



The Cactus Wren•dition

Volume LX1, No. 2

Summer 2010



Broad-billed Hummingbird

Photo by Tom Callahan

Programs 2010

September 7 2010

Dr. Gerald Rosenthal **Sonoran Desert Life: Understanding, Insights, and Enjoyment** Dr. Gerald A. Rosenthal, Scottsdale resident and retired Professor of Biological Sciences and Toxicology, spent a decade observing and documenting the flora and fauna of the Sonoran Desert. He has compiled his knowledge into an informative and lavishly illustrated field guide with an emphasis on botany. Dr. Rosenthal will share some of his many images that are part of his research and stitch together fragments of the vast web of life of this unique ecosystem. Dorrance Hall



Photo by Scott Davies

October 2010 TBA

November 2, 2010

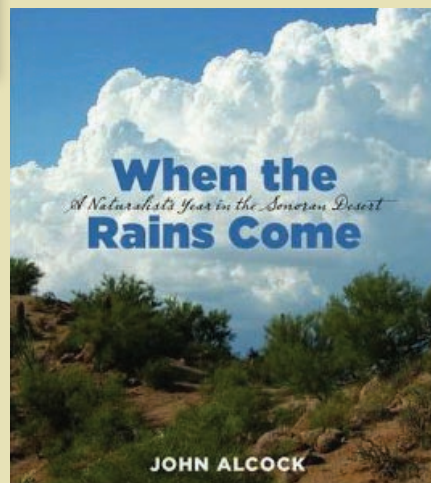
David and Diane Reesor **Three Birds, Three Locations.** Enjoy an outstanding evening with photographer David Reesor and his wife Diane. This evenings program is a sampler of three remarkable sightings- Dutch Harbor, Alaska: The eagles swooping down for a



meal; Churchill, Manitoba: The Snowy Owl with his winter friends the polar bear and red fox; Seychelles, Africa: 300,000 pairs of Sooty Terns and their offspring. Dorrance Hall

December 7, 2010

Dr. John Alcock Discover the virtues of returning to the same place repeatedly to really get to know the nature of change in the desert. Dr. John Alcock is Professor Emeritus at ASU specializing in Animal Behavior and the evolution of diversity in Insect Mating Systems. He will have copies of his new book for sale and will graciously sign them. Webster Auditorium (Review on page 17.)



Committees/Support

Arizona Audubon Council Reps

Herb Fibel
hsfibel2004@q.com
Bob Witzeman
witzeman@cox.net
Emerson Stiles
estiles2@hotmail.com

Book Store

Mel Bramley
480 969-9893

Hospitality

David Chorlton
602-253-5055

Web Page

Kurt Rademaker
480.837-2446

kurtrad@mexicobirding.com

Maricopa Audubon web site

<http://www.maricopaaudubon.org>

Maricopa Audubon Phone

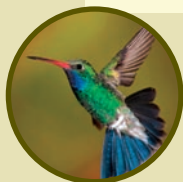
480-829-8209

"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.



Cover Photo: Broad-billed Hummingbird. This was taken in the month of May in Madera Canyon south of Tucson, AZ. I was using a Canyon 40D and 70-300mm Sigma lens. It was also a multiple high speed flash set up to be able to freeze the wings and get a sharp image. Photo by Tom Callahan.

Since this is a bird oriented publication, I guess it is appropriate to call this my "swan" song. After four years in my second go around at the helm of this wonderful organization, which we know as the Maricopa Audubon Society, by the time you read this I will no longer be your president. At this writing, our annual election has not yet occurred, but I'm certain that we will have a new leader. I'm pretty sure I know who it will be, and we'll have some new faces on the board as well.

It looks as if we have survived these four years despite the abandonment of MAS by no less than five duly elected board members over a period of about four months. We could not have done so without the dedicated leadership of those who stepped forward to fill these huge gaps as well as by those who persevered. Whenever I start to cite names, I'm always fearful that I will overlook someone, but let's hope not. Filling these abandoned positions were Maureen Stewart, secretary; Mark Horlings, treasurer; Past president Laurie Nessel, who moved over from publicity chair to field trip chair; and even later to program chair when Cynthia Donald stepped down; Fred Stewart, who stepped into the position vacated by Laurie; and Jack Follett, who joined the board as the new membership chair. Cynthia Donald, Robin Silver,



Herb Fibel

Bob Witzeman, Doug Green, and Deva Burns stayed around to fill out the remaining board positions. Later Mark Larson, who had returned to the Valley, took over education from Doug Green. Peggy Booth served as secretary for a time and was followed by Sylvia Orioli.

Past president Scott Burge took over the field trips position, and when Jack Follett left the board, Scott, ably assisted by his helper Michell, became membership chair. Finally, less than a year ago Deva Burns left as editor after nine years, and Emily Morris became our new editor.

By the time you read this even more changes will have occurred, and some new faces, together with some old ones, will be seen offering a hand to the Chapter.

On the non-elected end, my hat is off to our poet laureate David Chorlton, serving as hospitality chair, to Mel Bramley and Janet Witzeman, handling book sales, and to all those who served when asked to do so on the nominating committees, the annual banquet committees and to our newest AAC representative Emerson Stiles.

So, beware all those who seek to destroy the environment for your own gain: "We ain't done yet!"

We'll see you at the annual banquet and celebration on May 4th.

Cipher Puzzle

Submitted by Herb Fibel, Created by John Daleiden

I have been enlisting my friends to try and solve the "Celebrity Cipher" in The Arizona Republic each day, and have been encouraging them to do so. Each letter in the puzzle represents a different letter in the alphabet. For instance each of the Bs in a particular puzzle might represent the letter L. Once you have figured out which letter represents which other letter, you have mastered the puzzle. I always use a pencil in case I've guessed wrong, and I place what I believe is the correct letter above the puzzle letter, e.g.,

ETTE

Puzzle word: PSLLSK

The full correct answer for the above word is "LETTER". So everywhere else in the puzzle the Ps are going to be

Ls. The Ss are going to be Es. The Ls are going to be Ts, and the Ks are going to be Rs. Get the idea? In each puzzle different letters are substituted for different letters. In the "Celebrity Cipher" in The Republic the puzzle is always a quotation, and the end words of the puzzle are the name of the author. My friend John Daleiden created this puzzle for me to solve and I solved it. The clue he gave me, and which I'll give you is Y equals W. Since most of you are new at this, we're going to give you another clue. The cipher is very apropos for Cactus Wren-dition readers. Here goes:

"TC GC-UNPTRTCV ONAOD AC A VNBGRN

B-PLBPVR RYTZZHY-ACL IGRV RYTC

HBAHZP OHHDAP YBPC VHGOTC VPBC NPBHC."

Solution:

AN UN-PHEASANT CHICK IN A THRUSH R-EGRETS SWALLOWING JUST SWAN ORIOLE COOKIE WREN TOUCAN TERN HERON.

Notes & Announcements

Flagged Shorebirds

Although not common in our area, please be aware of color-flagged Hudsonian Godwits, Whimbrels, and any other shorebird species which you notice have color bands. You can also contact Dave Krueper, Ass't. Nongame Migratory Bird Coordinator, US Fish and Wildlife Service, PO Box 1306, Albuquerque, NM 87103, (505) 248-6877 or dave.krueper@fws.gov

Unwanted Catalogues

Is your mailbox full of unwanted mail? Catalogue works collaboratively with the catalog industry to embrace voluntary measures to reduce unwanted mail by honoring your mail preferences. Catalog Choice has become a significant consumer voice in the direct mail industry. Nearly 200 catalog mailers are participating in Catalog Choice, and this number grows every day. Please go to <http://www.catalogchoice.org/pages/merchants> to reduce the mailing of unwanted catalogs.

E-mail Alert System

Maricopa Audubon Society has established an e-mail alert system to notify members of upcoming events and activities. E-mail addresses were obtained from both the "Friends of Maricopa Audubon" roster and the National Audubon roster. There were several addresses that were returned, most likely because the e-mail addresses were not updated. If you would like to be included in or removed from this notification system, please let Laurie Nessel know at laurie@laurienessel.com. The list will only be used for the stated purpose and not sold or used for any other reason.

Birding Community E-Bulletin

A monthly bulletin with rare bird sightings and other birding information. If you would like to be put on the monthly emailing list please contact either Wayne Petersen (Director of the Massachusetts Important Bird Areas Program) at 718-259-2178 or wpetersen@massaudubon.org or Paul Baich at 410-992-9736 or paul.baich@verizon.net. They never sell the recipient list and you will receive a lot of interesting information.

Casa Del Caballo Blanco EcoLodge - Belize

A new six-cabana, eco-friendly accommodation in Belize - Casa del Caballo Blanco is a 23-acre former ranch 9.5 miles from the Guatemalan border near San Ignacio. It also shelters the not-for-profit Casa Avian Support Alliance (CASA) <http://www.casaavian.org/>. Its purpose is to understand and support the biodiversity of Belize that attracts and sustains over 530 species of migratory and resident birds spotted in a given year. Jodi and Vance Benté, owners of the property, also established The Alliance whose motto is: "Birds are the farmers of the world - help us to help them continue to sow their seeds." Their work has been undertaken in

cooperation with the Government of Belize's efforts to protect critical habitat, the loss of which threatens the avian population. Guests are invited to share in the responsibilities of supporting the avian program. They can assist in nest-box building, maintenance and feeding as well as trail building and signage. A percentage of each cabana rental will be donated to the CASA center to assist with medical and other expenses related to the management of the facility. Casa also organizes day-long tours that in addition to an educational and scientific focus can include bird-watching, horseback riding, cave tubing and visiting archeological and World Heritage Sites in Belize and Guatemala. For more information, call 707-974-4942 or visit www.casacaballoblanco.com.

Land of the Quetzal

Rich Kern and his brother, Jim, are looking for twenty partners to join us in the purchase of the 486 acre parcel, which is adjacent to Los Quezales National Park and across the Savegre River from Los Santos National Preserve in Costa Rica. Preserving an important piece of quetzal habitat is a big part of our motivation in choosing the Savegre tract; the area is one of the best places to see this beautiful bird. Besides birds, it is also possible to see puma, ocelot, the little margay, jaguar and tapir. Half of the shares for the project have been spoken for. If you would like more information and a copy of the DVD please contact Rich Kern at kernnature@aol.com. (N.B. The Kern brothers project is independent from Audubon.)

Book Store Selections

We now have a selection of books on birding topics for adults and children alike. Remember that Friends of Maricopa Audubon members get a 10% discount and that your purchase helps to support our event, education and conservation efforts.

Arizona Watchable Wildlife Tourism Association (AWWTA)

Check out their website for events around the state--www.azwildlife.com

Museum of Northern Arizona

They sponsor Venture trips that explore and discover the Colorado Plateau in the Four Corners area. For more information contact Lisa Lamberson at 928-774-5211 x241 or llamberson@mna.mus.az.us.

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 Laine Seton at the Environmental Fund for Arizona: efaz@efaz.org or (480) 510-5511.

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 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.

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.

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, as does Sunflower Market. Another source is Toucanet Coffee/Avian Ecologist. They are in the business of serving Smithsonian certified, bird-friendly coffee. All of their varieties are organic and shade grown. They also have fair trade varieties. Please visit www.toucanetcoffee.com for more information about their goals or to place an order. The website also includes an online community for bird and/or coffee lovers. They invite you to join. Another website for shade grown/organic coffee is www.cafebritt.com. An additional website is Thanksgiving Coffee Co--www.thanksgivingcoffee.com or 800-648-6491. And another from Kenn Kaufman is www.birdsandbeans.com

More Birding and Nature Festivals

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

SUBMISSIONS

Do you have an interesting story to tell about birding? Please forward your submissions to the Editor - Emily Morris. Check the back page for address/email. Attaching an article to an e-mail is the absolute easiest way to submit an article. Please send any pictures to complement your article directly to me as well. Remember, all articles may not be published the first month after receipt.

A Birder's Doubt

Emily Morris

from the editor

You've probably all had it...that moment when you doubt your own knowledge and skill as a birder. I'm sure it even happens

to those of you who've been expert birders for years, who could normally tell the difference between Empidonax flycatchers in your sleep. The doubt sometimes creeps up when you're looking at or hearing the most obvious of birds.

I doubted myself when I heard a Painted Redstart in my tiny backyard in Tempe at the end of March this year. I was taking out the garbage when I heard a chip that I didn't recognize. I paused for a moment, the doubt creeping up slowly but surely; of course it had to be a Ruby-crowned Kinglet or an Audubon's Warbler. It had to be something I knew that I

just couldn't remember what the chip call sounded like. But, then, I saw the Redstart flitting around high up in our one big pecan tree. I couldn't even see its colors, but I knew that I had to run into the house to grab Scott and our binoculars. The doubt was banished and we both identified the Painted Redstart in our backyard (bringing our backyard count to 32, I'm pleased to say).

So, when you're out birding and you see a female duck that at first glance seems like a mallard but looks a little weird, trust your gut and id it as a Gadwall; or if you hear a chip and think you're silly for wanting to double-check...dismiss that little voice in your head saying that you're not a good birder. Trust your birding instincts and ignore birder's doubt.



Editor Emily Morris

8th Annual Nature Film Festival and Silent Auction

Join Audubon Arizona for the 8th Annual Nature Film Festival and Silent Auction featuring two compelling films. The feature presentation is the visually stunning documentary titled Path of the Condor.

Hosted at Harkins Camelview theatre, the Annual Film Festival and Silent Auction is an important fundraiser for Audubon Arizona. All proceeds generated from the event go directly to Audubon Arizona's education programs.

Tickets for the event are \$25 which includes admission to the films, a picnic supper before the movie, popcorn, soda, and a bid number for the silent auction. VIP tickets are available for \$100, which offer special reserved seating and express auction check-out.

The silent auction begins at 5:30 p.m. The first film begins at 7 p.m.

Please RSVP by June 12th to 602-468-6480 or audubonarizona@audubon.org.

THE PATH OF THE CONDOR

A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY CHRISTIAN HOLLER



NARRATED BY VIGGO MORTENSEN

A journey made by an ornithologist and paraglider pilot who set out to discover the secrets of the largest flying bird in the world, the andean condor.

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

Laurie Nessel

MAY--JULY 2010

CAR POOLING: Please make every effort to organize your own carpool; consolidate vehicles at meeting places and/or contact leaders for car pooling assistance. It is recommended that passengers reimburse drivers 10 cents per mile. Be courteous to the trip leader and help cover their gas costs.

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 distance, considerable birding from vehicle and possible multiple birding stops. 5 equals very high level of difficulty with respect to exertion. Longer hiking distances are expected with possible steep trails. Trips are level 1 unless noted otherwise.

REMINDERS:

- Be courteous to the trip leader and help cover their gas costs.
- Wear neutral colored clothing and sturdy walking shoes.
- Bring sunscreen, sunglasses, head protection and water.
- Avoid wearing bright colors.
- Always bring your binoculars. Bring a scope if recommended.
- Submit trip and leader suggestions to the field trip chair.
- Unless stated otherwise, reservations are required.

*Day Passes Required for National Forests.

Many favorite spots in our National Forests now require Day Use Passes. You are responsible to acquire a day pass (\$6) in advance of field trips with an asterisk (*). Passes are available by phone or mail, at FS district and ranger offices, Big 5, some Circle K's, the Shell station at Tom Darlington and Cave Creek Road and elsewhere. Visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto/tp/where.shtml> for more information.

Impromptu Field Trips: Post your own outings or get notified of others planned field trips on short notice. Also get reminders of MAS field trips by email. Founded by naturalist Mike Plagens, membership is easy, free and open to those who have an interest in the flora, fauna, and ecology of Arizona. Not just a trip listing, view the website for trip reports, flora and fauna databases, maps, links to google earth including Gilbert Water ranch, and photos. Trips focus on plants, animals, mycology, geology, biology, entomology, herpetology, ecology,

paleontology, birding, anthropology or microbiology. Share expenses, experiences and expertise with like-minded travelers. Proposed trips should include a brief description of the destination, ways, means, purpose, hiking difficulty, departure location, date and time. Drivers and riders will negotiate between themselves any shared expenses, but it is recommended that riders at least cover the cost of gas. Users can share via e-mail questions and experiences they have encountered while hiking through the wonders of Arizona's landscapes. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/az_nature_fldtrips/

Saturday, May 1

Pinall Mountain. This trip will be a cool drive to 8000' elevation and cover mesquite, chaparral, juniper, ponderosa and fir forest habitats. We usually see between 70 and 85 species on this trip, and if we hit migration right, it could be even higher. Specialty birds on this trip include Black-chinned Sparrow, Gray Vireo, Juniper Titmouse, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Magnificent Hummingbird, Red-faced Warbler, Olive Warbler, Zone-tailed Hawk, all three species of nuthatches, Yellow-eyed Junco and Mountain Chickadee. We leave from the s.e parking lot of the Tempe Library (s.w corner of Southern and Rural) at 4:30 am. (sunrise is at 5:40 am). Bring bag lunch and drinks as we will picnic near the peak. We should return to Tempe about 3:00 pm.

Leader: David L. Pearson, School of Life Sciences, Arizona State University Laurie Nessel laurie@laurienessel.com, 480.968.5614 for reservations.

Saturday, May 8

Boyce Thompson Arboretum International Migratory Bird Day Count. Celebrate the remarkable phenomenon of bird migration by counting spring migrants. Nearly 350 species of birds migrate between nesting habitats in North America and non-breeding grounds in Latin America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

Doug Jenness 520-909-1529 or djenness@hotmail.com to sign up.

Saturday, May 15

Roger's Trough* and Montana Mountain: We will travel up FS172 northeast of Queen Valley to Rogers Trough, a beautiful riparian area in the Superstition Mountains. From there, we will continue on FS650 to the north face of Montana Mountain, a seldom-visited area at nearly 6,000 feet. Vegetation changes from saguaro desert to cottonwood corridors to alligator and one-seed junipers as we gain elevation.

The country is spectacular, and the bird life is rich and varied. Expect Spotted and Canyon Towhees, Scrub and Steller's Jays, Bushtits, Bluebirds, and a wide variety of Flycatchers, Vireos and Warblers. The hiking is fairly level, although some at almost 6,000 feet. Even in May, temperatures can be cool in the shaded areas of Montana Mountain, so bring a light jacket. The road is rough in spots with creek crossings. High-clearance vehicles are required (4WD is recommended). Bring lunch, plenty of water, and a scope (optional). End near 6:00 pm. Maximum 15. Difficulty 3 (approx. 5 miles hiking, some higher-elevation). \$6/vehicle Tonto National Forest pass required. Meet 6:00 am. Open Range Steakhouse, 6030 S. King's Ranch Rd, Gold Canyon (1 mile northeast of US 60, on the north side of King's Ranch Rd). **Leader: Tom Gaskill** gaskillthomas@gmail.com or 480.968.5614 for reservations.

Saturday, May 15

Beginning Butterflies and Dragonflies

at Gilbert Water Ranch. This area is outstanding for stunningly beautiful butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies. Bring binoculars (close focal point preferred). Learn to identify local butterflies including Painted Lady, Queen, and Fiery Skipper as well as common dragonflies and dragonflies such as Western Pondhawk, Flame Skimmer, Blue-ringed Dancer and Familiar Bluet. Meet 7:30 am. at the Dragonfly Ramada just south of the parking lot, east of Greenfield Rd. off Guadalupe Rd. in Gilbert. There is a suggested \$5 donation to support the Gilbert Riparian Preserve. Bring binoculars (close-focus preferred), water, and hat. Common Dragonflies of the Southwest by Kathy Biggs will be available for sale for \$10. No reservations. Difficulty 1 **Leaders: Janet and Bob Witzeman**

Thursday, June 3-Sunday, June 6

Q Ranch- Not Your Ordinary Field Trip. Join Maricopa Audubon for an "out of the ordinary" field trip experience to historic Q Ranch. The "Q" is a 250-acre private ranch in Gila County at an elevation of 5600 feet. Formerly the headquarters of one of the largest cattle ranching operations in Arizona dating from the 1800's, Jonathan Rogers, current owner who was raised on the Q, has been running a lodge since 1989. Surrounded by Forest Service Land, accessible only by unpaved roads and not having cattle for several years have resulted in a rich habitat. Mammal species include 10 large ones and a host of smaller critters. Over 90 bird species, 25 butterfly species and 10 dragonfly species have been recorded at the ranch and in the area.

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

Laurie Nessel

field trips

There are important pueblo ruins on site dating from 1250 AD and each year the Q hosts AAS (AZ Archaeological Society) field schools. For those interested in the heavens, the Q's remote location and lack of light pollution allow naked eye viewing of the Milky Way and a host of celestial orbs.

The ranch is in the Young, AZ area, just below the Mogollon Rim in Pleasant Valley, location of the longest and bloodiest range war in US history. Driving time is about 3 - 3.5 hours from Phoenix.

Cost is \$380 per person. This includes lodging for up to 14 people (double occupancy) with 3 large, shared bathrooms; an honorarium for Dr. John Hohman who will lecture and lead a trip to the 220-room Q Ranch Pueblo; and a \$20 donation to Maricopa Audubon. Complimentary food including continental breakfast, lunch and gourmet dinner (from Thursday dinner through Sunday lunch) will be available. Coffee, tea and water are provided and there is a refrigerator available for guests wanting to bring wine, beer, other beverage and snacks. Reservations require a \$110 deposit, with the remainder due upon arrival. The Q happily accepts personal checks (payable to Q Ranch Lodge) and cash (no credit cards).

Contact Cynthia Donald at planres@earthlink.net or 480-283-4515 for reservations and a detailed itinerary. Carpooling is highly recommended!

Saturday, June 12, 2010

Butterflies of Highline Trail, Payson area. On Saturday June 12th, the Central Arizona Butterfly Association will hike a part of the AZ/Highline trail in pursuit of colorful butterflies. As the temperature rises, the flowers start to bloom higher and higher in elevation. Butterflies follow this nectar flow "up the trail" and June is the perfect time to check them out. An abundant plant along the trail: Bergamot attracts the pretty Fritillaries. Butterfly Weed and Arizona Thistle are also popular amongst the nectaring butterflies. Other butterflies (like Blues) are more interested in mudpuddling at one of the three springs we will pass. Yet another group of butterflies like California Sister and Weidemeyer's Admiral are mostly found perched on trees. Please wear sturdy shoes and a hat, bring water, snacks, a sack lunch, and close focusing binoculars. The trail is moderately steep in places, but we will take our time. Meeting place is Denny's on Shea Blvd in Fountain Hills at 6:30am or at the trailhead at 8:15am. Done by 1:00 PM. Directions to the trailhead: Drive to Payson, go straight at the hwy 260 intersection. After 3/4 mile turn right onto Houston Mesa Road. Cross all 3 "water crossings", and after about 8

miles turn left at the stop sign. The road now turns into a dirt road. After about 1 mile turn right towards Shadow Rim Camp and Washington Park Trailhead. Follow this road up for about 5.5 miles until the right turn-off to the Washington Park Trailhead (marked). After a bit turn left (signs again) and you will find the trailhead well marked. This trip is for CAZBA members. Membership is \$10 annually. To join visit <http://www.cazba.org/JoinCAZBA.aspx>. There is a \$5 donation per person for the field trip.

Leaders: Marceline VandeWater and Wendy Hodgson.

Saturday June 19

Dragonflies & Damselflies of Dudleyville Area. Join odonata expert Dr. Pierre Deviche on a guided walk through the riparian area along the San Pedro River in Dudleyville, and the Lower Gila River at Kearney and the Kelvin Bridge in search of dragonflies and damselflies. Learn about the life history and identification of these interesting creatures. Bring plenty of water, snack/ lunch, a hat, and waterproof shoes/ waders since this hike will require walking along the creek. Close-focus binoculars are helpful. Meet 9:00 am. at Gilbert Public Library, east end of south lot (off Greenfield). Difficulty 2 (easy walking in high temperatures). Done by midafternoon.

Leader: Dr. Pierre Deviche
Contact: Laurie Nessel, laurie@laurienessel.com, 480.968.5614 for reservations and information.

Saturday, June 26

Chandler Veterans Oasis Park Dragonflies and Butterflies. While bird watching slows down in the summer heat, insect populations increase. The urban wildlife habitats at Veterans Oasis Park are quickly becoming a haven for birds and insects. We will see which beautiful and fascinating butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies have found the park's 113 acres of Sonoran Desert and wetlands habitat. Bring binoculars (close-focus preferred), water, and hat. The walks are not fast-paced, and the terrain is easy. Reservations not required. \$5 suggested donation to support the Environmental Education Center. *Common Dragonflies of the Southwest* by Kathy Biggs will be available for sale for \$10. Meet at 8:30 am. at the Curve-billed Thrasher Ramada just north of the main parking lot. Veterans Oasis Park is on the northeast corner of Lindsay and Chandler Heights Rds. Done by 10:30 am.

Leader: Laurie Nessel

July, date TBA

Stewart Mountain Desert Tortoise Quest. Have you ever seen a Sonoran

Desert tortoise in the wild? Increase your chances of stumbling upon one of these iconic desert creatures by searching in their preferred habitat after a summer monsoon. For this reason, we are not setting an exact date for this trip near Saguaro Lake until the monsoon has begun and conditions are right. We will collect email addresses and phone numbers and contact you one day before or possibly the morning of the walk. Learn about the behavior, life cycle and status of this keystone species. Limit 10. Difficulty 3- steep, rocky terrain and hot, humid weather. Bring snacks, sun protection, hat, sturdy hiking shoes, plenty of water. We will start near daybreak and be back before noon.

Leader: Laurie Nessel, 480.968.5614, laurienessel@gmail.com to get on the call list.

Friday, July 9

Indian Steele Park "If you build a desert right in the middle of the city, will they come?" Indian Steele Park at 3rd and Indian School in Phoenix has extensive desert landscaping designed by Elaine Ten Eyck. Several desert-adapted birds have so far set up nesting territories there. There are three ponds with occasional birds. We will also examine the survival of native plantings. Handicap accessible. Half morning beginning at 6:30 am. Meet in parking lot north of Indian School and 3rd Street.

Leader: Mike Plagens, 602-274-0129 for reservations.

Saturday July 10 to Sunday July 25, 2010 with Machu Picchu extension to July 28

Southeastern Peru: The Wilds of Manu (The Manu Road, Manu National Park, and Machu Picchu). There is no place that I know of in South America that compares to Manu! Located southeast of Cusco, this huge National Park encompasses elevations from high *Paramo* in the eastern Andes to an amazing expanse of lowland Amazonian rainforest. The bird list for the park exceeds 1000 species, and it is one of the few truly *wild* places left on Earth that have huge areas undeveloped and even unexplored, with indigenous people living within the park that have never had any contact with the outside world! Despite the seeming remoteness of Manu, it is actually quite accessible by way of the Manu Road that traverses a transect from Cusco to the Amazonian Lowlands, and then along the Madre de Dios River to the Manu River. Our 16 day tour is designed to sample the best Manu has to offer, staying first at a small rustic lodge near treeline in the eastern Andes, then at Cock-of-the-Rock Lodge at mid-elevations, famous

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips cont.

Laurie Nessel

for its Andean Cock-of-the-Rock lek, then two nights at Amazonia Lodge on the Madre de Dios River, then three nights at a comfortable tent-camp at Cocha Salvador, up the Manu River in the heart of Manu National Park, and finally at wonderful Manu Wildlife Center, with its famous Macaw clay lick nearby. This tour is unsurpassed in scenic beauty, spending virtually all the time in untouched, virgin rainforest, full of macaws, monkeys, large mammals, and more than 500 species of birds. The tour is not at all strenuous, with level trails and comfortable lodging. Maybe we'll even see a Jaguar! A post tour extension to incredible Machu Picchu is also available. Cost \$4600. Cost of Machu Picchu extension \$1300.

Leader: Gary Rosenberg, Avian Journeys. P.O. Box 91856, Tucson, AZ 85752-1856. 520-744-6780.

info@avianjourneys.com,
www.avianjourneys.com

Saturday, July 17

Dragonfly Day at Veterans Oasis.

Dragonflies and damselflies rule the wetlands at Veterans Oasis Park during the summer. This event celebrates the beauty of these humble but amazing insects through games, crafts, guided walks, information booths, and presentations. Great for all ages! Chandler Environmental Education Center 4050 East Chandler Heights Road. NE corner of Lindsey and Chandler Heights Rds. 8:30 am.-12:30 pm.

Sunday, July 18

Huachuca Highlands and Coronado National Memorial.

Enjoy a day in southeastern Arizona visiting the famous canyons called Carr, Miller, and Ash, the Coronado National Memorial of The National Park Service, and possibly a couple of new bed and breakfast locations with bird feeders. A large variety of hummingbirds should be the highlight, to include Lucifer, Broad-tailed, and Magnificent, with rarities possible. Other expected bird sightings include Painted Redstart, Blue Grosbeak, Acorn Woodpecker, Hepatic Tanager, and Cassin's Kingbird.

Difficulty: 1 Limit: 15 participants
The expected meeting place will be at the Motel 6 in Sierra Vista at 6:30 am. Bring a lunch, and drinks.

Leader: Richard Kaiser at
(602) 276-3312 or rkaiserinaz@aol.com.

Saturday, July 31

Beginning Butterflies and Dragonflies at Gilbert Water Ranch. This area is outstanding for stunningly beautiful

butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies. Bring binoculars (close focal point preferred). Learn to identify local butterflies including Painted Lady, Queen, and Fiery Skipper as well as common dragonflies and dragonflies such as Western Pondhawk, Flame Skimmer, Blue-ringed Dancer and Familiar Bluet. Meet 7:30 am. at the Dragonfly Ramada just south of the parking lot, east of Greenfield Rd. off Guadalupe Rd. in Gilbert. There is a suggested \$5 donation to support the Gilbert Riparian Preserve. Bring binoculars (close-focus preferred), water, and hat. *Common Dragonflies of the Southwest* by Kathy Biggs will be available for sale for \$10. No reservations. Difficulty 1

Leaders: Bob and Janet Witzeman

Saturday, August 7th

Bronco Creek Trail. This hiking trail north of Carefree off the Seven Springs Road passes through the area devastated by the 2005 Cave Creek Complex fire. The vegetation now is largely herbaceous grassland with some returning shrubs. The species richness is surprisingly diverse and birds are abundant. We will survey for birds, butterflies, plants and other fauna that have recolonized and revitalized this habitat. Moderate hiking - 2 miles at most. Bring lots of water, snack, sturdy shoes and sun protection. Meet 6 am.

Leader: Mike Plagens, 602-274-0129 for reservations.

Saturday, August 21

Chandler Veterans Oasis Park

Dragonflies and Butterflies. While bird watching slows down in the summer heat, insect populations increase. The urban wildlife habitats at Veterans Oasis Park are quickly becoming a haven for birds and insects. We will see which beautiful and fascinating butterflies and damselflies have found the park's 113 acres of Sonoran Desert and wetlands habitat. Bring binoculars (close-focus preferred), water, and hat. The walks are not fast-paced, and the terrain is easy. Reservations not required. \$5 suggested donation to support the Environmental Education Center. *Common Dragonflies of the Southwest* by Kathy Biggs will be available for sale for \$10. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Curve-billed Thrasher Ramada just north of the main parking lot. Veterans Oasis Park is on the northeast corner of Lindsay and Chandler Heights Rds. Done by 10:30 am.

Leader: Laurie Nessel

Saturday, August 28

Beginning Butterflies and Dragonflies at Gilbert Water Ranch. This area

is outstanding for stunningly beautiful butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies. Bring binoculars (close focal point preferred). Learn to identify local butterflies including Painted Lady, Queen, and Fiery Skipper as well as common dragonflies and dragonflies such as Western Pondhawk, Flame Skimmer, Blue-ringed Dancer and Familiar Bluet. Meet 7:30 am. at the Dragonfly Ramada just south of the parking lot, east of Greenfield Rd. off Guadalupe Rd. in Gilbert. There is a suggested \$5 donation to support the Gilbert Riparian Preserve. Bring binoculars (close-focus preferred), water, and hat. *Common Dragonflies of the Southwest* by Kathy Biggs will be available for sale for \$10. No reservations. Difficulty 1

Leaders: Bob and Janet Witzeman

Saturday, September 18

Beginning Butterflies and Dragonflies at Gilbert Water Ranch.

This area is outstanding for stunningly beautiful butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies. Bring binoculars (close focal point preferred). Learn to identify local butterflies including Painted Lady, Queen, and Fiery Skipper as well as common dragonflies and dragonflies such as Western Pondhawk, Flame Skimmer, Blue-ringed Dancer and Familiar Bluet. Meet 7:30 am. at the Dragonfly Ramada just south of the parking lot, east of Greenfield Rd. off Guadalupe Rd. in Gilbert. There is a suggested \$5 donation to support the Gilbert Riparian Preserve. Bring binoculars (close-focus preferred), water, and hat. *Common Dragonflies of the Southwest* by Kathy Biggs will be available for sale for \$10. No reservations. Difficulty 1

Leaders: Bob and Janet Witzeman

Saturday, October 16

Beginning Butterflies and Dragonflies at Gilbert Water Ranch.

This area is outstanding for stunningly beautiful butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies. Bring binoculars (close focal point preferred). Learn to identify local butterflies including Painted Lady, Queen, and Fiery Skipper as well as common dragonflies and dragonflies such as Western Pondhawk, Flame Skimmer, Blue-ringed Dancer and Familiar Bluet. Meet 7:30 am. at the Dragonfly Ramada just south of the parking lot, east of Greenfield Rd. off Guadalupe Rd. in Gilbert. There is a suggested \$5 donation to support the Gilbert Riparian Preserve. Bring binoculars (close-focus preferred), water, and hat. *Common Dragonflies of the Southwest* by Kathy Biggs will be available for sale for \$10. No reservations. Difficulty 1

Leaders: Bob and Janet Witzeman

Field Trip Review

Richard Kaiser

field trip review

Here is my final list of birds seen and heard on Saturday's field trip to: **Page Springs Fish Hatchery**, the Important Bird Area, and the **Bubbling Ponds Hatchery**. Of note, the flowing body of water that we walked along at Page Springs was the infamous Oak Creek, of Oak Creek Canyon and Sedona fame.

Gadwall
American Wigeon
Mallard
Cinnamon Teal
Green-winged Teal
Canvasback (1 male)
Ring-necked Duck (many)
Hooded Merganser (1 female)
Common Merganser (1 female)
Gambel's Quail
Pied-billed Grebe
Great Blue Heron
Turkey Vulture
Cooper's Hawk
Common Black-Hawk (several)
Red-tailed Hawk
American Kestrel
Sora (heard)
American Coot
Eurasian Collared-Dove
Mourning Dove
Belted Kingfisher
Gila Woodpecker
Red-naped Sapsucker
Northern Flicker
Black Phoebe
Common Raven
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Violet-green Swallow - ?
Mountain Chickadee
Verdin
Rock Wren- heard by Pat
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
American Robin - several
European Starling
Orange-crowned Warbler-?-heard
Abert's Towhee
Song Sparrow - heard
White-crowned Sparrow
Red-winged Blackbird - females
House Finch
Lesser Goldfinch - a few beautiful male "green-backed"
House Sparrow

Walking along Oak Creek, we were surprised to spot the Common Merganser. It was only seen briefly as it was being driven downstream by the rapidly flowing water. I mentioned that it was the best bird of the day up to that time. It was not long at all after, that I saw a Common Black-Hawk fly into a tree, also along the water. It was a beautiful bird, and we were able to study all of its color and characteristics, including the tail



Red-tailed Hawk

Photo by Paul Berquist ASDM

pattern as it flew away. Just a few minutes before we saw the hawk, I had mentioned that we saw this species on this same trip, and route, last time I was here. This bird was the first of several other Common Black-Hawks that we saw in flight, or perched for shorter periods. This species is being seen commonly and in numbers in southern Arizona now, in its northward migration, so our sighting was not a rarity or extremely early. It had to be the premier species of our trip. But close candidates were a beautiful male Canvasback, the male Cinnamon Teal, and Belted Kingfisher, all at

Bubbling Ponds, and then the Red-naped Sapsucker in the tree in the parking lot right after we got out of the car, and the Mountain Chickadee that we had close views of, in that same tree, and in the trees next to our picnic table.

Some species may not be on the 2003 Page Springs bird checklist that Bud picked up for us at

Bubbling Ponds, including Belted Kingfisher, Hooded Merganser, and Eurasian Collared-Dove. The vulture and raven were seen along the road from Page Springs in the afternoon.

We were unable to spot the Sora, but this was the same place we heard the bird when I was last at Bubbling Ponds on the field trip with Maricopa Audubon members.

Our curiosity about whether singing female Red-winged Blackbirds will have to persist, but I did look into it in Sibley's Guide to Bird Life and Behavior. A couple of statements: "In many icterids, including Red-winged Blackbirds, Brewer's Blackbirds, and Baltimore Orioles, the females sometimes sing." "Red-winged Blackbird females sing commonly, but their

song is very different from that of the male; it is also often accompanied by a female version of the song-spread display." We saw several female Red-wings in that same dry pond as where we heard the Sora, but we are unsure whether the common Red-wing song was from "hidden" males, or the feeding females. I'll check more books, but I guess there were "hidden" males!

Thanks for the great company,

Richard Kaiser
Field Trip Leader

Become a Citizen Scientist & Report Box Turtle Observations

Audrey Owens

Little is known about Arizona's ornate box turtles, because, put simply, they are secretive and hard to find. Unfortunately, there is some evidence that suggests that Arizona's box turtle population may be in decline, possibly a result of habitat destruction and fragmentation, and collection from the wild. In response, the Arizona Game and Fish Department closed the season on box turtles in 2005, making it illegal to collect them from the wild. The Department is now asking the public to become citizen scientists by reporting wild box turtle observations.

Gathering data on box turtles, although difficult, allows biologists to draw conclusions on the status of this species, and then develop and implement management decisions.



Ornate Box Turtle

Photo by Jim Burns

This "citizen scientist" approach relies on valuable location data gathered from chance encounters by the people driving, hiking, birding, or working in box turtle habitat in southeastern Arizona, where the species is found. Specifically, the Department is interested in hearing about any box turtles observed in the desert grassland, desert scrub, and oak woodland habitats of Cochise and

parts of Graham, Pima, Pinal, and Santa Cruz counties.

Box turtles are most active in the early morning and evening, or just after a rain during the summer monsoons, when they may be observed crossing roads. If you are going to be spending time in box turtle habitat, download and print off a few observation forms from <http://www.azgfd.gov/boxturtlewatch> so you will be ready to collect data on any box turtles you might

encounter. Mail the forms, along with any photographs, to Turtles Project, Arizona Game and Fish Department, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix, AZ 85086.

The data requested will not require any handling of the turtle. You may only handle a box turtle to move it off the road, but remember to only stop to on the road if it is safe for you to do so.

Sensational Sightings

Emily Morris

This is a new section in the Cactus Wren-dition dedicated to one or two of the best sightings in the past few months. Maricopa County gets some great birds and some great birders... put that together and you get some wonderful sightings and photos to go with them!

Green Kingfisher

I took this photo of the Green Kingfisher at Hassayampa River Preserve on Sunday February 28th. It was a special find, the first recorded in



Green Kingfisher
Photo by Ed Dukart

Maricopa County. It was found by several others the Saturday before at HRP, just across the first stream crossing below the visitor center, feeding along the now flowing river. My camera is a Lumix

DMC-FZ30K (higher-end point & shoot digital camera).

I had spend two hours looking for it up and down the river with no luck, was almost ready to leave when Mr. Lawrence from the nature center pointed it out to me. It was really my luck day,



Black and White Warbler
Photo by Jen Burk & Steve Lind

especially since it was pouring rain all the way there, and started again right after I left!

Black and White Warbler

Quite a few people saw this Black and White Warbler on the north side of the Salt River in the City of Phoenix's Rio Salado Restoration Habitat in South Phoenix. This area has started to get quite a few interesting birds, now that the trees are full-sized and draw in migrants and fascinating passers-by. This eastern warbler was reliably seen for about a month under the Central Avenue bridge near one of the demonstration ponds.

Reflections on Arizona's Great Spotted Cat

Mention of "jaguar" typically conjures up images of a handsome, stealthy cat of tropical forests with bone crushing jaws capable of efficiently dispatching even the largest peccary or tapir. As a young aspiring wildlife biologist of the early 1970s, my sense of the jaguar changed abruptly while reading Peter Matthiessen's *Wildlife In America* (1959), an eye-opening primer on the historic decimation of our native wildlife, including jaguars.

The jaguar has resided in what is now the United States far longer than history alone can remember, dating back many hundreds of thousands of years according to fossil evidence. During the Pleistocene, it ranged south from what we now refer to as the Pacific Northwest, the central plains and Texas, Tennessee, and probably Pennsylvania, competing with the likes of the American lion, dire wolf, and other great predators for foods ranging from indigenous horses to deer.

About 11,000 years ago, the "big axe" fell on North America's wildlife. Massive killing of large mammals by early human colonizers of the continent, perhaps along with climate change, eliminated most of the great beasts, and relegated the two surviving large cats, puma and jaguar, to the southern tropics. Later, as jaguars were

re-colonizing their old home continent they suffered another killing spree during Spanish and Anglo-European settlement.

Historically, jaguars roamed parts of California, lived in much of the Southwest, and were reported north to Colorado, and east to the Ohio Valley and the Appalachian Mountains. Native



Americans knew the jaguar and some, like the Cahuilla Indians of southern California, held it in reverence. In the East, Thomas Jefferson, a naturalist in his own right, included the species among the fauna of western Virginia. Well into the last century, jaguars persisted in the Southwest, including Texas. But they were fiercely hunted, trapped, and poisoned, and their natural prey harshly reduced in number.

Over the past decade or so, at least four or five different jaguars have roamed parts of southern Arizona and New Mexico. These vanguards, part of a small remnant population centered in nearby Mexico, have held or

regained a tiny fraction of the species former range in the U.S.

My interest in the jaguar accelerated one night in 1992 while sitting around a campfire with my college students in the Dos Cabezas Mountains near Willcox, Arizona. Mention was made of a jaguar killed a few years back near this very location.

"But how could that be" someone asked, isn't the jaguar protected under the US Endangered Species Act?" We grew motivated to find out more, and within days shot off a hand-written petition to the US Fish & Wildlife Service asking that the jaguar be put on the national endangered species list.

Four years later, just as the US Fish & Wildlife Service was finally about to list the jaguar and provide the federal protection we had asked for, a state-led jaguar team was formed to conserve jaguar habitat in Arizona and New Mexico. If that could be done, jaguars would still have a place to come home to, either by arrival from Sonora, Mexico or through re-introduction by wildlife specialists. Enthusiastically, I seized the opportunity to work with the group. However, to my great disappointment, the jaguar team effort fizzled over the years as Arizona Game officials increasingly bowed to pressure from those ideologically opposed to habitat conservation work.

Meanwhile, the US Fish and Wildlife Service opined that it need not restore the jaguar since most of the species occurs outside of the U.S. I was

Time for the Jaguar *cont.*



plans. For example, the northern aplomado falcon, a bird mainly of Mexico and Central America, has long had an active recovery program with reintroductions to habitats in the U.S.

Sadly, in my lifetime a dozen wild jaguars have been killed in Arizona. One of these, a beautiful female in Arizona's White Mountains, was shot while feeding on elk. The latest was an old-timer named Macho B who roamed south of Tucson for many years. He died after his controversial and apparently illegal capture by Game and Fish researchers.

Year after year, urban sprawl engulfs more of Arizona's open country, our highways see more and more traffic, more land clearing for energy and surface mining is proposed, and growing numbers of people seek recreational access to our remote public lands.

So why on earth do I think that there is still "time for the jaguar"?

First, the Southwest still has a lot of habitat for jaguars. Consider the large blocks of wild country in Arizona's Sky Island region and its Mogollon Rim country, and in the neighboring mountains of New Mexico. These areas collectively offer abundant natural prey for jaguars, including white-tailed deer, mule deer, collared peccary, elk, and

dumbfounded because other endangered species in this same situation had federal recovery

smaller mammals. In contrast to most areas within jaguar range worldwide, wild prey populations here are successfully managed and protected by game authorities.

One major problem, of course, is the grand scale fragmentation of wildlife habitat taking place across the southwestern landscape. For the most part, we know which remaining open space areas are needed as "habitat linkages" or wildlife movement corridors between the bigger blocks of wild habitat. We just need to protect them, as Pima County is trying to do under its Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

Second, in a major policy shift, the US Fish & Wildlife Service has announced its intention to


"I think we are on the cusp of that now with the real possibility of restoring the jaguar as a native species of the Southwest"

prepare a recovery plan for the jaguar and designate critical habitat for special management or protection. However, the Service is still ambivalent about restoring the jaguar. One senior official in Phoenix, for example, told an Associated Press reporter (March 17) that they are "going to concentrate on the fact that the jaguar barely occurs in the U.S." But at least the agency is now engaged. At this important juncture, wildlife advocates must insist that the Service work to re-establish jaguars in the Southwest, the goal being a restored northern population shared by the United States and Mexico.

Third, Mexico's conservation group Naturalia and the Tucson-based Northern Jaguar Project have established a 70-square mile reserve of prime jaguar habitat just 125 miles south of the Arizona border, and progress is being made to control widespread poaching. The time is ripe for a bi-national program between the U.S. and Mexico that can protect trans-border wildlife while improving cooperative efforts at border security.

Finally, we who love and cannot live without wild nature have much at stake here. Our culture is at a turning point. The return of the jaguar can help revitalize our American sense of natural wonder, and the wild spirit upon which we as a people thrive. This realization should compel more of us to speak out on the jaguar's behalf.

Once in a long while something very special happens in wildlife conservation. I think we are on the cusp of that now with the real possibility of restoring the jaguar as a native species of the Southwest. This is our last and best chance, so I urge readers to "support the cause." Visit our Jaguar Habitat Campaign website <http://jaguarhabitatusa.wordpress.com> for details. And consider joining the Jaguar Bike-a-Thon, 15-22 April 2010, as we pedal from the borderlands to Phoenix, ending with an Earth Day rally at the State Capitol in support of jaguar recovery.

Dr. Tony Povilitis is a conservation biologist based in Willcox, Arizona. He directs Life Net, a non-profit wildlife research and advocacy group. His email is tpovilitis@lifenetnature.org 

Leadership Changes at Audubon's HQ

Gillian Rice

John flicker



Former Audubon president John Flicker

“John Flicker talked about ‘Wow!’ moments in nature long before Richard Louv (author of *Last Child in the Woods*) did,” says Sarah Porter, Director of the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center. “He said we have to provide kids with special moments of awe and wonder – this is how we make conservationists. Here at Rio Salado, we’re trying to do that. We have kids here who have never ever had a nature experience. They’ve never walked on a trail.”

The Audubon Centers are just one example of the lasting achievements of John Flicker who resigned as president of Audubon in January. Soon after becoming President, in the mid-90s, Flicker wrote his “2020 Vision” of what the conservation movement needed to do, and what Audubon could do to contribute. An important part of this was his vision of urban centers. “He was teased a bit for being overly ambitious,” says Porter. “However, he launched the urban centers campaign. He started the ball rolling and was quite successful in making it happen. Phoenix wouldn’t have the Rio

Salado Center if it were not for John. He’s a great communicator and he infects us all with his enthusiasm.”

“When John came in it was a time of transition,” explains Porter. “One of the big challenges for him was to navigate through all the various groups and he engineered a decentralized organization.” Today, after 15 years with Flicker at the helm, Audubon’s field-based network includes 23 State Programs, more than 40 community Audubon Centers, and nearly 500 local Audubon chapters. The Important Bird Areas Program is another local project. Its rationale is to construct a framework for community-based stewardship of habitats essential to bird populations. More than 2000 Important Bird Areas now exist.

One of the grassroots initiatives Flicker began is Audubon’s alliance with Toyota: TogetherGreen (<http://togethergreen.org/>), a five-year \$20 million commitment supporting local conservation action, training and volunteer development projects. Each year, 40 promising and proven leaders (half from within Audubon and half from outside groups) are awarded fellowships, receive a \$10,000 grant, assistance launching a conservation action project, and all-expenses paid specialized training. Arizona is well represented. Tice Supplee was a 2008 Fellow and two more Arizonans (Karen LaFrance and Jose Marcos-Iga) are 2009 Fellows.

One of Flicker’s successes last year was the spread of an Audubon-championed approach to save the imperiled Greater Sage-Grouse, while simultaneously permitting domestic energy development. This involves designating about 20 percent of

Wyoming as core Sage-Grouse habitat, where there are extensive – but not total – limits on energy development. The remaining non-core habitat areas are available for energy development with lesser controls. The Bureau of Land Management, with Audubon’s help, is exploring how to expand this core habitat strategy to other states.

A Minnesota native who grew up on a farm, Flicker soon developed a strong commitment to conservation. His philosophy is: “Everything comes from the land. If you take care of it, it takes care of you.”

Flicker’s other achievements include leading Audubon into a coalition of organizations to tackle climate change, and growing Audubon’s revenues from \$43 million in 1995 to \$74 million in 2004.

The interim President is Dr. Frank Gill, who was Audubon Chief Scientist from 1996-2005. He’s also a well-known current national Board Member. Frank authored the classic textbook, *Ornithology*, now in its third edition, and is a past President of the American Ornithologists’ Union. He shares Flicker’s vision and notes: “Audubon is about birds and people and the wonderful things that can happen between them.”

In the future, it appears that local grassroots efforts and approaches like science-based habitat management will remain important to Audubon. In announcing the search for a new President, B. Holt Thrasher, Chair of Audubon’s Board declares: “We will continue to use the power of science, education, and advocacy, and to tap the knowledge and commitment of local volunteers to remain America’s leading bird conservation organization.”

U.S. Presidents and Endangered Species

Bob Witzeman

“The love of Nature is the only love that does not deceive human hopes.”

– Honore Balzac 1799-1850

The Tucson based Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), points out that under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is required to not spend more than two years to study prospective listing of an endangered species once it has been submitted for listing. There were 93 prospective species cited this year for listing. USFWS has a total backlog of 249 species recognized as warranted for protection. That agency claims that they lack resources to study protection and must defend their non-listings in court. This is difficult to believe since that agency's budget has increased by 275% between 2002 and 2009. To date the Obama administration has only listed two species as endangered.

CBD's staff person Lynn Greenwalt says with hundreds of species facing extinction “Wholesale reform is needed at the USFWS to unseat a culture of delay and foot dragging. We've yet to see comprehensive reform in the endangered species program

under the Obama administration.” CBD is holding off on suing for ESA listing over 48 species from Kauai because the administration has promised to list these species within that time. The Center (CBD) petitioned for many of these species as far back as 2004. In Arizona these species include the Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl and the Tucson Shovel-Nosed Snake.

Last week, five conservation groups sued the federal government after USFWS refused to draw up critical habitat maps for the Florida Panther, now down to 100 or fewer individuals. In response, the Obama administration said they plan to list 55 species in Hawaii this year.

On the bright side of the news, the Obama administration upheld a Bush decision to list the polar bear as threatened, but he tragically agreed to ban consideration of greenhouse gas emissions in reviews of federal projects affecting the bear. Obama officials claimed endangered species rules aren't the right vehicle to address climate change.



Eagle bringing stick to nest. One of some fifty pairs of Arizona's unique Desert-nesting Bald Eagles, they face survival threats from riparian abuses to Arizona's few remaining streams.

Photo by Robin Silver

Efforts to protect Arizona's highly endangered and unique Desert-Nesting Bald Eagle population by CBD, MAS, and others has been opposed by Obama's USFWS. It is also opposed by Arizona's Game and Fish Dept. (AGFD) and Arizona's conservative State Legislature (the body which selects AGFD's commissioners). Arizona's state legislature is heavily influenced by cattle grazing, mining, logging and agriculture. The Arizona Game and Fish Commissioners (AGFC) are appointed by the legislature and Governor. Not surprisingly, the conservative,

U.S. Presidents and Endangered Species

livestock industry-influenced AGFD even sent AGFD biologists to Arizona's Indian tribes to sell ESA de-listing of Arizona's unique and tiny population of now some 50 pairs of Desert-nesting Bald Eagles (DNBE). Arizona tribes promptly responded to AGFD by unanimously passing a resolution opposing ESA delisting of Arizona's Bald Eagle.

Since 70% of all water in Arizona is used by agriculture (which ironically returns only 1% of Arizona's Gross State Product) there is little water left for our embattled eagle's streams and wetlands. Delisting would leave our state's precious riparian habitats to abusive cattle grazing practices and the impacts of agribusiness, mining, logging, grazing, and ground-water pumping.

One of the very serious impacts to Arizona's eagles is cattle grazing abuses on our federal and state lands. Cattle destroy streamside habitats and eagle nesting tree vegetation. Cliff-nesting eagles do poorly. Thus, protection of tree-nesting sites is critical. Grazing threatens the suitable arboreal nest sites of Arizona's eagles because cattle devour willow and cottonwood saplings and seedlings as if they were ice cream. Mature trees provide shade for nestlings and do not have the harmful insect mites found at cliff sites which can harm nestlings.

Cattle hooves erode the stream banks which are needed as

soil for future cottonwood and willow nest sites. Trees also provide much needed shade to cool adjacent stream waters. This reduces eutrophication and the algal bloom which makes it difficult for eagles to see their fish prey. Insects which fall out of the trees and into the river provide prey for the fish which ultimately become the eagles' prey base.

Urban growth of cities like Prescott and their proposed Big Chino well-field diversions on the Upper Verde would have grave effects on downstream eagle nesting habitat. Groundwater pumping adjacent to rivers and streams in Arizona is already over-allocated for agriculture, mining,

“Obama's embrace of nuclear power should have come as no surprise. One of his biggest campaign donors was the Illinois-centered Exelon Corporation, a nuclear industry. It has contributed over \$330,000 over Obama's political career.”

homes, industry and livestock. Without ESA protections harmful stream diversions are more likely.

Let's move to a different subject, old-growth logging in northern Arizona. Thanks to the efforts of the Center for Biological Diversity and the Grand Canyon Trust, the U.S. Forest Service says their proposed jobs-creating “forest tree thinning” project will not

allow trees larger than 16 inches in diameter to be cut. Such trees are vital habitat for Spotted Owls, Goshawks, cavity nesting species and our entire unique montane forest ecosystem.

Obama's embrace of nuclear power should have come as no surprise. One of his biggest campaign donors was the Illinois-centered Exelon Corporation, a nuclear industry. It has contributed over \$330,000 over Obama's political career, says the Center for Responsive Politics. Obama's U.S. offshore drilling, like his escalation of Afghanistan, has also surprised many.

Bill Snape senior counsel for CBD was disappointed the way Obama listed the polar bear. Obama declared he would not use it to push a climate change bill through Congress.

Likewise, Obama in referring to the prospect of capturing and storing carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants, disappointed most. Ms. Beinecke of NRDC said “there is not such a thing as “clean Coal...every single step in the coal power cycle is dirty, from the profoundly destructive mountaintop removal mining to the smokestack emissions, which are responsible for 24,000 deaths a year.”

Of our past presidents since ESA was enacted Reagan listed the fewest, followed by Bush II , Nixon, and Bush I the best. The best Democrat was Carter, then Clinton, and Obama, thus far, last.

Hawk Rescue

Linda Covey



It was apparent that one wing was badly injured, so they proceeded to rescue the hawk by attempting to place towels over its head. That didn't work too well because the hawk's talons would grab the towels. John removed his nice golf shirt and used it in addition to the towels and that did the trick.

Larry and John called me. I called Liberty Wildlife hotline and talked to Pam. She called Gary, another volunteer, and arranged a pickup at the Pro Shop out at The Wigwam. Everyone was very compassionate and came together to take care of this very special hawk.

An adult Harris's Hawk is approximately 20 inches tall and has a 3 1/2 foot wingspan. The Harris's Hawk is so special because it's a "family" oriented bird and they hunt as a group. They are found in Mexico and southern Arizona. Our metro area is as far north as it's generally seen.

I checked with Liberty Wildlife this morning and the hawk is in ICU. They will keep me updated as to its recovery.

The original rescue party: John Rutan (pictured) is a pilot with SW Airlines and my husband Larry Covey, is a retired Fire Captain captured the moment with his mobile telephone.

My husband, Larry, and his buddy were playing a round of golf out at The Wigwam in Litchfield, Arizona. Larry's friend, John Rutan, spotted an injured Harris's Hawk way off to the side of the fairway.

International Migratory Bird Day 2010: Big Success

The first IMBD 2010 to be hosted by both Audubon Arizona and the City of Phoenix on April 10th was a huge success. Hundreds of visitors streamed past the booths on both sides of the Salt River in South Phoenix on the sunny Saturday morning. Visitors were able to park on both sides of the river and "migrate" across to see live animals, play kids games and learn lots about Arizona's migratory birds! Here are just a few photos from the fun day.



All photos by Scott Davies.



When the Rains Come: A Naturalist's Year in the Sonoran Desert

University of Arizona Press

Publication Date: October 29, 2009
336 pages, 8 1/2 x 9 1/2, 111 color photographs

ISBN: 978-0-8165-2835-6,

\$45.00 hardcover

ISBN: 978-0-8165-2762-5,

\$21.95 paper

"Like an unexpected rainstorm in the midst of a prolonged drought, *When the Rains Come* brings forth delightful surprises and creates a desire for more—more rain, and more stories from John Alcock about this wonderful desert." —Janice Emily Bowers, author of *Fear Falls Away*

Life in the desert is a waiting game: waiting for rain. And in a year of drought, the stakes are especially high.

John Alcock knows the Sonoran Desert better than just about anyone else, and in this book he tracks the changes he observes in plant and animal life over the course of a drought year. Combining scientific knowledge with years of exploring the desert, he describes the variety of ways in which the wait for rain takes place—and what happens when it finally comes.

The desert is a land of five seasons, featuring two summers—hot, dry months followed by monsoon—

and Alcock looks at the changes that take place in an entire desert community over the course of all five. He describes what he finds on hikes in the Urey Mountains near Phoenix, where he has studied desert life over three decades and where frequent visits have enabled him to notice effects of seasonal variation that might escape a casual glance.

Blending a personal perspective with field observation, Alcock shows how desert ecology depends entirely on rainfall. He touches on a wide range of topics concerning the desert's natural history, noting the response of saguaro flowers to heat and the habits of predators, whether soaring red-tailed hawk or tiny horned lizard. He also describes unusual aspects of insects that few desert hikers will have noticed, such as the disruptive color pattern of certain grasshoppers that is more effective than most camouflage.

When the Rains Come is brimming with new insights into the desert, from the mating behaviors of insects to urban sprawl, and features photographs that document changes in the landscape as drought years come and go. It brings us the desert in the harshest of times—and shows that it is still teeming with life.

John Alcock has published widely on animal behavior and natural history and is the author of *Sonoran Desert Spring*, *Sonoran Desert Summer*, and the John Burroughs Medal winner *In a Desert Garden*. He is a Regents' Professor Emeritus in the School of Life Sciences at Arizona State University.



John Alcock

Bright Wings

*An Illustrated Anthology of
Poems about Birds*



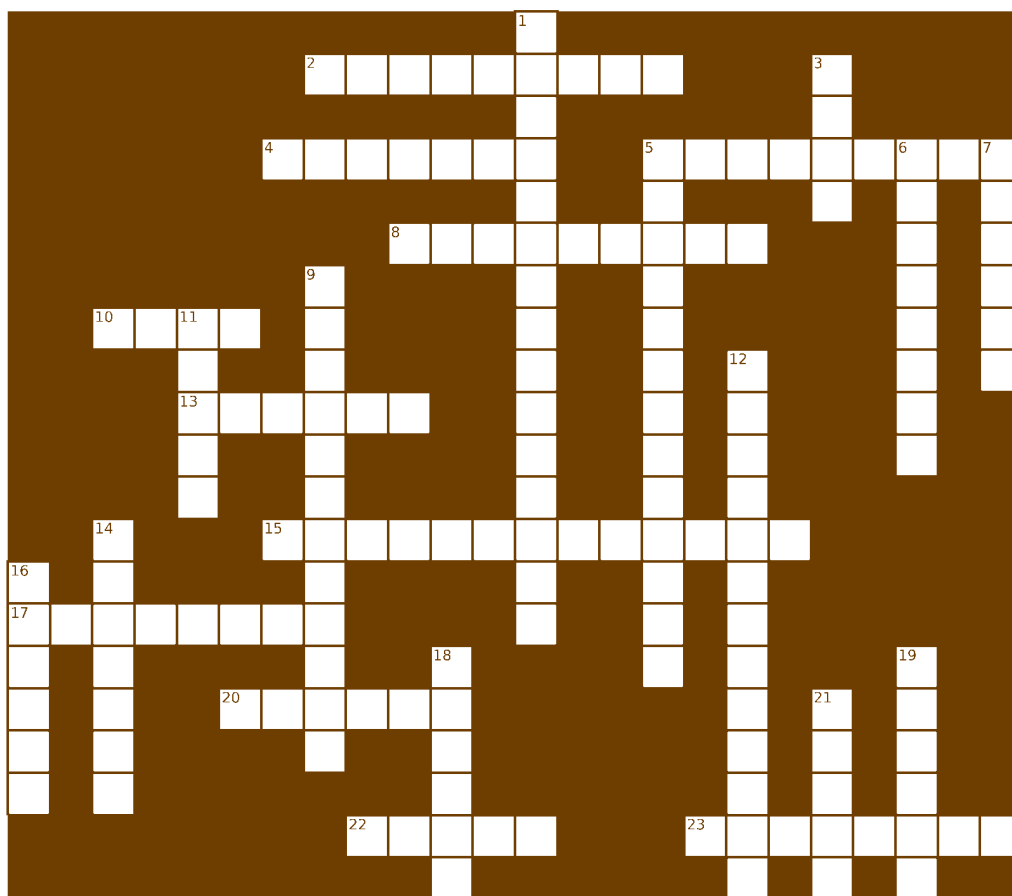
Edited by BILLY COLLINS
Drawings by DAVID SIBLEY

Bright Wings

Review courtesy of Columbia University Press. In this beautiful collection of poems and paintings, Billy Collins, former U.S. laureate, joins with David Allen Sibley, America's foremost bird illustrator, to celebrate the winged creatures that have inspired so many poets to sing for centuries

Audubon and Bird Trivia

Emily Morris



Across

- 2 What a chick is called upon leaving the nest
- 4 Term used to define a species
- 5 International _____ bird day
- 8 Nests on the ground on Mogollon Rim and Madera Canyon
- 10 Eastern warbler characterized by rufous cap and yellow throat
- 13 A collection of eggs in a nest
- 15 Many warblers eat only bugs, so are called this
- 17 Flashes its white wing patches and outer tail feathers, giving it its name
- 20 Smallest "bird of prey" that might eat a warbler
- 22 Notched tail, unique call and slender bill gives this warbler its unique characteristics
- 23 Warblers are songbirds, which can also be called _____ birds

Down

- 1 If a zebra were a warbler it would be this
- 3 Largest warbler
- 5 Characterized by gray hood and white eye arcs
- 6 This warbler looks like a thrush and likes to bake
- 7 Sings "sweet, sweet, sweet, I'm o' so sweet!"
- 9 Bright AZ rarity seen in fall '09 at Gilbert Riparian
- 11 Tiny cavity-nesting warbler of the sonoran
- 12 A pair of these rare Mexican visitors seen in the spring '09 in Florida Canyon
- 14 The western equivalent of the myrtle
- 16 Some warblers nest in trees, but many AZ species nest on the _____
- 18 The orange-crowned warbler is the same color as this Wimbledon ball
- 19 Shining golden disk on the face defines this bird
- 21 Mixed _____ of winter warblers

Answers

1. BLACK AND WHITE	2. FLOCK	3. HERMIT	4. PROTHERONOTARY	5. LUCYS	6. FLOCK	7. FLOCK	8. FLOCK	9. FLOCK	10. FLOCK	11. FLOCK	12. FLOCK	13. FLOCK	14. FLOCK	15. FLOCK	16. FLOCK	17. FLOCK	18. FLOCK	19. FLOCK	20. FLOCK	21. FLOCK	22. FLOCK	23. FLOCK
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Nature through the Artist's Eye: Nissa Kubly

Originally from a small town in southern Wisconsin, Nissa Kubly attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison obtaining a degree in studio Art and a Teaching Certificate in Art. She continued her education at Arizona State University completing a Masters of Fine Art in the area of Metals & Jewelry. Since graduate school, Ms. Kubly has been constructing and using her own handmade pinhole cameras. Currently, she has been working with images on metal. Her work has been recognized through grants from institutions such as the 3M Corporation & Phoenix Art Museum. Nissa's work is exhibited in galleries across the country and regionally by the Lisa Sette Gallery in Scottsdale Arizona. The artist can be reached via her website, nissakubly.com.



nissa kubly



Spring Series I (Bee)

Vitreous enamel on Fine silver (pendant)
Coated stainless steel wires & sterling silver (necklace)
approx 1" x 1" (pendant)
Necklace measure 16"
2010



Spring Series (Bee II)

Vitreous Enamel, Sterling silver, stainless steel neckwires
1.25" x 1.5"
2010



Spring Series (Butterfly I)

Vitreous Enamel, Fine silver, stainless steel neckwires
approx 1 " x 1" pendant
2010



Spring Series (Butterfly II)

Vitreous Enamel, Fine silver, stainless steel neckwires
approx 1" x 1" pendant
2010
* all necklaces measure 16"

Maricopa Audubon Society

P.O. Box 15451

Phoenix, AZ 85060-5451



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miscellaneous

Monthly Meeting

First Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise announced, September through April, 7:30 p.m. Our meeting place is Dorrance Hall or Webster Auditorium, at the Desert Botanical Garden (DBG), except for our annual banquet in May, the location to be announced. The DBG is located at 1201 N. 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. Webster is in the far southeast side of the gardens. Please contact a board member if you have any questions, or check out our web site at www.maricopa-audubon.org. Pre-meeting dinners (September through April) are held at Rolling Hills 19th Tee Restaurant, 1405 N. Mill Avenue, starting at 6:00 p.m.

Membership Information

There are two ways to become a Maricopa Audubon member and to receive the *Cactus Wren*dition* by mail:

1. By joining the National Audubon Society. If you live in the Phoenix metro area generally east of 43rd Avenue, or in the East Valley other than in Gilbert or Chandler, when National Audubon Society receives your check made payable to National Audubon Society and your membership application, you will be assigned to Maricopa Audubon Society, or you can send your check payable to National Audubon Society and your National Audubon Society membership application to Scott Burge, membership chair, and he will send it on to National Audubon for you, or
2. By becoming a "Friend of Maricopa Audubon". In this case you will become a member of Maricopa Audubon Society only, and you will not receive the Audubon magazine or any of the other "benefits" of National Audubon membership, but you will receive a one-year subscription to the *Cactus Wren*dition*. "Friends" contribution categories are: Anna's Hummingbird-\$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+. Mail your Friends membership application and your check made payable to Maricopa Audubon to Scott Burge, membership chair. All "Friends" members receive certain designated 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".) For National Audubon membership address changes or other questions call (800) 274-4201 or e-mail CHADD@audubon.org. For all other membership questions call or e-mail Scott Burge.

Submissions

Copy for *The Cactus Wren*dition* must be received by the editor by e-mail, 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: The Cactus Wren*dition Editor, Emily Morris: monarchmorris@gmail.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.

Reprinting of material

Unless stated explicitly in the article, material in *The Cactus Wren*dition* may be reprinted on other newsletters as long as the material is credited to the original author and to *The Cactus Wren*dition*.

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Maricopa Audubon Board

PRESIDENT

Herb Fibel

3255 S. Dorsey Lane,
Apt 2004
Tempe, AZ 85282
480-966-5246
hsfibel2004@q.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Robin Silver

P O Box 1178
Flagstaff, AZ 86002-1178
602-799-3275
rsilver@biologicaldiversity.org

SECRETARY

Sylvia Orioli

PO Box 27553
Tempe, AZ 85285
Cell: (480) 290-1304
sorioli@cox.net

TREASURER

Mark Horlings

334 W Palm Ln
Phoenix, AZ 85003
602-279-2238
mhorlings@cox.net

FIELD TRIPS

OPEN

Contact Laurie Nessel
(480) 968-5614
laurienessel@gmail.com

PUBLICITY

Fred Stewart

1846 E. Grandview
Mesa AZ 85203
480-898-7239
fspescador@yahoo.com

CONSERVATION

Robert Witzeman

4619 E. Arcadia Ln
Phoenix, AZ 85018
602-840-0052
witzeman@cox.net

PROGRAMS

Laurie Nessel

1632 E. Cedar St.
Tempe AZ 85281
480-968-5614
laurienessel@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

Scott Burge

8869 S. Myrtle Ave.
Tempe, AZ 85284
480-897-8608
burge@burgenvm.com

EDUCATION

Mark Larson

13585 N.92nd Pl.
Scottsdale, Az. 85260-4333
Home: 480-474-4439
Mobile: 480-310-3261
larsonwarren@gmail.com

EDITOR

Emily Morris

1226 W. 5th St
Tempe, AZ 85281
203-213-5208
monarchmorris@gmail.com

Audubon Online

see us on the Web at:

www.maricopa-audubon.org