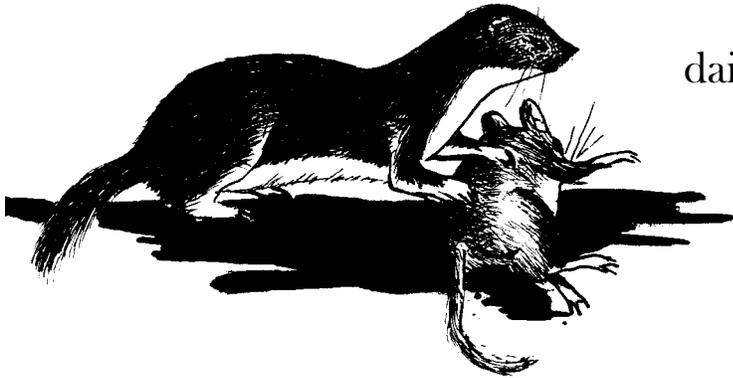
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LEAST WEASEL

Mustela nivalis



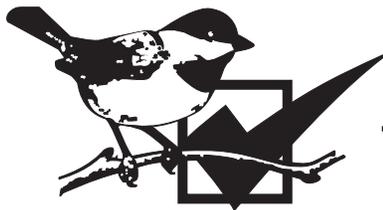
This tiny carnivore is less than eight inches in length. It is not common in Kansas (occurring only in grasslands of the northeast through the north-central sections of the state). Presently, it appears to be extending its range southward. Small rodents make up the bulk of its diet. They require, on a

daily basis, one-half of their body weight in food.

In winter, their coat color changes to a pure white, providing a perfect camouflage suit. Other weasels, which change to white in winter, retain the black on the tip of their tail.



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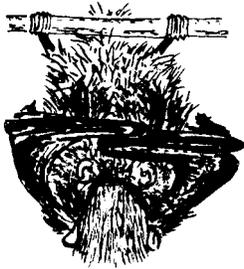
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RED BAT

Lasiurus borealis



Red bats are common in Kansas, often seen in the light of street lamps feeding on insects. They are tree dwellers and must migrate to avoid the harsh conditions of winter.

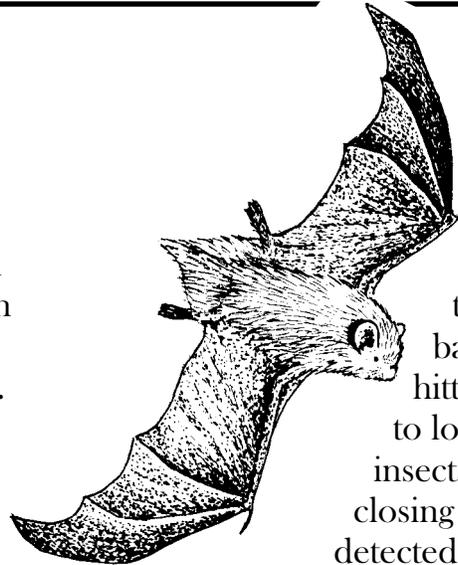
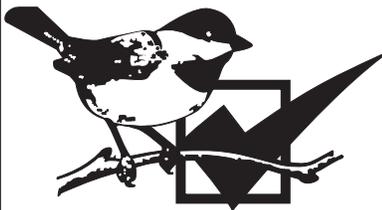
Although they can have fleas, mites, and other parasites, their incidence of rabies in red bats is no greater than in any other



mammal.

Superstitions and “wives’ tales” about bats, such as the notion that bats can become tangled in your hair, or that they are blind, are untrue.

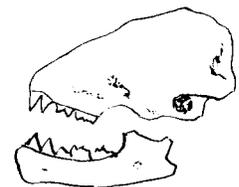
Bats use a unique system called echolocation (high pitched sounds omitted



from the bat that reflects back upon hitting an object) to locate flying insects. When closing in on the detected insect, the bat forms a net by bending the tail inward and scooping its wings.

One to four pups are born between May or June. They spend most of their early life clinging to their mother until they are ready to fly. It is difficult to distinguish the young, which are embedded in their mother’s fur. Sometimes this extra weight causes the group to fall to the ground, and the female is unable to regain flight.

Bats lack front teeth, but are well supplied with others.



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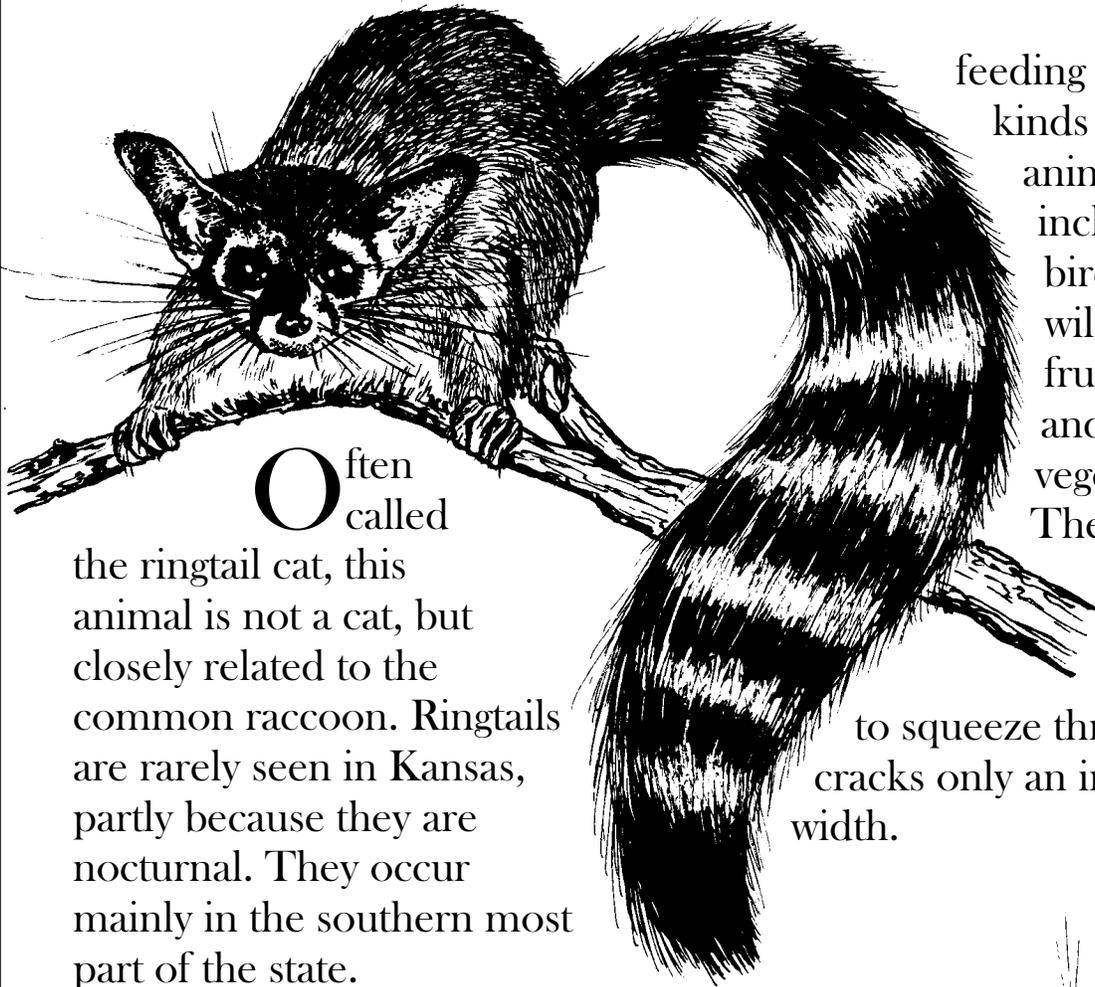
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RINGTAIL

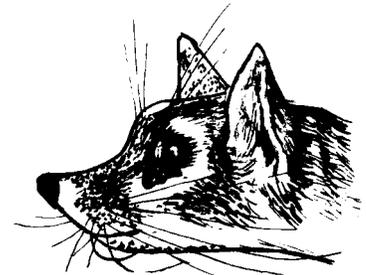
Bassariscus astutus



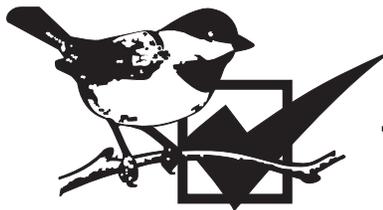
Often called the ringtail cat, this animal is not a cat, but closely related to the common raccoon. Ringtails are rarely seen in Kansas, partly because they are nocturnal. They occur mainly in the southern most part of the state.

Their cute, innocent appearance is deceiving, for they are ferocious predators;

feeding upon all kinds of small animals, including birds. They will also eat fruit, berries and other vegetation. They are great escape artists, being able to squeeze through cracks only an inch in width.



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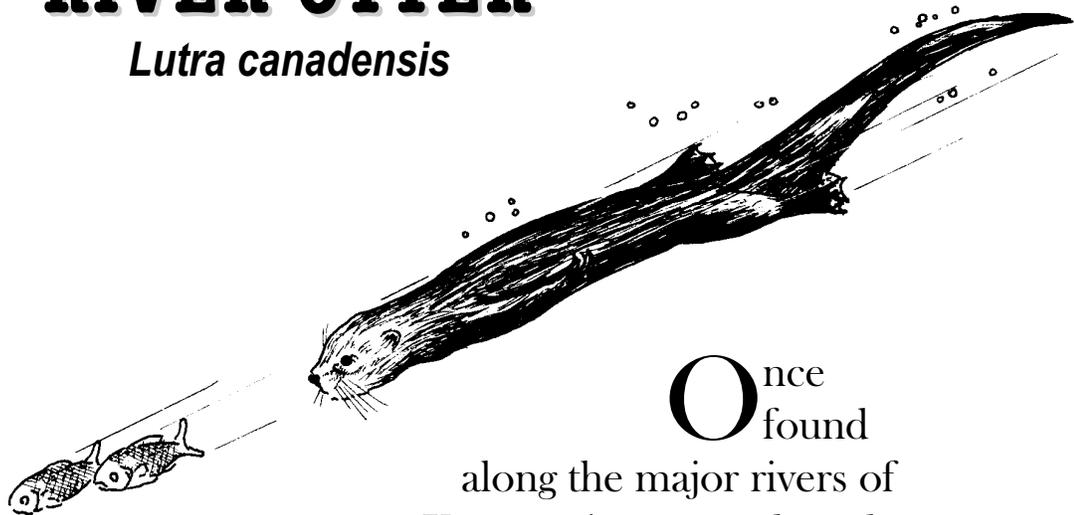
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RIVER OTTER

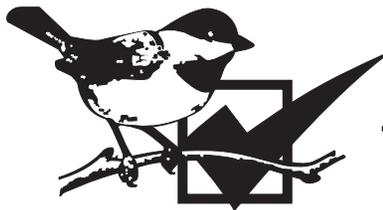
Lutra canadensis



Once found along the major rivers of Kansas, river otters have been gone from the state (an exception maybe along the Missouri River in the Northeast section of the state) for over a century. Recent attempts to reestablish otters in Kansas have had limited success.



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SHORT-TAILED SHREW

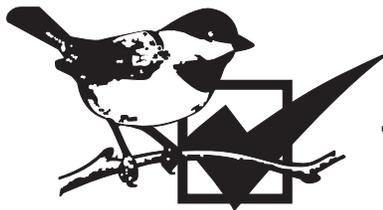
Blarina carolinensis



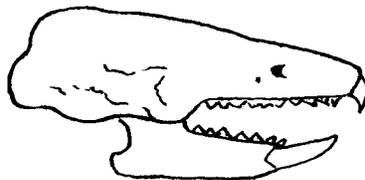
Short-tailed shrews are the largest shrew found in Kansas. They are abundant in the eastern half of Kansas. Their hair is silky, and black or silvery in color.

They are often confused with mice and voles. Unlike mice and voles, they have very small eyes and barely visible ears.

Although shrews, as a group, are the smallest of all mammals (the short-



shrew is only four inches in length), they are one of the most vicious and fearless hunters of the forest. Part of this is due to their extremely high



metabolism rate, and to the fact that they do not

hibernate. They must eat almost constantly or starve to death. Insects make up most their diet, but a shrew will kill small rodents larger than itself.

tail

Shrews are food for hawks, owls, and snakes.

Their skull shows exceptionally large incisor teeth, indicating their predatory nature. Shrews can also secrete a poison through their saliva which can kill a mouse in five minutes or less. Their large incisors aid in exposing their victim to this poison.



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THIRTEEN-LINED GROUND SQUIRREL

Spermophilus tridecemlineatus



These small ground squirrels are found in open, short, grasses across Kansas, including yards, golf courses, and cemeteries. Their home is an underground tunnel, consisting of a hidden entrance

and a rear escape exit. They feed on grasses, seeds and insects.

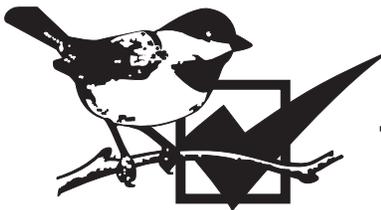
These rodents are active during the day in warm months, but must hibernate in winter.

erect, checking for predators.

Although they appear to be social animals, the ground squirrel is essentially solitary, often having squabbles over disputed territorial claims.



Their striped pattern helps them to blend with the grass when they stand



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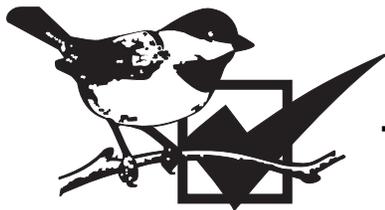
WOODCHUCK

Marmota monax

Woodchucks, often called groundhogs, are found in the eastern fourth of the state in dry soils near the edge of woodlands, or on the rocky outcrops of grasslands.

They live in extensive tunnels with one or more entrance and escape routes. Woodchucks are herbivores, feeding on grasses, wild, green plants and cultivated crops. A variety of

larger predators prey on woodchucks, including coyotes, foxes, bobcats, hawks, and owls. They hibernate during winter and have gained fame as forecasters of the arrival of spring according to the visibility, or lack of same, of their shadow. This is a myth.



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