



The Cactus Wren • dition

Volume LIII, No. 3

Fall 2005



Elegant Trogon

Maricopa Audubon Meetings & Programs Sept. 2005 – May 2006

Cynthia Donald

Please join us for a terrific year of speakers with a wide range of topics – the Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas, mining of Oak Flat, Grand Canyon protection, Bald Eagles, Bird Coloration, Avian Communication and Hummingbirds.

Meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of each month, September through May. Our May meeting is our Annual Banquet with a location to be announced. Please check our web site or newsletter for the location of the May 2006 banquet.

Meetings start at 7:30 p.m., and feature a general membership meeting, guest speaker, book sales, refreshments and a chance to socialize with MAS members. Visitors are most welcome! Our September through April meetings are held in Dorrance Hall at the Desert Botanical Garden. The Garden is located at 1201 North Galvin Parkway in Phoenix, which is approximately ½ mile north of the Phoenix Zoo. Dorrance Hall is located off the main parking lot and entry to

the Garden. There will be signs directing you to the meeting. Although there is no charge to attend our general membership meetings, the Annual Banquet does require a dinner reservation and associated cost.

A pre-meeting dinner at Pete's 19th Tee Restaurant, 1405 N. Mill Avenue in Tempe (at the Rolling Hills Golf Course), will be in effect for the September through April meetings. Come and join us at 6:00 p.m. for a delicious meal (no-host), meet our guest speaker and say "howdy" to other birders. Meals at Pete's average \$5.00 to \$7.00.

September 6, 2005

Troy Corman Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas
Over ten years in the making, the Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas is now available! Troy Corman will discuss the book and copies will be available for sale. The Breeding Bird Atlas is a statewide survey for nesting birds designed to document the current status and distribution of each species, as well as their relative abundance, habitat associations and nesting chronology. Atlas data provide a baseline against which future range expansions and contractions can be measured. The final product will be filled with range maps and natural history information specific to birds of a particular region. Written with the layperson in mind, this book will be a valuable resource.

October 4, 2005

Roxane George Grand Canyon
Protection Campaign

The Grand Canyon is much more than a spectacular piece of scenery: it's a link to our

past. The concept of setting aside wild places that represent the beauty, solitude and power of nature is an important part of the American psyche. Today, the wilderness character of the Grand Canyon is diminished by noise from scenic tour flights, motorized raft trips and visitor traffic. Valuable habitat is at risk from over a century of fire suppression, logging, grazing, mining and road building. This beautiful and informative program gives an overview of the threats facing one of our greatest natural treasures and the actions we can take to preserve the Canyon for future generations.

November 1, 2005

Resolution Copper Company Mining in Queen Creek and Oak Flat
Andy Wiessner and Jennifer Russo from the Resolution Copper Company will discuss the Resolution Copper Company project in Superior, Arizona and various aspects of the Federal land exchange legislation introduced earlier this year in Congress. Mr. Wiessner has served as a representative on the Eagle County Open Space Advisory Committee for the Town of Vail, Colorado; serves on the board of the Eagle Valley Land Trust, the Colorado Land Trust; and has a 19-year tenure with High Country News.

December 6, 2005

Paul Holdeman Wildlife-Friendly Water: Oasis in the Desert
Paul's presentation will center around properly built ponds to attract wildlife, allowing them safe ingress and egress. It will also touch on our disappearing wetlands, and what we, as

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Committees/Support

Activist Alert
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Maricopa Audubon web site
<http://www.maricopa-audubon.org>

"Man's greatest joy is to teach the love of nature."
Anon

An Investment in the Future

Bequests are an important source of support for the Maricopa Audubon Society. Your chapter has dedicated itself to the protection of the natural world through public education and advocacy for the wiser use and preservation of our land, water, air and other irreplaceable natural resources.

You can invest in the future of our natural world by making a bequest in your will to the Maricopa Audubon Society. Talk to your attorney for more information on how this can be accomplished.

House Hunting-Female Elegant Trogon; photographed by Jim Burns in Madera Canyon, AZ, July 9, 2005 with Canon EOS 1D body and Canon 600mm f/4 lens.



From the Editor, Deva Burns

Because of our holiday getaway to the green and misty Pacific Northwest, this Wrendition was going to be a little late. It is 115 degrees outside as I write this column. Don't even ask me if that was a good trade-off. Then, don't even ask me about the computer problem I had when we returned or about my love-hate relationship with technology. Just enjoy this issue when it gets to you.

Jim and I spent the 4th of July on Bainbridge Island in Puget Sound, just rated in an online article as the 2nd best place to live in the United States. We're not moving up there anytime soon, but we certainly couldn't disagree with the rating. We finally found a Barred Owl for our Washington state list, and we did one of my favorite things. We attended the Bainbridge Island 4th of July parade. Small town parades are truly a piece of Americana at its finest. I always wonder how it is decided which half of a town watches these parades and which half is actually in them. I must say the Islanders are very green themselves—one of the proudest entries in the parade was the new town car—a Prius, and there were numerous bumper stickers proclaiming that

"Nothing grows under a Bush!"

Here in our own backyard we have a grave situation that has been covered in a previous Wrendition. In this issue Bob Witzeman gives us even more extensive information. An article in the Tucson Citizen relates that both Kyle and Renzi support giving land to the Resolution Copper Company. I simply cannot understand their position. Please read Bob's article.

These are the brown and dusty dog days of Arizona's summer, but the shorebird calendar keeps its own rhythms. Fall migration will soon start. Check out the Photo Quiz for some heads up. Thanks to Marjorie's efforts, there are some great Field Trips lined up, and thanks to her persistence, we have some informative Field Trip Reports. Additionally, our new President, Mike Rupp, sends us his first thoughts.

Until later—keep on Birding and check out the new website of the Arizona Field Ornithologists at www.azfo.org. And if you know some good computers guys, email me.

Maricopa Audubon Meetings & Programs Sept. 2005 – May 2006

responsible homeowners and landscapers, can do to provide substitute habitats. Paul has a degree from ASU, is a Master Gardener, and has been a licensed Valley contractor since 1995

January 3, 2006

Mike Rupp Arizona's Nesting Bald Eagle Program Join the Arizona Game and Fish biologists as they band Bald Eagle chicks. Mike Rupp's video will document Arizona nesting eagles and discuss the status of the species. We are hopeful that Liberty Wildlife will have their Bald Eagle at this presentation as well.

February 7 2006

Kevin McGraw Communication in Color – The Avian Language of Love

Birds are among the most extravagantly and variably colored animals on Earth, which raises the evolutionary question of why they develop so many different colorful features in their plumage and bare parts. Dr. McGraw runs a research program at ASU and he has focused most of his attention on understanding how these different colors are produced and used. A primary thrust of his current research involves less-common

colors including red and yellow in parrots and yellow in penguins.

March 7, 2006

Pierre Deviche Oscine Serenade Birds are unmatched in the range and complexity of their voices. Some birds produce harmonics, some sing well-coordinated duets, some can even reproduce human voices. Oscines are that group of songbirds that learn their songs. Join Dr. Deviche as he takes us on a journey through bird vocalization. Many of you are already familiar with postings on the internet of Pierre's field observations.

April 4, 2006

David Reesor Birding Around the Ring of Fire David is well-known for his incredible photographs and compelling stories. Join him in a trip around the "Ring of Fire", from the northern Japanese islands (now held by Russia), to Kamchatka in Russia, through the Pribiloff Islands and on to Alaska

May 2, 2006

Sheri Williamson Hummingbirds: More Than Just

Eye Candy

Don't let the Disney-esque public image fool you! There's much more going on behind a hummingbird's glittering façade than meets the eye. From their confusing plumages and savage battles to their continent-spanning travels and penchant for mix-and-match mating, these tiny dynamos pack a lot of birding excitement into a small package – and Arizona birders have a ring-side seat! Sheri Williamson, co-founder and director/naturalist of SABO is the author of A Field Guide to Hummingbirds of North America. An avid birder since childhood, she resisted the charms of hummingbirds until 1988 when she and her husband, Tom Wood, were hired as resident managers of The Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve. Though hummingbirds have been a major focus of Sheri's recent life, she also has a special interest in raptors, trogons and manakins, and enjoys watching butterflies and reptiles.

NOTE: The May program will be associated with our Annual Banquet. Check our web site, newsletter, or contact a board member for location information.

President's Musings

Mike Rupp

As I write a newsletter article for the first time as your new President, I think back to previous Presidents of Maricopa Audubon and their accomplishments over the many years this chapter has been effectively advocating, educating, and leading in conservation issues in our state and county. This chapter has a long history of working to protect our local habitats and wonderful species, and during my tenure as President I hope to continue this legacy, while searching for opportunities to initiate traditional and perhaps new programs both within Maricopa Audubon Society (MAS) and in partnership with other like-minded groups as well.

Programs are only as good as the leaders and volunteers who envision, plan, and administer them. It's easy to put many of the program pieces together and go through the motions, but it's quite another thing to be able to quantify the impact on participants and gauge the effectiveness of a program or event.

Fortunately, we have received some very encouraging feedback from several participants in one program from last season, the Gilbert Family Birdwalks at the Gilbert Water Ranch. Here's what one mother told us via email:

"My family has been changed by the birdwalks at Gilbert Water Ranch. The kids are so excited about birds that we now plan a birdwalk on our own almost every weekend. They want to know everything they can about all the birds around us."

I am sure that many other individuals and families had a similar reaction, as I have

received numerous positive emails, and signed up several new, excited members. This program was initiated to acquaint residents in the east valley area with the great Water Ranch facility, which has a species list of over 120, yet is unknown to many residents. MAS introduced over 600 folks to the Water Ranch, bird-watching, and Maricopa Audubon, making this one of the most well attended events we've ever done. Will we be repeating this program this season? You bet!

But to do these kinds of programs, and start others that are currently being considered, the chapter needs substantially more volunteer assistance and input from the membership. To this end, I have enclosed a member survey in this newsletter that gives you the opportunity to tell the MAS board what areas of service you feel are most important, and to indicate your interest in becoming a volunteer if you so wish. As we enter this next season as your officers, we would like to know what issues concern you the most, what you feel the chapter should invest its time and resources in, and what direction the chapter should take. This is your chance to give us your opinions, suggestions, and comments that we might be in tune with the membership and spend our time and resources for the greatest good. Please take a moment to fill out the survey and return it, won't you? I understand that a similar survey was done some years ago, but the response was minimal- hopefully we will get a good response this time, and a good indication of the membership's wishes.

I personally invite those National Audubon members who receive this newsletter but haven't ventured out to attend a monthly meeting, or taken advantage of the terrific field trips we offer, to make this next season a first. I know you'll find a bit of the excitement that most of us experience when peering up at a Great Horned Owl just twenty feet away in a fir tree, or visiting new birding areas in the early morning, seeing wonderful landscapes and perhaps up to sixty species of birds in a day. We welcome you to participate- bring yourself and your family, and experience the nature we often leave behind in our busy lifestyles. You can see the field trip schedule on our website: www.maricopaaudubon.org and in this newsletter.

We have a few new field trip leaders this season that will be able to provide more than the "usual" commentary on birds, as they come from the ornithological community. I trust that this next season will be memorable, and feedback like the above will stream in from those who participate and volunteer in this year's activities.

I'd also like to make you aware of the Audubon Celebration event in Sierra Vista September 9-11. This weekend of activities offers various field trips, workshops, and world-class speakers like Ken Kaufman. Please consider coming to this wonderful opportunity to learn more about southern Arizona birds, the work of each state Audubon chapter, and the Audubon Arizona state office. Registration forms and information can be found on our website.

Notes & Announcements

Environmental Fund -- Green At Work--
Thousands of employees can now support Maricopa Audubon Society (MAS) in their annual fall charity campaign. The Environmental Fund for Arizona get thousands of Arizona employees involved with our group and many other conservation groups through payroll deduction workplace campaigns. Help spread the word at your office about checking off "Green" choices this fall! If your employer does not yet include environmental/conservation groups, please contact Solange Whitehead at the Environmental Fund for Arizona: efaz@efaz.org or (480) 510-5511.

Donation Wish List -- Maricopa Audubon Society is looking for a donation of a laptop computer in order to provide educational presentations to youth groups and classes. To donate please contact any board member.

Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas -- The University of New Mexico Press will soon release, The Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas, compiled by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. A large book, it was years in the writing. The Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas will be 8.5 x 11, will have over 275 color photographs and 275 maps. It will carry a list price of \$45.00. If you would like more information, please access the book's page on the > UNM Press website--<http://www.unmpress.com/Book.php?id=10473189937981>

Membership Information -- There are two ways to get on the mailing list in order to receive the Cactus Wren-dition. First, by joining the National Audubon Society. If you live in Maricopa County, generally east of 43rd Avenue, when National Audubon receives your check and membership application, Maricopa Audubon will receive your name and address from National, and will add you to Maricopa Audubon's Wren-dition mailing list, or you can make a check payable to National Audubon Society for \$20.00 and mail it with your National Audubon Society membership application to: Krys Hammer, Maricopa Audubon Society's membership chair, 1121 N Terrace Road, Chandler, AZ 85226, and she will forward it on to National Audubon. In the latter case, Maricopa Audubon will receive

a rebate of your entire \$20.00 National Audubon membership fee the first year. Secondly, by becoming a "Friend of Maricopa Audubon". In this case you will become a member of Maricopa Audubon Society only, and will not receive the Audubon magazine, or any of the "benefits" of National Audubon membership but you will receive one year of the Cactus Wren-dition. "Friends" contribution categories in the form of a check made payable to Maricopa Audubon Society, and mailed to Krys Hammer, Maricopa Audubon Society's membership chair, 1121 N Terrace Road, Chandler, AZ 85226. The categories are--Anna's-\$20; Verdin-\$35-\$99; LeConte's Thrasher-\$100-\$249; Cactus Wren-\$250-\$999; Harris's Hawk*-\$1,000-\$9,999; and California Condor*-\$10,000+. *These levels include a signed, framed photograph by Jim Burns of your designated raptor. All "Friends" members receive various discounts. If you reside outside the above-indicated geographical area, the only way to receive a subscription to the Cactus Wren-dition is to become a "Friend" of Maricopa Audubon Society.

Audubon Celebration--Sept. 9-11 2005--Windemere Hotel, Sierra Vista, AZ -- Co-sponsored by Arizona Audubon Council and Audubon Arizona. The Council and State Office invite you to join with friends old and new for a weekend of fun -- including guest speakers, workshops, setting state issue priorities, and, of course, great birding. For further details and registration information, call (602) -468-6470 or go to www.audubon.org/states/az. Early registration is encouraged because some activities will be limited.

Ecuador & Galapagos Birding Contest -- If you've always dreamed of seeing fantastic tropical species like the plate-billed mountain toucan, the violet-tailed sylph, and the Galapagos endemics, a new birding contest makes it possible. Alianza Jatun Sacha -- CDC Ecuador, a leading Ecuadorian conservation group, has organized BirdQuest, a friendly bird-watching event designed to support environmental protection in Ecuador. The idea is for teams of from two to six persons to bird several of Ecuador's renowned hotspots over a 10 to 15-day period. Each team will be led

by an experienced local guide to help identify Ecuador's fantastic bird diversity (more than 1,600 species!), so previous familiarity with the habitats is not necessary.

The itinerary includes three reserves co-managed by Jatun Sacha. The first is Yanacocha Bird Sanctuary near Quito, a high-altitude forest that sits below Andean paramo grasslands and is filled with a remarkable collection of hummingbirds. Next is La Hesperia Cloud Forest Reserve, where the 276 species recorded so far include the Andean cock-of-the-rock and the pale-mandible aracarí. The Choco contest winds up at Congal Reserve on the Pacific seashore, home to the Ecuadorian trogon, the Choco toucan, and many shorebird species. If you chose the Choco + Galapagos (San Cristobal Island) event (14 days) you'll observe the amazing Galapagos fauna and vegetation, and 15 endemic birds, including the Chatham Mockingbird, endemic to San Cristobal.

The cost for the ten-day Choco tour (not including airfare) is \$2,085 and Choco + Galapagos is \$3,861 and, because the tour is personalized, the timing of your trip is flexible depending on when your team wants to visit. Details can be found on the Jatun Sacha website at http://www.jatunsacha.org/ingles/bird_quest.htm.

Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas:
Volunteers are needed for the second PA Breeding Bird Atlas Project scheduled for 2004-2008. This atlas effort comes two decades after the first atlas which documented 187 breeding species in the Commonwealth. The sponsors include the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Powdermill Nature Reserve, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and Pennsylvania Game Commission. To learn more or register to participate go to www.pabirdatlas.org.

Credit Card -- The American Birding Association has negotiated an agreement with US Bank to provide ABA members a distinctive US BANK VISA Card. Using your card will not

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Bad photo, difficult birds

THIS ISSUE'S CLUE—

Here's a fun little departure from our normal three-photo quiz. But, because of focusing and sharpness issues, this is a bad photo and the birds are difficult. What was I thinking? Well, it is shorebird time again in Arizona, and this photograph was taken in Arizona around this time last year. There are three different species in the photo, and it presents a unique opportunity to compare them side by side. I promise an easy quiz next issue.

All photos by Jim Burns.

National Audubon Society at the Crossroads

Bob Witzeman

On June 21, 2005, the National Audubon Society (NAS) sent an Action Alert! to many of its members describing the critical importance of protecting and retaining our nation's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This law, passed by Congress in 1970, is now under attack by conservatives in Congress who wish to weaken or destroy it.

NEPA is unquestionably the most effective environmental law this nation has. It enables the public to review and comment on a full range of project alternatives for any undertaking on federal land or projects built with federal funds. NEPA also requires that the U.S. Endangered Species



Gray Vireo "Watch-listed" by NAS as a bird whose status might be in jeopardy someday. This vireo is limited to dry, juniper hillsides in the southwest U.S. It is found at the Oak Flat USFS campground, a site threatened by the world's largest mining company, Rio Tinto. Rio Tinto lobbyists are asking Congress to allow their destructive, polluting copper mine to circumvent U.S. environmental and cultural protection laws. Jim Burns photo

Act (ESA) and the U.S. National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) be considered in NEPA oversight review.

What could possibly motivate NAS to endorse a NEPA-exempted environmental and cultural pariah? Simply put, it's about self-aggrandizement!

Paradoxically, NAS is now apparently supporting a Congressional land swap bill that would exempt a proposed Arizona copper mine from NEPA and greatly

weaken ESA and NHPA oversight. The bill privatizes 3000 acres of Forest Service land near Superior, Arizona and transfers it to the Resolution Copper Company, a company owned by the world's two largest mining companies, Rio Tinto (British) and Broken Hill Proprietary (Australian). This highly controversial copper mine has serious land, watershed, groundwater, smelter pollution, cultural and environmental problems- making NEPA oversight vital.

The possibility that the mine would incur the collapse of "Apache Leap," a Native American historical/cultural landmark, is so likely that the bill actually has language specifically absolving the mine owners of any liability for destroying it! In 1871, 75 Apaches threw themselves off this precipice rather than face capture by the



Black-chinned Sparrow "Watch-listed" by NAS as a bird whose status might be in jeopardy someday. This species is limited to rocky, brushy, arid hillsides in the Southwest U.S. It is found at the Oak Flat USFS campground, a site threatened by the world's largest mining company, Rio Tinto. Rio Tinto lobbyists are asking Congress to allow their destructive, polluting copper mine to circumvent U.S. environmental and cultural protection laws. Jim Burns photo

U.S. Cavalry.

The mine's "block-cave" underground mining technology causes the land above the mine to collapse, obliterating not only Apache Leap, but habitat for the federally endangered Arizona Hedgehog Cactus, *Echinocereus arizonicus*, var. *arizonicus*. This plant, only found in this region of Arizona, is already impacted by past heavy mining in the area.

What could possibly motivate NAS to endorse a NEPA-exempted

National Audubon Society at the Crossroads

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conservation



J Slash X ranch, 147 acres, 5200 ft. altitude, Turkey Creek. Three years ago fire burned most of this ranch including its riparian hardwoods and adjacent ponderosa forest. With both fire and decades of overgrazing few riparian hardwoods remain. The stream is intermittent (underground at times) with only a trickle on the surface, even after a record wet spring. Resolution Copper's selection of riparian habitat in a ponderosa forest, when our southwest Sonoran Desert cottonwood/willow ecosystems face near extinction, is discouraging. Resolution's other three Tonto Forest swap properties have equally marginal riparian properties. These firesale-priced ranches were abandoned by their owners years ago. They are now being grazed by USFS permittees who live on ranches elsewhere. All four ranches will probably continue to be grazed after the swap.

environmental and cultural pariah? Simply put, it's about self-aggrandizement! Resolution Copper has offered to spend \$4 million to acquire 1000 acres of private land on the northern border of NAS' Appleton-Whittell

Research Ranch located near Elgin, Arizona, and turn it over in this land swap to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. These 1000 acres are currently owned by the heirs of the recently deceased Arial Appleton, the land donor and benefactor of that NAS ranch property. Resolution Copper's land swap bill would allow NAS to avoid having to raise the \$4 million needed to prevent Ms. Appleton's children from selling the lands they inherited from their mother to land developers.

NAS should raise the \$4 million, instead of tarnishing itself by complicity in this circumvention of an environmentally and culturally destructive copper mine that vitiates our nation's NEPA, ESA and NHPA laws.

It is hypocrisy for NAS and Audubon Arizona (NAS' state office in Arizona – which actively supports this land swap) to ask its members to defend NEPA while supporting this NEPA-exempt land exchange bill. NAS and Audubon Arizona should not let venality cloud their judgment.

Our Maricopa Audubon Chapter, and Audubon chapters nationwide, would surely rather help in fundraising appeals from NAS for land acquisitions to their Research Ranch, than see NAS supporting legislation trashing the very law NAS' Action Alert! calls "the

Magna Charta of environmental protection."



7B Ranch, Lower San Pedro River (5/16/05), alt. 2400 ft. This 3072 acre historically overgrazed ranch consists of seven miles of bone dry San Pedro riverbed devoid of visible water. It is devoid of the San Pedro's lush willow, cottonwood, ash, sycamore or walnut riparian galleries! This is no gift to the beleaguered San Pedro riparian ecosystem, despite its 800-acre, even-aged, monoculture of upland mesquite on its east bank. The west bank is ecologically sterile, consisting of the dying mining town of Mammoth and huge piles of defunct mine tailings. This swap property lacks habitat for threatened Southwestern Willow Flycatchers and Western Yellow-billed Cuckoos, as well as for Zone-tailed, Black, and Gray Hawks, Mississippi Kites, Summer Tanagers, Hooded and Bullock's Orioles, and the many other birds which nest or use this important north/south flyway. Resolution Copper is unloading this dry riverbed property they currently own, rather than spending money to purchase: (1) quality San Pedro riparian habitat like SRP and TNC do, or (2) to purchase adjacent farmland (whose groundwater pumps suck the river dry).

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

Marjorie Eckman

The following field trips are sponsored by the Maricopa Audubon Society who have an organized program of trips throughout the year. They are open to the public and are free and include all skill levels. All the trips are Difficulty Level 1 unless noted otherwise.

CAR POOLING:

Maricopa Audubon strongly encourages carpooling on field trips. Please make every effort to organize your own carpool, consolidate vehicles at meeting places; and/or contact leaders for carpooling assistance. It is recommended that passengers reimburse drivers 5 to 10 cents per mile

LEGEND:

Limit: Maximum number of participants per field trip. Please call early to make your reservations.

Difficulty Levels 1 through 5: 1 equals very low level of exertion, short walking distances, considerable birding from vehicle and possibly multiple birding stops. 5 equals very high level of difficulty with respect to exertion. Longer hiking distances are expected with possible steep trails.

REMINDERS:

- Wear neutral colored clothing and sturdy walking shoes
- Bring sunscreen, sunglasses, head protection and water
- Avoid wearing bright colors
- Bring your binoculars
- Don't forget to have FUN!!!

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

August – December 2005

Saturday, August 6 Page Springs

We will visit the Page springs Fish Hatchery southwest of Sedona and bird other nearby locations. Possible sightings of Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Western and Cassin's Kingbirds and summer warblers. Bring lunch. Limit 15. Difficulty 2. Call leader for information, reservations and carpooling.

Leader: Herb Fibel at 480-966-5246

Wednesday - Sunday, August 10 to 14 Southwest Wings Festival in Bisbee

Southwest Wings Festival in Bisbee.

I highly recommend this Festival as I think it is very well run with excellent leaders and in vans rather than buses. This year it will feature different varieties of owls. The keynote speaker is Pete Dunn, Director of Cape May Bird Observatory and he will be leading a field trip as well. The web site is www.swwings.org.

Saturday, September 3 Paloma Ranch and Area

Paloma Ranch and Area led by Bill Grossi--Painted Rock Reservoir, Paloma Ranch and associated areas in southwestern Maricopa County. This past winter's rains resulted in water above and below Painted Rock Dam. We will visit those places and others looking for migrating shorebirds and vagrants from the Sea

of Cortez. Songbirds will be looked for in the trees at the Paloma Ranch headquarters and the Gila River valley as we make our way back to Phoenix. Last years all day total was 95 species! A scope will be helpful. Please bring a hat, sunscreen, lunch, water and carpool money. Meet at REI parking lot at southwest corner of Southern & Priest in Tempe for prompt departure at 5:15 AM or Mike Rupp's office lot at 740 E. Highland for 5:30 departure. Back at approximately 3 to 4 PM. Leader: Bill Grossi Contact: Claudia Kirscher at 623-934-5460 or antclaudia@aol.com for reservations.

Friday-Sunday, September 9-11 Sierra Vista Celebration

Sierra Vista Celebration with workshops & fieldtrips sponsored by Arizona Audubon Council and Audubon Arizona-- See Notes and Announcements.

Saturday, September 17 Dateland Shrimp Ponds

Dateland Shrimp Ponds led by Pierre Deviche--The Dateland shrimp ponds consist of ten large multi-acre ponds that are stocked in May and drained in October. They are a new birding location near Gila Bend that have become increasingly important to local birders over the last year as migrating shorebirds in good varieties and numbers are often found. This trip will afford the opportunity to perhaps see shorebird species that aren't often seen in the valley, like Baird's Sandpipers in addition to Dunlin, Sanderling and Willets. On Sept 14/04, Red-necked

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

& Wilson's Phalaropes, Sabine's and California Gulls, Forster's & Black Terns, Snowy & Semi-palmated Plovers and 6 species of sandpipers were found. In addition to these ponds, we will visit several other well-known locations in the western end of the state that could be productive for gulls, waders and other farmland species. Interested in knowing more about the anatomy of our feathered friends? Our leader, Pierre Deviche, is a Ph.D ornithologist at ASU, and can share "scientific" information about the species we will see. This will be a daylong trip - bring lunch, water and carpool money. Those people needing to return earlier can carpool in one car. Departure point to be announced later. Expect to leave at 5:30 AM promptly. Leader: Pierre Deviche, Professor, School of Life Sciences, ASU
Contact: Michael Rupp at 602-277-0439 days or ruppar@mindspring.com to reserve your spot and obtain more information.

Saturday, September 24 Fountain Hills and Saguaro Lake, Sycamore Creek in Sunflower and Mt. Ord

Fountain Hills and Saguaro Lake, Sycamore Creek in Sunflower and Mt. Ord led by Kurt Radamaker--Join us for early passerine migration in western Maricopa County and part of Gila County as we search for fall migrants. After a brief scan of Fountain Hills Lake for any early waterfowl, we will proceed to Saguaro Lake for a quick check, then to Sycamore Creek in Sunflower where we will search for a variety of riparian species. Finally we will check the foothills of Mt. Ord and possibly go to the top if there is time.

Plan on an all day trip. Please bring a scope if you have one, lunch, water and snacks. Meet at the east side parking lot off N. Panorama Drive in Fountain Hills at 6 AM.

Leader: Kurt Radamaker at 480-837-2446 or email Kurtrad@mexicobirding.com for reservations.

Saturday, October 1 Basic Bird Photography Seminar

Basic Bird Photography Seminar led by Cindy Marple--Have you ever thought about taking your bird watching to another level? Whether for fun or profit, bird and nature photography opens a whole new approach to bird watching that can be deeply fulfilling. Experienced bird photographer Cindy Marple will present a basic seminar on bird photography covering equipment selection, composition, lighting, and how to approach the subject. Cindy will illustrate photo principles with her own terrific images in a power point presentation, and answer all your photography questions. Mike Rupp will end the session with a discussion on videography of birds, and show a short program. Digi-scoping will be covered as well. This seminar fills fast - please register early!
Leader: Cindy Marple at 490-892-4460 or clmarple@cox.net for reservations.

Saturday, October 8 East Valley Shorebirding

East Valley Shorebirding led by Roy Jones--Roy, one of Arizona's expert birders has said that he would like

to leave the destination unknown for now. He will be deciding much closer to the time of this trip what locations will be best to visit. Limit 12. Meeting place to be decided at that time also.

Leader: Roy Jones at 480-994-9386 or barbet03@msn.com for reservations and for additional information.

Saturday, October 15 Seven Springs Area

Seven Springs Area led by Joy Dingley--We shall concentrate on two or three of these attractive areas looking especially for migrants and residents species. With an early start and a quick look at Rachensack, we will have time to linger at Lower Camp Creek, always a very rewarding spot, and hopefully make it to Seven Springs for a day of quite varied habitats. Meeting place and time to be decided. Bring lunch, water and carpool money. Difficulty 2. As we go to press, we have no idea what this area will be like or even if it is worth going to so soon after the Cave Creek Complex fire. Please call Joy before making the trip out.
Leader: Joy Dingley at 480-419-9804 or joy.dingley@cox.net for reservations & additional information.

Saturday, October 22 Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Boyce Thompson Arboretum near Superior led by Cindy Marple--We will carpool from the Wild Birds Unlimited parking lot at SW corner of McClintock & Guadalupe at 6:45

continued on page 10

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

continued from page 9

AM. We can always expect a good list of species in this very beautiful Arboretum that can also include occasional rarities. A scope is helpful. Please bring lunch and \$7.50 entrance fee. Consider buying a State Park Pass that will allow you to enter any of our beautiful state parks as well as the Arboretum for one full year.

Leader: Cindy Marple at 480-892-4460 or clmarple@cox.net for reservations.

Friday-Sunday, October 28-30 Salton Sea

Salton Sea led by Russ Widner--We are hoping for a mix of migrants and winter residents to this area of avian biodiversity. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn new birds with a leader who knows the area well. The lake was formed by the flooding of the Colorado River in the early 1900's and in excess of 400 species of birds have been recorded here. Places are limited - there is a 3-car maximum for this trip. Difficulty 1
Leader: Russ Widner at 480-595-2977 or rwidner@earthlink.net for reservations and additional information.

Saturday, November 5 Lower Salt River

Lower Salt River led by Charles Saffell--We will be birding the Granite Reef, Phon D Sutton & Coon's Bluff areas and other neat areas nearby that Charles knows like the back of his hand! This is a traditional favorite as the birding is always great in these areas with waterbirds, raptors

and migrants. Resident and migrant birds in the mesquite bosques can include a surprise or two. Last year we had Charles' good friend, Richard Kaiser helping and bagged 60 species. Bring lunch, snacks and water as this usually is one of our longer trips - you won't want to quit early! We will meet at the Walgreen's parking lot on the SE corner of McKellips and Power Roads. We leave promptly at 7 AM.

Leader: Charles Saffell at 480-668-9393 or marisaff@cox.net for reservations and information.

Saturday, November 12 Base & Meridian Wildlife Area

Base & Meridian Wildlife Area led by Tom Hildebrandt--We will be birding a variety of desert habitats in the 115th Avenue & Gila River area including grassland, river bottom, open water, and desert foothills. We will be looking for waders, cormorants, osprey, and riparian winter residents. Meeting place & time to be decided - please contact Claudia for further information. Expect to return about midday. Please bring a scope if available, lunch or late morning snack, sturdy boots, water, and carpool money. Please note that the level of difficulty for this trip is 2-3. We will be in cobble/sand in river bottom, climb up Monument Hill (optional 1/4 mile steep slope with loose rock). Limited mobility OK, but would stay on road/berm areas.

Leader: Tom Hildebrandt, of the Arizona Game & Fish Department
Contact: Claudia Kirscher at 623-934-5460 or antclaudia@aol.com

Saturday, November 19 Gilbert Water Ranch

Gilbert Water Ranch led by Cindy West--The ponds and surrounding marshes attract migrating waterfowl, wintering raptors, and passerines. Burrowing owl colonies are well established and easily viewed. Like Tres Rios in the west end, these ponds are fast becoming the east side mecca for birders and also have had their share of rarities. Bring a scope if available, lunch and water. Start at site promptly at 7:30 AM. Limit 18.

Leader: Cindy West at 480-830-5332 or cwestbirdr@juno.com for reservations.

Saturday, December 3 Arlington & Gila River Area

Arlington & Gila River Area by Tracy McCarthy--We will concentrate on the ponds and agricultural fields looking for wintering waterfowl, wetland birds, sparrows and raptors. This is a good trip for early December, as we should have the possibility for similar species as the ones they get on the Gila River/Arlington Christmas Bird Count. A scope will be helpful. Please bring lunch, snacks and water. Meet at 7 AM for prompt departure at McDonald's parking lot on the SW corner of McDowell and 7th Street in Phoenix. Expect to return around 3 PM. Limit of 5 vehicles so we will need to carpool.

Leader: Tracy McCarthy at 602-451-4179 or tmccarthey@Acstempe.com for reservations.

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

Middle to end of December

Five Maricopa County Christmas Bird Counts--The five counts are: Salt-Verde Rivers, Phoenix-Tres Rios, Hassayampa River, Gila River, and the Carefree Count. Please check our web site for information and dates. Also see the Winter Wrendition. Walter Thurber, one of the compilers notes, "National Audubon Society has conducted these counts since 1900. Volunteers from across North America and beyond take to the field during one calendar day between December 14 and January 5 to record every bird species and individual bird encountered within a designated 15-mile diameter circle. These records now comprise an extensive database that helps to monitor winter bird

populations and the overall health of the environment. A \$5 participation fee defrays a portion of the cost of tabulating and publishing the count results. Help is needed on most of these counts, so find one that interests you and contact the compiler for more information."

Gilbert Water Ranch Beginning Birdwalks

Maricopa Audubon Society, the oldest and largest Audubon chapter in the valley, has teamed with The Riparian Institute of Gilbert, to bring regular monthly "birdwalks" to individuals and families in the southeast valley.

Located at the southeast corner of Greenfield and Guadalupe Roads,

the beautiful 110 acre Gilbert Water Ranch will play host to guided birdwalks one Saturday of the month, from October 2005 through March 2006, with April being the Feathered Friends Festival. Running from 8AM to 12:00, the birdwalks will be guided by experienced leaders, with "loaner" binoculars and field guide books available free of charge. Each walk will travel around several of the ponds and a variety of habitats that will provide participants with good views of some of the 125 species that have been recorded at the water recharge facility.

Details about birdwalk dates, times, and changing exhibits can be seen at: www.maricopaaudubon.org, and www.riparianinstitute.org

STATE OF THE CHAPTER FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED 5/31/05

Herb Fibel

As required by our bylaws, here is a summarized report of our income and expenditures for the fiscal year ended May 31, 2005.

INCOME		EXPENDITURES	
National Audubon dues share & incentive payments	\$ 6,313	Wren-dition	\$10,143
"Friends of Maricopa Audubon"	5,245	Dues and donations	1,916
Books and t-shirt sales	4,801	Power point projector and speaker	1,460
Environmental Fund for Arizona (EFA)	2,403	Liability insurance	1,255
Fundraising activities	2,387	Costs related to books and t-shirt sales	930
Miscellaneous donations	1,347	Education expenses	865
Realized interest and dividends	452	Officer and committee expenses	790
Miscellaneous	40	Telephone	576
		Audit	500
Total income	\$22,988	Conservation	464
		Banquet and awards	300
		Miscellaneous	256
		Total expenditures	\$19,455

Shortly the books will be turned over to a CPA for a review. If you have any questions, please call Herb Fibel at (480) 966-5246.

AZ's Special Species—Gila Woodpecker

Jim Burns

Conspicuous, brash, and noisy, the lead singer in the dawn chorus throughout Arizona's Sonoran Desert, the Gila (that's HEE-la, not GILL-a, for you easterners) Woodpecker, *Melanerpes uropygialis*, is one of our state's most familiar and easily seen special species, species found only here or more easily here than in any other state. Inhabiting both urban and rural Saguaro stands, riparian cottonwood groves, and dry desert washes, Gilas are still abundant in central and southern Arizona despite having undergone a precipitous decline in southeastern California. They are also found in extreme southwestern New Mexico and south into Baja and central Mexico.

This fawn-colored, zebra-backed woodpecker, closely related to the Golden-fronted and Red-bellied, its congeners to the east, derives its common name from the Gila River along which it was discovered. Gilas, together with Gilded Flickers, are the principal architects of the desert "apartments complexes," proximal old nesting cavities, primarily in saguaros, which are subsequently used by at least ten other bird species as well as assorted rodents and snakes.

In addition to the preferred Saguaro, Gilas excavate nestholes in cottonwoods, willows, and mesquites, typically 15 to 20 feet off the ground, usually with a north or east exposure to avoid the direct heat of the desert sun. Most woodpecker species do not nest in the same cavity in successive years, but in areas where Saguaro are sparse Gilas will reuse the same hole annually or return to an old one after several years. Typically a pair of Gilas will produce two or three broods per year.

When trees are used, the bed of wood chips from the excavation is the only nesting material, but in cacti where the plant's fiber is soft and vascular to facilitate water storage, no nesting material is used. The fleshy tissue in Saguaro secretes a fluid which hardens to create a scabrous lining on the inside of the cavity. These hard, tubular shells



Photo by Jim Burns

are often found on the desert floor near fallen Saguaro and are known as Saguaro boots.

Gilas do not excavate for food like many woodpeckers, but merely probe along the trunk or branches of woody plants and Saguaro gleaning insects such as grasshoppers and beetles. When the Saguaro are in bloom, Gilas, like the flickers, will eat the pollen and later in the season gorge on the pulpy fruit. Gilas readily come to hummingbird feeders, suet feeders, and sliced citrus, and they have been known to eat the eggs and young of small birds and also to cache food for later use.

If you're breathing and you're in central or southern Arizona up to 4000 feet, you won't have to find Gilas. Gilas will find you and will probably announce their presence, before they are seen, with one of their two principal calls: a strident, querulous series of "pip"s, or a boisterous, rolling, upslurred "churr." Unlike the Gilded Flickers whose habitat they share, there is nothing shy and retiring about Gilas, and when you come to appreciate their outsized personality, it's hard to remember this species is two to three inches smaller than the flickers. If you don't have a pair of Gilas in your yard, there's probably a pair in your neighborhood. If there's not a pair in your neighborhood, visit any of the mountain parks in Phoenix, and just sit and listen for awhile.

My favorite Gila neighborhood has come to be Papago Park between the Phoenix Zoo and the Desert Botanical Garden where the accompanying photograph was taken, at a nest hole, in June of 2003. All members of the woodpecker tribe drum to attract mates and establish territories, seeking good acoustical surfaces so this communication carries long distances. It should come as no surprise that the obstreperous Gilas' favorite drumming posts in Papago are the metal light covers throughout the park, and that their drumming is longer, louder, and steadier than that of their flicker and Ladder-backed neighbors.

To find and observe the latter two species takes time and patience. Not so the Gilas which are always busy rousting about, chasing one another, harassing the starlings, investigating the next Saguaro hole, calling from atop Hunt's tomb, or roller-coasting across the ponds from light pole to date palm to fencepost. If not for the equally noisy and engaging Cactus Wren, the common and special Gila Woodpecker might easily have been Arizona's state bird.

Photo Quiz Answers

Jim Burns

With the long legs, long bills, and dark over light color scheme, there shouldn't be much debate that these three birds are waders. Why are these waders crossing the road? Well, they are going from the pond behind them on their left to the pond across the road on their right, neither of which can be seen in the photo. Who knows why? In this case maybe it was because they were a little uncomfortable with the attention of all the birders standing around with big scopes and big lenses. One (of the shorebirds) must have been a celebrity.

Except for those legs and bills and the fact that the third bird (from the left) could be a smaller version of the second, there aren't any obvious similarities between the three, so let's list the differences. There seem to be enough of these to show, beyond reasonable doubt, that we are indeed looking at three different species. The most notable dissimilarity is in size. The middle bird is obviously the largest, whereas the leader of the parade (the bird on the right) is the smallest. And the middle bird is as proportionately larger than the first as the first is larger than the third.

Note, however, that bill lengths do not correspond to this proportionality. The largest bird has the longest bill, but the bill of the third, the smallest bird of the three, is longer than the bill of the first bird. If you're still with me on this, look again more closely at the shape and color of the three bills. The bill on the left, the shortest one, appears uniformly colored and slightly downcurved. The middle bird's bill, definitely bi-colored, seems ever so slightly upcurved. The bill on the right is uniformly colored and looks straight.

There are two other obvious dissimilarities in the photo. The first is the plumage patterns of the birds' mantles (upperparts or backs). Compared to its companions, the bird on the left has darker upperparts which are much more strongly patterned. Mantle markings on the other two are lighter and more diffuse. A second and more obvious distinction is in the jizz of the birds. Compared to the other two, the bird on the left has a notably long neck and a notably small head. It has a completely different profile and posture. Maybe that one is our celebrity. Don't you wish we could see the original photograph to check leg color?

Bad photo, difficult bird
Simply because of the way the eye is

trained in Western Civilization, we're going to start with the wader on the left, the bird with the most distinctive overall look (jizz). This jizz is so distinctive, in fact, that it should separate our first bird not just from the others in this photo but from all other shorebirds! Let's see what we can see.

We've already commented on the long neck and the small head relative to this bird's body size and the other birds' heads. There are two other noteworthy features to this bird's shape: the bird is plump to the point of looking pot-bellied; and this look is magnified due to the bird's hump-backed appearance. If you're flipping frantically through the shorebird section of your field guide, slow down, repeat the four structural field marks we've just covered, add the short, decurved bill, and look for a matching shape.

One of the plovers? Close, but the bill's not that short, and the neck's longer. One of the tringines? Well, the long legs might qualify, but the bill is too short and the tringa sandpipers exhibit a horizontal posture, not the upright look seen here. One of the calidridines? Well, the bill might qualify, but the legs are too long, and there is still that upright posture.

Hey, Upland Sandpiper! We're getting closer. Upland's are long-necked and upright. But an Upland has a prominent black eye and a very long tail. Our bird's eye doesn't jump out from a plain face, and its rear end is rather attenuated. Here we go! Buff-breasted Sandpiper--pot-bellied, upright, and there was one at the sod farms east of Scottsdale! When? Last year? Real close, but Buff-breasteds are small, almost peep sized, their bill isn't decurved, and they too have a prominent, patent-leather black eye which stands out against a plain face.

There's only one thing left. This is the classic, juvenile Ruff found on the Dateland Shrimp Farm west of Gila Bend last fall. The photo was taken on September 26, 2004. Note the thin, dark, postocular stripe, the contrast between the crown and the rest of the face and, most importantly, the neat, prominent fringes on the back feathers which give juvenile Ruffs their unique scalloped appearance. Leg color in the original photo is greenish-gray. Field guide summaries of fall Ruffs range from "distinctive and easily recognized" to "what else could it be," but in my twenty-two years in Arizona this was only the third Ruff report I've heard, and the first confirmed. Who goes shorebirding in

Arizona thinking about Ruffs? Maybe a lot of people now.

Bad photo, difficult bird
Big bird, long legs, long bill, long primary projection bringing wings to or just beyond tail tip, horizontal posture--does this description of our middle wader sound familiar by now. This is the template for the shorebird genus, tringa, and the template modification for this species is the slightly upturned bill. Don't you wish we could see the original photograph to check leg color?

A quick look might suggest Willet, a larger bird with a heavier body and a straight bill, which occupies a different genus. The only real tringa possibilities, since we're in Arizona, are one of the yellowlegs or Solitary Sandpiper, but the latter would show us a bold white eye spectacle and shorter legs relative to its body size. Alright, let's look at leg color anyway--even in shades of gray our middle bird's legs look very light and bright. Moreso, for example, than the base of its bill.

I think we're already at the point where we can safely say "What else could it be?" This bird is larger than a Ruff, has white spotting on its upperparts, dark streaking on its breast, and a look-alike little congener leading its parade. This is a Greater Yellowlegs molting from juvenile plumage into non-breeding adult.

Bad photo, easy bird
Well, our last bird is easy now isn't it, and it's fun to get a side-by-side of Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. Unfortunately the Lesser is the least sharply focused of these three. Depth-of-field is always an issue with birds lined up at different distances from the camera, and this problem is exacerbated when long telephoto lenses are used and heat waves are present.

Even out of focus, we can see the Lesser's bill is about the length of its head, whereas the Greater's is obviously longer than its head. Notice, too, that the Lesser's bill is two-thirds to three-fourths the length of its tarsus (lower leg from "knee" to foot), whereas the Greater's is only slightly shorter than its tarsus.

It's time you were out there checking your local pond margins. Remember all waders DO NOT look alike. It's structure and jizz. What else could it be?

Field Observations

Janet Witzeman

MARCH, APRIL, & MAY 2005

At least one pair of Eared Grebes (among the 40+ counted at Painted Rock Dam May 7) were observed building a nest platform (TC,TMc). The species has nested in the county three previous times: in 1992, 2000, and 2002 – all at Gila Farms Pond. So this represents the first nesting record for Painted Rock Dam (hereafter PRD). Western Grebe is an irregular breeding resident at PRD, so of interest were the 100 observed courting above the dam May 7 (TC,TMc). Four Clark's Grebes were counted at PRD May 14 (TC) – only the second May record for the county.

Many Neotropic Cormorants continued to be seen at the Cobble Ponds during the period and two were observed below PRD May 7 (TC,TMc). Double-crested Cormorants were observed building nests at the heronry near PRD Rd, Mar. 6 (BG) and large young were seen in the nests below PRD May 7 (TC,TMc).

Individual Least Bitterns were observed west of 123rd Ave. and the Gila River Mar. 12 (TH), near 107th Ave. and the Salt River Mar. 25 (CBa), at the U. of AZ Agricultural Farm in Maricopa Apr. 23 (DJ), and at 115th Ave. and the Gila River Apr. 30 (TMc). An adult Little Blue Heron was discovered at the cattail marsh on Sisson Rd., near PRD May 14 (PD); there have been about 20 previous county records. A large group of 50 Black Vultures were seen over the Estrella Mountains Mar. 11 (TH), and 20 were counted at Hunter's Ponds w. of 115th Ave. Apr. 30 (TMc). More unusual was the one Black Vulture seen at the Desert Botanical Garden Mar. 25 (CBr) and one with Turkey Vultures at the confluence of the Salt and Verde Rivers May 14 (AP,CF) – the latter representing the first one recorded east of Phoenix.

About two dozen Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were observed in

four areas in s.w. Phoenix during the period (TC,TMc,CBa). One was found Apr. 20 at Willow Lake in Prescott (TMc) where there have been only a few previous records. The Greater White-fronted Goose that wintered at Fountain Hill Lake, remained until the late date of May 22 (KR); there have been only two previous county records past the end of March and none after May 7. A female Bufflehead was observed above PRD on the late date of May 14 (TC); the species is rarely seen after the end of April and there have been only two previous sightings in May – May 16 and 25.

A nest of a Gray Hawk was discovered farther north than usual – between Route 88 and the southeast end of Roosevelt Lake in Gila County (TH). One Red-shouldered Hawk continued to be seen at the Hassayampa River Preserve at least until May 7 (fide TC). A Crested Caracara, found at Tuzigoot National Monument, w. of Sedona May 1 (DVG), was new for that area and well north of the species' normal range.

At least one Clapper Rail was seen along the Gila River near 123rd Ave. Mar. 12 & 13 (TH,TMc), and at least two were heard calling in the cattails along Sisson Rd. near PRD May 7 & 14 (TC,TMc,PD).

A Black-bellied Plover, rare in spring, was observed at the Gilbert Water Ranch (hereafter GWR) Apr. 23 (BH, fide MR). Two Am. Golden Plovers were discovered at the GWR Apr. 23 – 24 (BH,PD). This species too is more rare in spring than fall; there have been only six previous spring records in the county. Up to eight Snowy Plovers were observed above PRD May 7 & 14 (TC,TMc); three were still present there May 22 (KR).

As usual Black-necked Stilts were found nesting in several areas of the county during the period. Several pairs were seen with nesting material at the dairy sludge ponds w. of 115th Ave. Apr. 2 (TC) and later in the

month (Apr. 30) one was seen on a nest in a dry field that was formerly a pond at the dairy (TMc). Numbers were reported nesting at PRD Apr. 9 (BG). Several were observed on nests at the GWR Apr. 15 and by May 8 there were many young there (TMc). Small numbers of Am. Avocets were found nesting at PRD Apr. 9 (BG) and at the GWR Apr. 15 (TMc).

A Sanderling was found above PRD May 7 (TC,TMc); there have been only four previous spring records in the county. A White-rumped Sandpiper was discovered at the Dateland Shrimp Ponds in Yuma County May 28 (HD); there have been only seven previous state records, most of which have been from s.e. Arizona. A Baird's Sandpiper, found at PRD May 14 (TC), provided the latest spring record for the county and only the second in May. A Stilt Sandpiper, found at the GWR May 8 (TMc) was also only the second May record for the county and it remained until the late date of May 30 (PD). A Red-necked Phalarope, uncommon in spring, was observed at the Lewis Prison Pond in s.w. Phoenix May 14 (TC).

Individual Franklin's Gulls were seen at Lake Pleasant on the early date of Mar. 21 (SO) and again Apr. 9 (TC), and at PRD May 11 (FP). Two were reported at the GWR Apr. 15 (TMc). An early migrating Bonaparte's Gull was observed at Lake Pleasant Mar. 26 (SO). Large numbers of California Gulls (up to 27) were reported at Lake Pleasant Mar. 23 – 28 (SO). One was seen at PRD May 14 (TC) and three were reported at PRD May 22 (KR). Between one and ten Caspian Terns were observed at PRD May 11 – 22 (FP,TC,KR). A Least Tern was discovered at the GWR May 14 (RE).

A male Ruddy Ground-Dove was found at Arlington May 14 (TC). Burrowing Owls and their habitat have become more scarce in the county in recent years, so of interest were sightings in three areas of the

Field Observations

continued from page 12

county during the period. About three burrows and four owls were seen atop a drainage ditch in Goodyear Mar. 27 – 29 (JL), one was seen near a residence on 115th Ave. in s.w. Phoenix Apr. 30 (TMc), and 16 were counted along dirt roads e. of PRD Rd. May 11 (FP). Lesser Nighthawks arrived in Cave Creek Apr. 11, which was early for that elevation of 2250 feet (RWd).

The Lewis's Woodpecker, that wintered at Oak Flat Campground, remained at least until Mar. 14 (fide KKp). The male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, that wintered at Boyce Thompson Arboretum (hereafter BTA), was still present there Mar. 27 (PM,CD). A Red-naped Sapsucker was observed on Mt. Ord during the Maricopa Audubon Society field trip there Apr. 27 and provided the first county record away from the lowlands where this species winters. A Red-breasted (hybrid type) Sapsucker was observed at BTA Mar. 3 (TC).

A N. Beardless Tyrannulet was seen and heard singing along Sycamore Creek near Sunflower May 14 (CBa,KR); there have been only six previous county records. A Greater Pewee, found along the Verde River n. of Rio Verde Ranch Mar. 7, probably wintered there (TC). A Tropical Kingbird was discovered at the Hassayampa River Preserve (hereafter HRP) May 7 (MV) and five were counted there May 28 (PM,CD). The species was first found nesting there in May 2001 and has nested there each year since then. Two Thick-billed Kingbirds were observed at the HRP May 7 (MV) and at least three were seen there along the south shore of Palm Lake May 28 (PM,CD). This species was first found at the HRP in the fall of 2003 and nested there in June 2004. The Thick-billed Kingbird that wintered in Yuma was last seen Mar. 26 (HD).

An early Bell's Vireo was observed at the GWR Mar. 5 (PD). A Yellow-throated Vireo was seen and heard

singing at BTA May 7 (JH). There have been about two dozen previous state records and at least one previous record from BTA. A Cassin's Vireo visited a yard in Tolleson Apr. 9 (BG). A pair of Hutton's Vireos with a nest was discovered Mar. 5 at BTA – a lower than usual elevation for this species to be nesting (TC). An early migrating Warbling Vireo was observed at Apache Lake Mar. 6 (JMc).

A male Varied Thrush was discovered in the mesquite bosque in front of the Phoenix Municipal Courthouse at Jefferson and 3rd Ave., downtown Phoenix, Apr. 19 – 21 (JMc, ph. TG). There have been 14 previous county records. A Yellow-rumped "Myrtle" Warbler was observed at Paloma Ranch Headquarters on the late date of May 14 (TC). A Painted Redstart was observed at a lower than usual elevation at BTA Mar. 22 (PW) and again Mar. 26 (MR).

A Sage Sparrow, observed Mar. 5 at the GWR, was away from its usual habitat (PD). A "Slate-colored" form of Fox Sparrow was found at the GWR Mar. 5 & 19 (PD). The White-throated Sparrow that wintered at BTA remained at least until Mar. 30 (SO).

A male Baltimore Oriole was discovered at the Hubbell Trading Post in n.e. Arizona May 21 (CBa,BJ). There have been only about three previous records for n.e. Arizona.

A small group of Cassin's Finches (irregular transients) were observed at Sunflower Mar. 26 (TC). Two pairs of Lawrence's Goldfinches were found at the HRP Mar. 12 and the female of one pair was seen building a nest (TC). There have been three previous records of the species nesting in the county and one previous record at the HRP – in 1980. Three pairs of Lawrence's Goldfinches were reported at the HRP Mar. 13 (PD), at least two pairs were observed there Mar. 16 (RWd,BD,AV), and at least one was seen there May 7 & 14 (TC). Additional Lawrence's Goldfinches

were reported in a n.e. Phoenix yard – two on Mar. 4 (BD), and up to three at BTA Mar. 13 – Mar. 30 (SO,PM,CD).

Following are highlights from s.e. Arizona during the spring. The Ruby-throated Hummingbird that wintered in a Tucson yard remained through Apr. 14 (RH). A Rose-throated Becard was heard singing across from the Patagonia Rest Stop May 24 and the following day a pair was seen in the same area in the same tree where the species nested in 2000 (fide KKp). A Slate-throated Redstart was discovered along the Comfort Spring Trail at the top of Carr Canyon May 26 by a birder visiting from New Jersey (LK) and was seen by many birders before it was found dead the morning of June 5. There have been seven previous U.S. records, four of which were from Arizona.

A Rufous-capped Warbler was found in Sycamore Canyon May 8 (KKp). A pair of Flame-colored Tanagers returned to Madera Canyon Apr. 14 where they nested again; two young were reported with the parents May 25 (fide KKp).

Abbreviations: Boyce Thompson Arboretum (BTA), Gilbert Water Ranch (GWR), Hassayampa River Preserve (HRP), Painted Rock Dam (PRD).

Observers: Charles Babbitt, Charlie Brenner, Troy Corman, Bix Demaree, Henry Detwiler, Pierre Deviche, Cynthia Donald, Roger Edwards, Craig Fischer, Tom Gaskill, Bill Grossi, Bill Higgins, Tom Hildebrandt, Jack Holloway, Rich Hoyer, Doug Jenness, Bud Johnson, Keith Kamper, Larry King, Jeremy Lawrence, Tracy McCarthey, James McKay, Pete Moulton, Scott Olmstead, Anne Peyton, Frank Pinilla, Kurt Radamaker, Mike Rupp, Anita Van Auken, Marcelne Vandewater, Doug Van Gausig, Paul Wolterbeek, Russ Widner

Field Trip Reports

Marjorie Eckman

Wednesday, March 23 - Native flowers and plants, Sahuaro Lake area led by Mel Bramley--We met at Denny's in Fountain Hills and with fourteen people in attendance, drove to Sahuaro Lake, and descended into a small canyon where the microenvironment was replete with various forms of wildlife. We were there about six hours. We identified about 54 plants and observed others. Birds noted were Osprey, Common Raven, Gambel's Quail, Lesser Goldfinch, Black-throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western (Clark's?) Grebe, Eared Grebe, American Coot, Mallard, Rough-winged Swallow, Cactus Wren, and Black-tailed Gnatcatcher. Gila Woodpecker and Curve-billed Thrasher were heard. Highlights of the trip was a female Black-chinned Hummingbird sitting on a nest in a bush about 30 inches off the ground and out in the open where we were able to observe her at close range and where she endured horse traffic passing by at about ten feet every day. Ask me about the wild cucumber we saw! Mel Bramley

Saturday, March 26 - Picacho Peak led by Bob Ohmart--Eight participants made the drive to Picacho Peak. It was my first visit, and I thought it was far more scenic than I expected. The weather was perfect and with Bob Ohmart patiently explaining many interesting facts about all the plants and birds, the time went by all too quickly. The flowers were lovely even though the peak had passed. I should have asked a plant person to write that part of the trip for me, but I can tell you about the birds we saw - all desert species but what great close-up views of them all! Ash-throated Flycatchers gave us terrific views several times, and Rock Wrens were on the huge rock outcrops and all of them singing. I never appreciated until then how varied their song is. Many thanks to Bob Ohmart for taking the time to lead us on this trip.

Saturday, March 30 - Seven Springs Area led by Joy Dingley--Fourteen birders set out early from Carefree Sundial to arrive at Seven Springs by 7 AM. We started first at the CCC Campground area where we were rewarded by the sight of a flock of around thirty Cedar Waxwings, which were feeding in the trees above us and gave everyone good views. The area also provided Phainopepla, Lucy's

Warbler, Northern Flicker, Gila and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Juniper Titmouse, Brown Creeper and Violet Green Swallow. Amongst the Lesser Goldfinches, Bewick's Wrens and Northern Cardinals at the next car park, a strange bird gave rise to some excitement. At first sight it seemed to be a Blackburnian Warbler but the bird was not easy to see. Gradually it became clear that the markings weren't quite right for a Blackburnian. Finally the clear sight of a yellow rump allowed a post field trip identification as a very orange Yellow-rumped Warbler. Thanks to Ken Linker for finding Troy Corman's posting on the Internet of another similar Yellow-rumped with vivid orange markings. The wind on Mt. Humboldt was probably responsible for the lack of birds, at least audible or visible birds. Rackensack Gulch was still flooded so we finished the morning at Lower Camp Creek. Here the Zone-tailed Hawk and the Common Black Hawk obliged by being in the air at the same time so that we were able to make good observations of their differences. Lower Camp Creek was as delightful and peaceful as usual with Canyon Wrens calling, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Verdin amongst the trees and the call of Bell's Vireo led to a sighting. By the time we returned to Carefree we had a species list of 44. It was an enjoyable morning - thanks to everyone for making it so.

Saturday, April 16 - Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area--led (and written) by Laurie Nessel and ranger John Gunn--Seventeen birders enjoyed partly cloudy, slightly breezy altogether beautiful weather. Blue Palo Verde were in full bloom, saguaros just starting to. But the profusion of spring perennials were mostly dried up. At the corral we had great views of Lark Sparrows. Gambels Quail were abundant thanks to the winter rains. We counted many species overlooking the cottonwood/willow canopy of the Jewel of the Creek including Bullocks Oriole, Wilson's and Yellow Warblers, Ladderback Woodpecker and a small flock of Cedar Waxwings spotted by Sonoran President Bob McCormick. We saw a Raven sharing a thermal with Turkey Vultures. An especially nice sighting was a circling Zone-tailed Hawk grasping a lizard- a sign of a recovering ecosystem that has been greatly impacted by ranching and mining,

which removed almost all the ironwood trees for firewood and timbers. Exotic plant species, especially grasses, were abundant and crowding out the natives. Park personnel are carrying out test plots and attempting to rehabilitate the area. We also saw a pair of Common Ravens attending to 3 nearly fledged nestlings. Barely nibbled Long-nosed and Common Kingsnake carcasses were discovered at the base of their Cottonwood aerie. Our co-leader, John Gunn, Biologist and Supervisor of the Conservation Area, suggested that in times of plenty, unused food is discarded. John also pointed out an especially low elevation Arizona walnut and Elderberry tree.

Cave Creek was flowing wide and strong the entire length of the preserve and harbored several tadpole species including Lowland leopard frog. One person got a soaking rock hopping the creek and 4 of us decided not to attempt a crossing. Before rejoining the group, we saw a W. Tanager, Warbling Vireo and Magillivray's Warbler. Five of us continued birding into the afternoon, exploring the newly opened, nicely constructed Metate and Towhee trails that alternately hug and overlook the creek. We added 13 species including Black-headed Grosbeak, Coopers Hawk, Brown Crested Flycatcher, Bushtit, Solitary Vireo and Lesser Goldfinches everywhere feasting on the bumper thistle crop. We also saw Common Buckeye, Mourning Cloak and Queen butterflies, Zebra-tail, Side-blotched, Western Whiptail and Tree lizards and a very close encounter with a 3 foot Western Diamondback by Tracy Wohl. What a trooper she was! We had 35 bird species for the first leg, and pushed the total to 50 for the day, including a Townsends Warbler.

I am grateful to the persistent advocates who saved the area from a golf resort and residential development. Although the "Spur" is now protected jointly by the State and County Park system and the township of Cave Creek, it is not immune from threats, which now include an upstream user who is siphoning three million gallons of water a year for Sedona Springs bottled water.

Wednesday, April 20 - Butterflies and Birds at Sunflower led by Janet Witzeman--Since the construction of

the new Beeline Highway, a wonderful section of the old road along Sycamore Creek near Sunflower has been blocked to through traffic and allows for undisturbed and quiet enjoyment of the wildlife there. On a clear day, four of us turned our attention to the many butterflies along both sides of the road as well as to the nesting and migrating birds in the sycamores along the creek and junipers on the hillside. At least three Zone-tailed Hawks graced us with their presence overhead throughout the morning. Many Violet-green Swallows were nesting in the large sycamore tree next to our lunch spot. It was nice to encounter more than one pair of Summer Tanagers - a species that has become less common at Bushnell Tanks and along the rivers southwest of Phoenix in recent years. Our total species count of 34 also included a Common Black Hawk on its nest, five species of warblers, and one Lazuli Bunting. The following species of butterflies were recorded: Pipevine Swallowtail, Two-tailed Swallowtail, Checkered White, Dainty Sulphur, Common Buckeye, Painted Lady, Checkered Skipper, and Spring Azure. The latter species was seen in large numbers in the mountain-laurel bushes.

Wednesday, April 27 - Mt. Ord led by Bob Witzeman--The completely charming Gray Vireo and Black-chinned Sparrow were fully visible and singing beautifully on Mt. Ord's foothills. We locals may take these birds for granted but in reality the Gray Vireo has a "High Priority" rating on National Audubon's "Watch List". It was selected as the cover species for Birds of Phoenix and Maricopa County. Visiting birders frequently ask where to find it when they visit Arizona. The Black-chinned Sparrow has "Moderate Priority" on that NAS list. The vireo survives in our hot, dry juniper forests, and the sparrow on our dry, steep and rocky brushy hillsides. Up on top of Mt. Ord we had great views of nesting warblers: Virginia's Black-throated Gray, Grace's, Olive and Painted Redstart. Interesting migrants included Red-naped Sapsucker and Hammond's Flycatcher.

Wednesday, May 4 - Slate Creek led by Russ Widner--Eight of us enjoyed the nice weather and nice birds. The area was heavily burned recently, but large patches of intact foliage remain. The birds seemed to be adapting well

and at 7000' elevation, lunch in the shade was very comfortable. Birding highlights included migrating Olive-sided Flycatcher and Hermit Warbler. Species presumed to be nesting included six warbler species (Olive, Virginia's, Black-throated Gray, Grace's, Red-faced and Painted Redstart), Gray and Plumbeous Vireo, Black-chinned Sparrow, Scott's Oriole and both Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches. Missing were Juniper Titmouse, Warbling Vireo and Hepatic Tanager. Many thanks to my companions, Anita, Bill, Bix, Cathy, Gretchen, Liz and Ken.

Wednesday, May 11 - Rackensack and Lower Camp Creek led by Bix Demaree & Janet Witzeman--Ten of us enjoyed a beautiful cool day in one of our favorite birding areas in Maricopa County. Rackensack Gulch was quieter than usual. We missed seeing Costa's Hummingbird and the Black-chinned Sparrow that are often found there. However, the reliable Canyon Towhee was seen, plus at least one Hammond's/Dusky type Empidonax flycatcher. The major part of the morning was spent walking down and along Lower Camp Creek where we encountered the usual assortment of flycatchers, vireos, wrens, warblers (including one Nashville), tanagers, orioles, and finches. The sighting of one pair each of nesting Zone-tailed and Common Black Hawks was a treat. The lovely yellow columbine growing along the shady parts of the creek added more beauty to the day. Seven species of butterflies were observed along the road: Pipevine Swallowtail, Queen, Common Buckeye, Dainty Sulphur, Spring Azure, Empress Lelia Hackberry Butterfly and a Checkerspot. (During lunch at the CCC Campground above Seven Springs where we tallied 44 species for the day, a surprise Juniper Titmouse was singing out in the open over our heads in a sycamore tree. It is often difficult to find even in its preferred juniper habitat.

Saturday, May 21 -- Oak Flat and Haunted Canyon led (and written) by Laurie Nessel--Eight intrepid Auduboners toughed it out under 100+ degree heat to two significant bird areas, both threatened by imminent mining activity. At Oak Flat, we had excellent views of a perched Crissal Thrasher through the scope. White Throated Swifts were circling and Violet Green Swallows

were skimming the pond. Juniper Titmouse, Scrub Jay, Brown Crested, Vermilion Flycatcher, Wilson's Warbler and Cassins Kingbird were also nice to see. A Black Chinned Sparrow was heard, a bird whose population has been declining due to habitat loss and degradation from overgrazing, off-road vehicles and mining.

There was no sign of the reported Gray Vireo whose habitat at Oak Flat is threatened by the proposed Resolution Copper Mine. If a controversial congressional land swap takes place, the area will be permanently closed to the public, and eventually will subside, forever altering the landscape.

We drove sixteen miles further east on US 60 and north on FR 287 to reach the Haunted Canyon trailhead. A pair of female N. Harriers was cruising along the creek together. We shadow hopped to listen for birds and evade the sun. Lucy's and Black Throated Gray Warblers, Bushtit, and Hooded Oriole were seen. We heard the Gray, Bells and Huttons Vireos and Spotted Towhee. We also had a very cooperative Zebra-tailed lizard posturing on a rock, displaying her orange throat and flanks. Pinto Creek was flowing clear and cool and looked to be on the mend after cattle were removed due to drought. We dipped our hats in the creek and ate lunch under the 95% canopy of Haunted. We saw Summer Tanager, a Sharp Shinned Hawk and Daddy Long-legs masting on a Sycamore.

The Carlota Copper Project showed signs of recent activity, with a graded and widened trailhead. A large bladed area was probably for turning around heavy equipment used to trench an 8" PVC pipeline to pump water into Haunted Canyon to replace that lost through the cone of depression which was created during test pumping. This pumping of groundwater into Haunted Canyon is a Rube Goldberg design whose final impact on the unique microclimate of the canyon is unknown. Seeing the recruitment of willow and cottonwood in Pinto, the amazing presence of Arizona Alder, Ash, Walnut, Cypress, and One-seed Juniper at 3,400', a pair of Zone-tailed Hawks and

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Field Trip Reports

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a multitude of birds was heartening. It would be heartbreaking if this splendid riparian area suffered from the effects of the mine. Pinto Creek has been proposed for Critical Habitat by the USFWS for the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. The creek may need several more years of rest from grazing before it can harbor significant colonies of WIFLs. The Friends of Pinto Creek, Sierra Club, Earthworks and MAS are appealing the last permit, the NPDES, that Carlota requires to begin mining on public land. In the meantime, the Canadian owner, Cambior, is putting the mine up for sale, with no apparent buyers.

Saturday, June 4 - Hassayampa River Preserve and US #60 Rest Area led by Cynthia Donald and Pete Moulton--This field trip never took place as the Preserve was closed May 30 for the summer and the participants were notified. However, Cynthia and Pete had scouted the area on the 28th before the closure, and I enclose his comments below as he wrote them--We spent about three hours birding at the Preserve near Wickenburg during the morning hours. For anyone wishing to give the Preserve one last try before it closes for the summer on the 30th, there are some good birds to see. There were at least three Thick-billed Kingbirds along the south shore of Palm Lake. Look and listen for them between the first and second benches. The Mesquite Meander produced a group of five (!) Tropical Kingbirds, all chasing each other and twittering like mad. No sign of the presumed nesting Lawrence's Goldfinches, nor the Red-shouldered Hawks, and we neither saw nor heard any Northern Beardless Tyrannulets.

Saturday & Sunday, June 11-12 -- Mogollon Rim area near Payson as guests of Mel Bramley--Eight ambitious birders arrived at the Tonto Fish Hatchery at 8 AM Saturday. This number included two birders from Payson who were a big help. We turned up 28 species of birds, in addition to a herd of elk, and saw some of the hatchery's very large trout while enjoying gorgeous vistas of the surrounding countryside. About noon we journeyed to my cabin on the East Verde River where we watched the

Acorn Woodpeckers duking it out with the Gray Squirrels, plus occasional visits by the Black-headed Grosbeaks, White-breasted Nuthatches, Steller's Jays, Mexican Jays, Broad-tailed and Magnificent Hummingbirds. Some of the party made an afternoon side trip to the Dude Fire area and saw additional species. Saturday night for dinner we feasted on the many goodies brought by all the members, told a few lies and watched the raccoons take over the feeders. Much later we crawled into the sleeping bags and were treated to the sounds of a thunderstorm and several hours of a gentle rain. Sunday we allowed enough time to make pancakes for breakfast and then went to Tonto Natural Bridge, birding along the way. At the Bridge we encountered 35 species and one Turquoise Lizard. The unique vistas down along Pine Creek from the rim held us for quite a while as we watched White-throated Swifts, Violet-green and Cliff Swallows swooping over the creek along with Yellow Warblers, Hooded Oriole, Phainopepla, Summer and Western Tanagers. Some members had never seen this bridge before which is believed to be the largest natural travertine bridge in the world 183 feet high over a 400 foot long tunnel all in a narrow valley surrounded by a forest of pine trees. We later returned to the cabin for lunch and the inevitable trip home.

Saturday, June 25, 2005 -- San Francisco Peaks led (and written) by Charles Babbitt-- There was a slight chill in the air as 15 people assembled early Saturday morning at the Museum of Northern Arizona for a field trip around the San Francisco Peaks. The cool morning air was a welcome relief after near record heat in Phoenix the previous week. Before starting out, a Lewis's Woodpecker, Black-headed Grosbeak and several Pygmy Nuthatches were spotted at a feeder near the museum entrance.

Our first stop was the Arizona Snowbowl. A hike through spruce-fir forest from the lower parking lot produced Golden-crowned Kinglet, Mountain Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper and Steller's Jay. Hermit Thrushes seemed to

be singing everywhere. Off in the distance, a Clark's Nutcracker gave its raspy call. On our way back down the mountain we stopped at the Veit Ranch Wildlife Area. Along the trail, the snappy call notes of Cordilleran Flycatchers could be heard as well as the sweet song of a Red-faced Warbler.

Hart Prairie was lush and green after an unusually wet winter. At our first stop, sharp "kip kip" calls alerted us to Red Crossbills. They were quickly located in a nearby aspen grove. Other birds seen in the area included Green-tailed Towhee, Pine Siskins and Violet green Swallows.

At the Hart Prairie Preserve, the group walked along the base of Fern Mountain through a large stand of bebb willow. A breeding Orange-crowned Warbler was singing and a Red-tailed Hawk flew overhead. There was a brief look at what appeared to be a subadult Northern Goshawk which flew directly toward the hawk and then veered out of sight.

Little Spring is one of the most beautiful spots in northern Arizona. On this summer morning the forest floor was carpeted with dense bracken fern, rocky mountain iris, Richardson's geranium and blue and purple lupine. At the spring, which is tucked away at the base of the mountain, "pishing" lured a breeding MacGillivray's Warbler out of a large gooseberry bush. In a nearby tree, a Red-naped Sapsucker was observed going in and out of a nest cavity. Walking back to our cars, a striking male Williamson's Sapsucker was spotted on the side of a small Engelmann spruce.

From Little Spring the group traveled the Kendrick Park road along the north side of Humphrey's Peak which still had large patches of snow on its upper slopes. At an old burn area, two additional Lewis's Woodpeckers were spotted as well as a stunning turquoise Mountain Bluebird. Several stops in pinyon-juniper habitat added Townsend's Solitaire and a Scott's Oriole. Near the intersection of FR 514 and Highway 89 there were several large flocks of Pinyon Jays numbering over 100 birds. The trip total for the day was 55 species.

Notes & Announcements

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only show your connection to ABA and birding but also, at no additional cost to you, provide a contribution to ABA. If interested, contact www.americanbirding.org. I think Audubon should offer something like this!

The Dovetail Directory (www.dovetailbirding.com): The Directory is an online catalogue of world birding tours, and our goal is to help birders locate that special birding tour, to any of 85 countries around the world. This is a free service. There are no hidden costs or

surcharges. Tours are offered at the operators price. In addition to tours, the Directory also carries a comprehensive inventory of birding-related books. For your further convenience we maintain a North American, toll-free number (877) 881-1145, and someone will always happy to take your call.

Member Survey

Please mark each box with a number indicating your response, with 1 being the least interest and 5 being the greatest interest. You can mark more than one box. We welcome your written suggestions as well, either via this survey or by emailing us at our email addresses on the website.

1. What chapter activities are most important to you?

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Field Trips | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Advocacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Partnering with other local organizations | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly Meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Event Participation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish-language Programs/Outreach | | |

Other _____

2. If you participated in a field trip last season, how would you rate it?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|

3. What suggestion might you have to improve our field trips?

4. In order to make voting for board members more accessible to all members, would you like to see voting take place by mail?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

5. Would registered children's summer workshops exploring various nature topics be of interest to you or those you know?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

6. If you have an interest in volunteer work with one of the programs mentioned above, please mark the box below, and fill in the information.

- | |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to volunteer, or learn to be a volunteer for one activity. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to receive email updates on chapter opportunities, events, or conservation issues. |

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email address _____

Shade-grown coffee: If you are searching for a source to purchase shade-grown coffee and haven't been successful, try ABA Sales. They carry seven kinds of Song Bird Coffee. For information call 800-634-7736. Also, Trader Joe's carries shade grown coffee.

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www.americanbirding.org and
www.birdinghotspot.com.

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Maricopa Audubon T-Shirts -- For information, contact Laurie Nessel at (480) 968-5614 or mail to:
laurienessel@hotmail.com

Do you have an interesting story to tell about birding? Please forward your submissions to the Editor—Deva Burns. Check the back page for address/e-mail. Actually, attaching an article to an e-mail is the absolute easiest way to submit an article. If you have pictures or slides, you do need to send those to me directly. Remember, all articles may not be published the first month after receipt.

Monthly Meetings

First Tuesday of the month, September through April, 7:30 p.m. Our meeting place is Dorrance Hall, at the Desert Botanical Garden (DBG), except for our annual banquet in May at Shalimar Country Club in Tempe. The DBG is located at 1201 North Galvin Parkway, Phoenix, Arizona. This is approximately 1/4 mile north of the Phoenix Zoo. For a map, please see the DBG website at www.dbg.org/.

Dorrance Hall is located just off the main parking lot and entry to the DBG, and there will be signs directing you to the meeting place. Please contact a board member if you have any questions, or check out our web site at www.maricopaaudubon.org. Pre-meeting dinners (October through April) are held at Pete's 19th Tee, 1405 N. Mill Avenue, Tempe (at the Rolling Hills Golf Course), starting at 6:00 p.m.

Membership Information--see notes and announcements for more detail

Your National membership entitles you to membership in the National Audubon Society and the Maricopa Audubon Society. National members receive bi-monthly issues of Audubon Magazine and quarterly issues of the Cactus Wren*dition. For all new National Audubon memberships send check or money order payable to National Audubon Society to: Membership Chair, Krys Hammer.

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For membership changes and status, call 1-800-274-4201.

Address changes can be e-mailed to CHADD@audubon.org.

For Wren*dition subscriptions only--\$20/year (Make your check payable to "Maricopa Audubon Society") and send to Krys Hammer at 1121 N Terrace Road, Chandler, AZ 85226. For Summer/Winter address change or to freeze your membership in our chapter call Membership chair, Krys at 480-413-9805 or krys.hammer@cox.net

Submissions

Copy for The Cactus Wren*dition must be received by the editor by e-mail, (may be on computer diskette, or typed and double-spaced; however, this is not preferred) by January 15, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Articles not received by the deadlines may not appear in the upcoming issue. E-mail to: Cactus Wren*dition Editor, Deva Burns. devaburns@aol.com

Opinions

The opinions expressed by authors in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the policy of the National Audubon Society or the Maricopa Audubon Society.

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