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KANSAS

Wildlife & Parks Magazine



2021 Photo Issue
Wild Attractions



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FRONT COVER Sandhill cranes are one of many species that mate for life. David Seibel photo.

INSIDE FRONT COVER A female blue-winged teal is drab in color compared to its male counterpart (right) during spring breeding season. Danny Brown photo.

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Editorial Creed: To promote the conservation and wise use of our natural resources, to instill an understanding of our responsibilities to the land.

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2021 Photo Issue: Behind the Theme “Wild Attractions”

As you flip through this issue, you may notice many photographs consist of both a male and female. Others feature a lone animal attempting to attract the opposite sex – either by posing in breeding plumage, doing a dance, or singing a song.

Some species are looking for a seasonal mate, while others seek a lifelong mate – like the sandhill cranes pictured on the cover.

No matter the strategy, no matter for how long, one thing is true for each of the species shown in this special photo issue – they all seek to reproduce.

Before we get into the subjects of each image, I’d be remiss if I didn’t first acknowledge the men and women “behind the lens.” The extra time and effort our photographers put into editing and formatting their work is evident, especially with a theme that lends itself to mostly hard-to-capture

images. A special “thank you” goes out to those who submitted images for this year’s photo issue, and who provide us stunning images to accompany our stories throughout the remainder of the year. None of this would be possible without you!

Though unrelated to this year’s photo issue theme, the back of this magazine features our 2020 Wild About Kansas photo contest winners; I highly recommend you check them out. These photographs – from professionals and amateurs alike – were chosen out of a record 609 entries and were judged on sharpness, lighting, subject matter, composition and creativity. They truly show the best Kansas has to offer!

And with that, I hope you enjoy some of Kansas’ Wild Attractions.

Jessica Ward, managing editor

Fox Squirrels



Fox squirrels, while generally solitary creatures, will come together twice a year to mate. Pictured is a melanistic fox squirrel with an ordinary fox squirrel.

Tony Pinalto



Northern Bobwhites

“Bob-white!” The familiar whistle of the Northern bobwhite is used mostly by unpaired males during the breeding season, though females may also sing the sweeping upward pitch. **Bob Gress**

Ruddy Ducks

Male ruddy ducks perform “bubbling” displays by striking their chests with their bills to attract females. **Bob Gress**



Cottontail Rabbits

Cottontail rabbits breed as early as two to three months old, with females having one to seven litters per year. Litter size can vary from one to twelve young, with an average of five offspring. **Danny Brown**





Praying Mantises

This is a deadly attraction. Some female praying mantises will bite off the head of a male during or after mating. The male then becomes a nourishing meal for the female. **David Butel**

Mourning Doves

A breeding pair of mourning doves have a nest size of two eggs. Incubation is carried out by both the male and female and can take approximately 14 days. **Bob Gress**







Great Egrets

During the breeding season, great egrets develop long, white breeding plumes called “aigrettes” to display on their backs as an attractor. **Bob Gress**



Wood Ducks

A male wood duck (left) will use its colorful markings during the breeding season - autumn to early summer - to grab the attention of a nearby female (right).

Danny Brown

White-tailed Deer

During the mating season, or rut, male deer will sniff, whiff, and “taste” the air to detect if a female is in “estrus” and ready to mate. **Tony Pinalto**



Wilson's Phalaropes

Unlike most species, the female Wilson's phalarope may mate with more than one male during the breeding season, leaving each male to care for its respective clutch. **David Seibel**



*Hooded
Mergansers*





To attract a female (top), a male hooded merganser (left) will repeatedly fan its crown feathers into a crest before tipping its head back until it touches its back. **Danny Brown**

Prothonotary Warblers



A male prothonotary warbler will display to a female by fluffing its plumage and spreading its wings and tail. **Bob Gress**

Pronghorn



Male pronghorns (left) will breed with multiple females. If the breeding is successful, the female (right) will be pregnant throughout winter, giving birth in the spring. **Tony Pinalto**

Black-necked Stilts

Black-necked stilts generally have a nest size of four but can lay anywhere from three to five eggs. Both males and females assist with incubation. **Bob Gress**





Monarch Butterflies

During mating, monarch butterflies often remain together from afternoon until early morning, with some connections lasting up to 16 hours.

David Butel



American Avocets

Breeding American avocets sport an orange head, neck and chest, but during the nonbreeding season, the orange is replaced by gray. Males (left) also have a comparatively straighter bill than females (right). **Karole Erickson**



Eastern Gray Squirrels

Eastern gray squirrels are polygamous, with one male mating with several females. Females bear litters of three to six young in early spring into late summer. **Tony Pinalto**

Bald Eagles

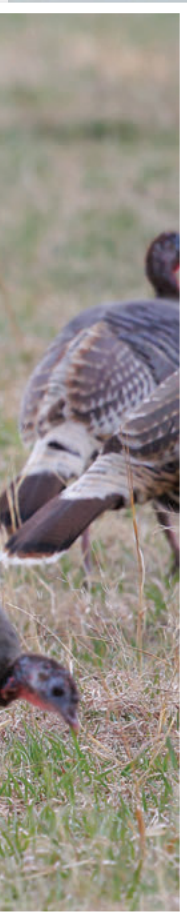
Bald eagles are monogamous. However, if one eagle in a pair dies, the other will search for a new mate. Courtship includes nest-building, perching and preening.

Bob Gress



Wild Turkeys

Male wild turkeys will exhibit courtship behavior patterns such as gobbling and strutting to attract nearby females. **Bob Gress**



Double-crested Cormorants

Both the male and female double-crested cormorant work on the nest, with the female building and the male gathering the materials. Breeding pairs will also “steal” materials from unguarded nests. **Bob Gress**





Eastern Collared Lizards

While bright colors increase the risk of predation, the male Eastern collared lizard will assume bright colors during sexual maturity to attract a mature female to its territory. **Danny Brown**





Brown-headed Cowbirds

When displaying to a female (top left), the male brown-headed cowbird (right) will fluff its body feathers, partly spread its wings and tail, and bow deeply while singing. **Bob Gress**



Green-winged Teal

A female green-winged teal (right) is courted by several males. The female will eventually choose a mate, and the chosen male will chase off other suitors.

Danny Brown

Blanchard's Cricket Frogs

With a call that sounds like two marbles clicking together, male Blanchard's cricket frogs call day and night, from late spring through summer, to attract a mate.

Judd Patterson





Greater Prairie Chickens

To attract a female, greater prairie chickens gather on “booming grounds” where each male lowers its head, raises its tail, inflates the air sacs on either side of its neck, and stomps its feet. The male does this while making hollow, moaning sound. The loudest and proudest wins. **Bob Gress**



Indigo Buntings

A male indigo bunting (top) will establish its territory in the spring, often with more than one mate living on its territory at a time.

Danny Brown

Damselflies



Damselflies join together in a “wheel” position to mate, and commonly fly tandem this way. The male usually remains attached to the female as it lays eggs.

David Butel

Red-winged blackbirds



To attract a mate, the male Red-winged blackbird will perch on a high stalk with feathers fluffed out and its tail partly spread. It will then lift the edge of its wings so the red shoulder patches are prominent, and sing. **Bob Gress**

Milkweed Bugs

An adult male milkweed bug will rub its back wings over its abdomen, making a sound that the female milkweed bug can't help but notice.

Tony Pianalto







About the Contest

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism's annual "Wild About Kansas" photo contest showcases Kansas outdoors through the lens of amateur and professional photographers. Photographers may submit photos in any of the following categories:

- *Wildlife*
- *Other Species*
- *Landscapes*
- *Outdoor Recreation*
- *Hunting and Fishing*

Contest rules are as follows:

- Mailed entries and photos less than 1 MB will NOT be accepted.
- Participants may enter only/up to three (3) photos total for the contest, regardless of categories.
- Each photo is judged on creativity, composition, subject matter, lighting and overall sharpness.
- The contest is open to residents and non-residents, and there is no age limit.
- Photos must be the participants original work and taken in the state of Kansas.
- Photos from participants under the age of 18 will be placed in a youth division; all others will compete in the adult division.

For more on Wild About Kansas, visit ksoutdoors.com and click "Publications," then "Wild About Kansas' Photo Contest."

Youth



1st Place
Jack Punswick

Hunting and Fishing

Adult



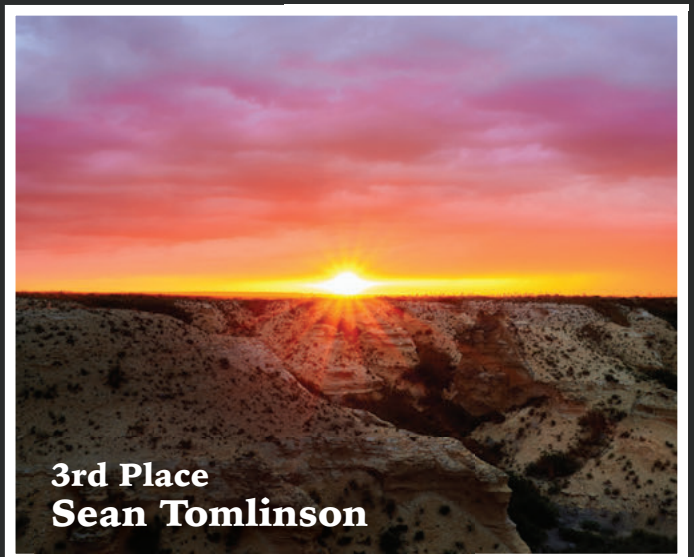
Adult



**1st Place
Jun Zuo**



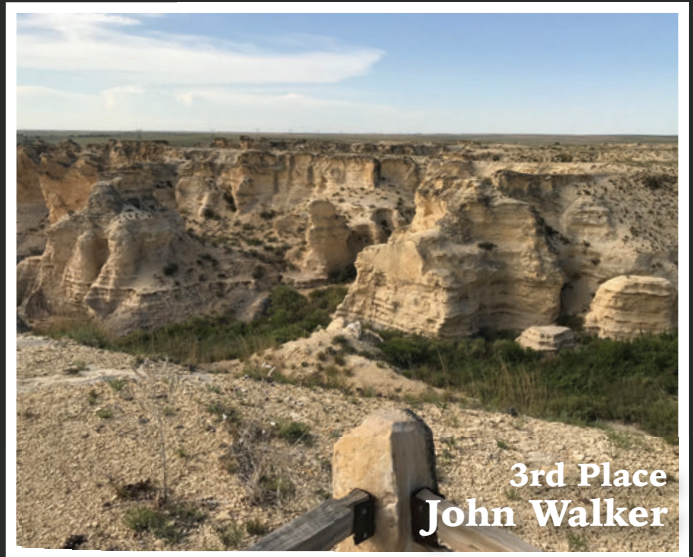
**2nd Place
Jeffrey Cole**



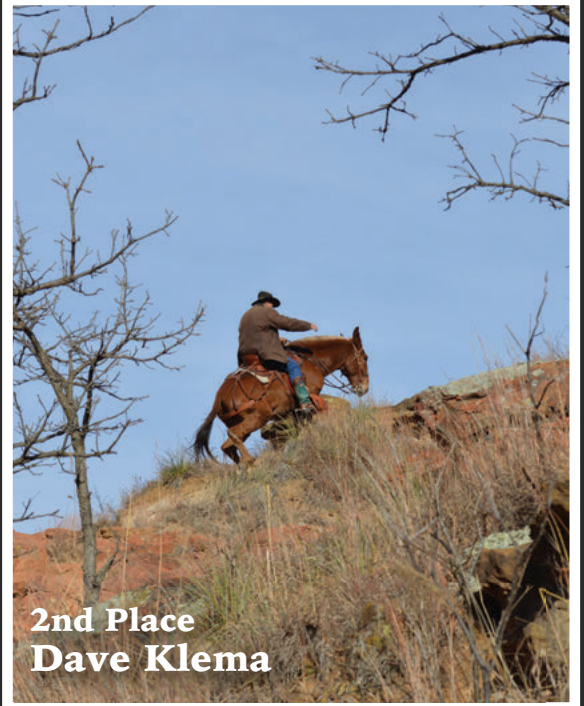
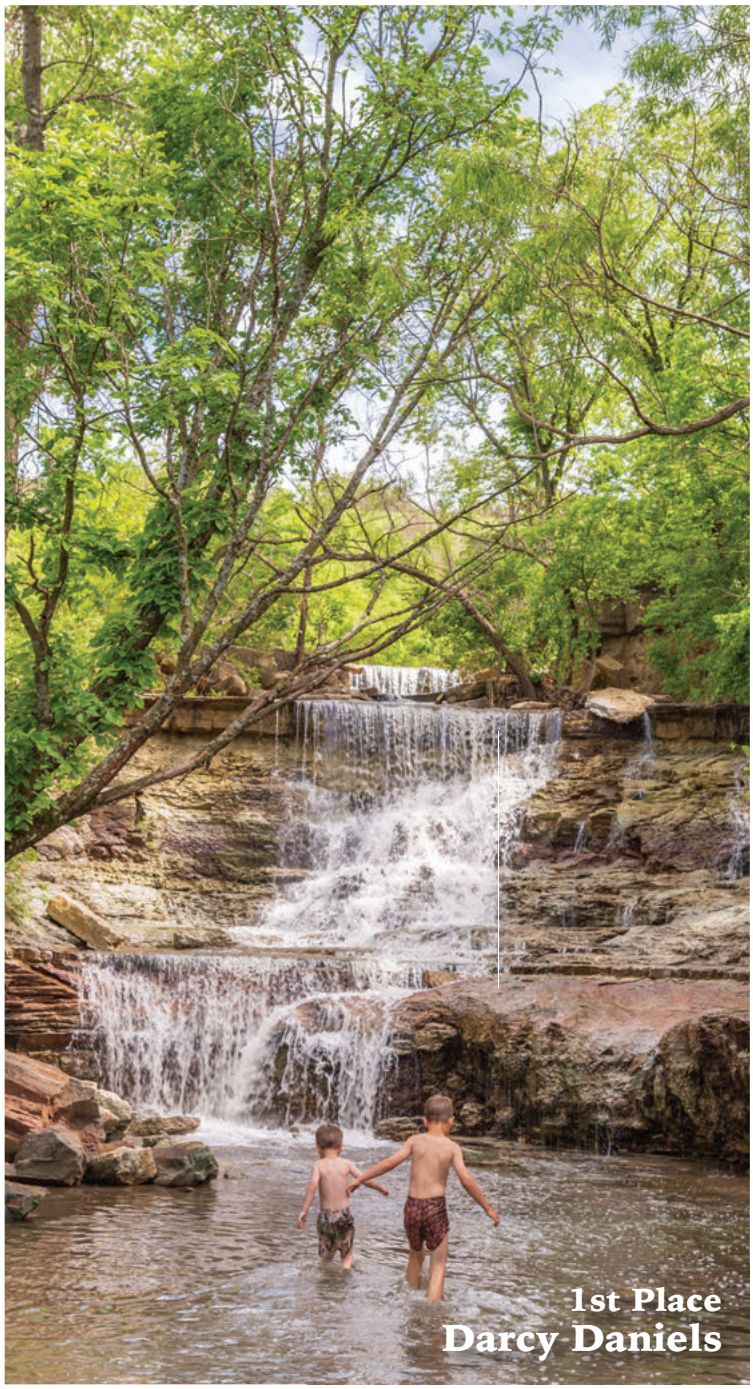
**3rd Place
Sean Tomlinson**

Landscapes

Youth



Adult



Outdoor Recreation

Youth

1st Place
Johanna Walker



2nd Place
Michaela Gold



Adult

1st Place
Jun Zuo



2nd Place
Sean Tomlinson



3rd Place
Donna Haldas



Wildlife

Youth



1st Place
Kendall Mast



2nd Place
Michaela Gold



3rd Place
Kendall Mast

Adult



**1st Place
Malcolm Gold**



**2nd Place
Megan Lambert**



**3rd Place
Mark Alexander**

Other Species

Youth



1st Place
Danielle Gold



2nd Place
Ella Jones



3rd Place
Clayton Kunselman



CampIt KS



HuntFish KS

