



The Cactus Wren•dition

Volume LIII, No. 4

Winter 2005/2006

Pine Siskin on thistle



Maricopa Audubon Meetings & Programs Oct. 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.

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Maricopa Audubon web site

<http://www.maricopaaudubon.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.

From the Editor, Deva Burns

As I sat down this morning to start gathering the articles submitted for this issue, I looked out the window and saw a large dove with a black collar at our fountain. Thoughts of editing went flying as I studied the bird as it turned in various directions. Just before it took off, it showed me its white undertail coverts. How nice to know we have Ringed Turtle-Doves in the neighborhood, exotics yes, but somehow without the baggage of the "invaders," the Eurasian Collared-Doves!

How many of you know the motto of National Audubon? It's "connecting people with nature" and our president, Mike Rupp reminds us in his column that making this connection in Maricopa County is his passion, and asks that we make it ours as well. Please read Mike's explanation of how National is trying to connect with the local chapters and how we can help.

If you haven't been following the Resolution Copper Company issue, Bob's article (a condensation of a letter sent to National Audubon) is

a must read. I also want to remind you of the Christmas Bird Counts. Walter has been trying valiantly to gather dates from the leaders. To his great relief the last dates came in just as we went to press. Our regular articles are all here too, and the Photo Quiz is easier this issue. I can't believe I actually knew all three birds without cheating!

Did you fill out the Member Survey in the last issue? Please look back and take the time to do it. The Board wants Maricopa Audubon to represent the members and what better way than by hearing their voices.

Finally, thoughts now turn to winter (winter?—it was 100 degrees today!). Valley birding will be more pleasant soon, so get out there and see what you can see. More importantly, go visit the new Audubon Center that opens the first weekend in November (see Sam Campana's article), the Gilbert Water Ranch, or any other favorite Valley birding locations.



Pine Siskin on thistle; photographed by Jim Burns at Becker Lake, AZ, August 6, 2005 with Canon EOS 1D body and Canon 600mm f/4 lens.

Maricopa Audubon Meetings & Programs Oct. 2005 – May 2006

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 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, so-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.

A Critical Educational Resource for Greater Phoenix

Sam Campana

Overlooking the restored and revitalized Salt River, the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center will be an important nature and conservation resource for greater Phoenix as well as 36 elementary schools and 14 high schools located within 20 minutes of the Center. The Center's strategic location in the multicultural heart of the city will provide hands-on nature education and experiences in a riparian habitat rich with animal and plant life.

We need Maricopa Audubon Society to help us make this an exciting, richly environmental opportunity for kids, families, chapter members AND birds, wildlife, and riparian desert habitat!

Research shows that direct experience in nature is the single most important factor in developing conservation values among young people. The central focus of Audubon's mission is the human experience of wildlife in natural settings, enhanced by science classes and projects, hikes, family adventures, and conservation programs, designed to engender a conservation ethic and to provide life-long learning opportunities. Audubon Arizona is committed to bringing high quality nature experiences into the urban environment.

The Rio Salado Audubon Center will bring to greater Phoenix:

- An environmentally integrated (green) building available to the public for nature education and community events.
- Adjacent wetlands, outdoor spaces, gardens and interpretative trails to enhance the Center's programs and visitor experience at the Rio Salado habitat restoration.
- Interactive programs for school children that supplement school science curricula and foster a culture of conservation.
- Hands-on experiences for families that are science-based, fun, and bring nature into the urban environment.
- A permanent home for Maricopa and Sonoran chapters to birdwatch, adopt the Rio Salado IBA, and meet for programs, monthly gatherings, chapter meetings.

PLEASE JOIN US ON SATURDAY, November 5th, TO DEDICATE THE FIVE-MILE, \$100 MILLION RESTORED HABITAT OF THE RIO SALADO PRESERVE, on Central Avenue and the Salt River. Program begins at 9am; the Nature Festival from 10-2pm. Please come – please volunteer – please come for a tour even before the project opens!

President's Musings

Mike Rupp

I'd like to share some thoughts about a recent trip I made to Maine Audubon's Hog Island Camp to participate in a week-long National Audubon leadership conference. This conference was the first of what may become an annual event designed to better acquaint chapters leaders with National's goals and mission of Audubon as a whole, and how our chapter fits into this historic organization.

Let me dive right into a burning question-what's going to become of the dues share arrangement that gave many chapters their largest percentage of income throughout the year? National will be the first to admit that the changes made to the long-standing system of dues sharing weren't enacted as well as they could have been. Strife between many chapters and National resulted in the formation of separate "Friends" memberships for many, many chapters, and a move towards more autonomy from National. Though understandable, this is unfortunate, and I believe mistakes were made on both sides of the issue, but I know that National still has a strong desire to work closely with the chapters, who are indeed the "grassroots" part of the organization, and together, work to achieve what neither party can achieve alone. They do not want to "abandon" the chapters as I've heard from some quarters. The old adages really apply in this situation- that we have much more in common than we have differences. and that together we are much more powerful than if we work separately. Current policy is that each chapter will continue to receive the \$2.25 "safety net" portion of dues received from any new NAS member assigned to a local chapter. In addition, there are funds being allotted for chapter development, specific conservation and education programs, which will be distributed through each state office. These funds number in the

tens of thousands of dollars, and are already becoming available to chapters for specific projects.

The National organization will continue to advocate for important environmental issues, and is right now strengthening it's Washington DC office to more effectively lobby and educate our representatives on environmental issues.. They are currently working hard to influence the outcome of the upcoming vote on the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge oil drilling bill. Keeping the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) intact is also a very important goal, with efforts underway to stop congress from gutting our most important environmental protection Act. As National works on a national level, our chapter can join the effort by making our voices heard about these national issues, while advocating, educating, and teaching locally, as we have done for most of the 50 year history of this chapter.

We now have an opportunity with our new state office to accomplish much, much more than we could ever accomplish alone as a chapter. The future nature center on the Salt River with it's associated programs and community outreach will eventually reach deep into valley communities of all classes and nationalities. Working with our state office, we can bring our skills and expertise into the mix and be a part of an effort to bring a conservation message to disadvantaged kids, as well as more middle class children. As Kenn Kaufman stated recently at the Audubon Celebration a few weeks ago in Sierra Vista, we all need to face the reality of a changing demographic in the southwestern states, and be much more inclusive of our Hispanic communities if we want to see our population at large embrace conservation by appreciating local habitats and animal species. Caring comes from understanding, and understanding comes

from a personal experience with nature, which our chapter and the state office can make possible to literally thousands of kids and adults in the years to come.

National's motto of "connecting people with nature" refers to this "continuum" that happens when people look through binoculars for the first time and are amazed by a Snowy Egret for example, enough to revisit the site and see what else can be found, often resulting in a growing appreciation for the birds and that particular habitat, which frequently helps them become a naturalist, advocate, supporter and member.

It's my opinion that the Maricopa chapter can achieve much more in the years to come working in concert with the state office, other chapters, and similar organizations. Let's embrace the opportunities before us, such as our relationships with Desert Botanical Gardens, Audubon Arizona, and our own Gilbert Water Ranch Birdwalks and outstanding Field Trips programs.

To learn more about Audubon Arizona, I encourage members and non-members alike to attend the upcoming dedication of the Rio Salado project at Central Ave and the Salt River on the morning of November 5th, where the state office will be leading tours and displaying the future programs and explaining the mission of their forthcoming nature center. The site is on both the northeast and southeast banks of the Salt River, with parking at both locations. Come see how this once dry, dumping ground is being transformed into a lush perennial river with thousands of trees, riparian ponds, and nature trails. When completed, this site will not only be another good birding location for birders but also a huge educational outreach to the community. I hope you will come take part in this "kick-off" event. Good birding!



Good photo, easy birds

THIS ISSUE'S CLUE—

We had so much fun last issue with three birds in the same frame, we decided to do it again. But, since I promised an easy quiz this time, here's a good photo with three easy birds. I call this portrait "The Triplets," but of course they're not really that closely related, so maybe we should call them the roadkill cousins. Photo by Jim Burns.

Notes & Announcements

Note of clarification—The wonderful field trip reports that have been in the last few Wrenditions are due entirely to Marjorie Eckman's tireless cajoling of the field trip leaders to send in a report. Many times she has written the reports for the trip leaders herself. So, please thank her for her efforts and unless stated that the field trip leader wrote the report, Marjorie did!

Expanded Book Store Selections—

We now have a full selection of books on birding topics for adults and children alike. Maricopa Audubon logo items will include binocular harnesses, tote bags, UV-protection caps, and baseball caps. We will also have bird-themed sandstone coasters and note-cards. Newly-designed t-shirts will also be available. We will be taking orders for long-sleeved, Easy-care, button shirts with the Maricopa Audubon logo. Samples will be available for your review. Be sure to get yours' ordered. Remember that Friends of Maricopa Audubon members get a 10% discount and that your purchase helps to support our event, education and conservation efforts

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 has released, 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 is 8.5 x 11, has over 275 color photographs and 275 maps. It carries a list price of \$45.00. If you would like more information, please access the book's page on the > UNM Press website—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.

Nature Trek Tours—

www.naturetreks.net

- Copper Canyon Birding Trip in partnership with Tucson Audubon Society and other Arizona Audubon chapters October 15-23, 2005
- Mata Ortiz Birding and Pottery Nature Treks Exclusive trip December 9-11, 2005
- Kino Bay on the Sea of Cortez: Birds, Beach, and Islands Nature Treks Exclusive Trip December 9-11, 2005, February 24-26, 2006

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 araçari. 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 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 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.

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.

More birding and nature festivals.

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

Audubon Adventures: Give the gift of discovery and share your love of the environment. The program is designated for students in grades 4-6. Introduce an entire classroom (up to 32 students) to the wonders of nature for just \$35 (plus shipping charges). You can select your favorite school or let Audubon do it for you. For orders: call 800/813-5037.

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.

National Audubon Society at the Crossroads

Bob Witzeman

Your MAS Board voted to oppose the Oak Flat Congressional land exchange legislation. Below is a chapter letter to the National Audubon Society. Portions are deleted due to length.

To: The Most Honorable Board of Directors of the National Audubon Society
From: Robert Witzeman, Conservation Chair, Maricopa Audubon Society

Subject: Why it would be wrong for NAS to be a participant in the Resolution Copper Company's proposed NEPA-Exempt Congressional land exchange

"I want to fight til I'm stricken on the spot. Fight for what? For the world, for life, for happiness, for clean air, for songs, for birds in the air and for fish in the sea."

Jacques Cousteau

A large number of river-killing Central Arizona Project dams on Arizona's San Pedro, Gila, Salt, and Verde Rivers were successfully opposed by local Audubon chapters, National Audubon, and others...during the NEPA Environmental Impact Statement public oversight

reviews...throughout the 1970's and 1980's. Without those NEPA studies, conservationist's successful multi-dam opposition campaigns would not have been successful.

NEPA...requires consideration of the environmental, cultural, economic and technical factors of those dams, and a full range of alternatives for each dam. If the action agency...fails to list viable, meaningful alternatives in their Impact Statements, they can be taken to court—and they were. Plaintiffs included Arizona's Audubon chapters, National Audubon... National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, and others.

Each time we thought a dam was killed, new alternatives would pop up. Fortunately, NEPA requires full engineering, hydrologic and environmental details on each new alternative...

Dams killed by the NEPA process saved hundreds of riparian river miles in Arizona and...western New Mexico. On the San Pedro River Charleston Dam was killed, saving over 100 miles of priceless riparian habitat. Preserved (from four proposed dams) were 150 miles of prime riparian habitat in Arizona and New Mexico on the Gila River...Killed on the Verde River was Cliff Dam...and at the Salt/Verde confluence Orme Dam...

The proposed NEPA-exempt Resolution Copper Company (RCC) land exchange



NEPA would provide oversight as to how "block-cave" mining might collapse and/or de-water the strikingly beautiful adjacent Devil's Canyon perennial willow/ash/cottonwood/sycamore/walnut riparian jewel with its chain of breathtaking pools and interconnecting waterfalls.

legislation... would transfer to RCC 3025 acres of Tonto National Forest land surrounding the USFS Oak Flat Campground near Superior, Arizona. RCC is owned by the two largest mining companies in the world (Rio Tinto-U.K, BHP-Australia). This land exchange privatizes those 3025 acres of USFS land. In this way RCC exempts itself from NEPA and simultaneously weakens application of the Endangered Species Act and the National



Like Resolution Copper's 7-mile long, bone dry, bare sand, San Pedro riverbed offer, this ranch offers an equally bone dry river bottom for the entire length of the ranch. It is devoid of sufficient water to support any cottonwood, willow, sycamore or ash riparian vegetation. It is abusively overgrazed and that will not change after Resolution's land exchange. Only three forlorn medium-sized sycamores exist on the entire ranch. There is one willow at an algae-filled, dried up stock tank next to the ranch's abandoned homestead. Like Resolution Copper's other three cattle-devastate USFS swap properties, this property will also continue to be grazed abusively after it is traded to the Forest Service. The acquisition of this property is of little benefit to the Tonto National Forest or the public. National Audubon's proposed participation in this land swap legislation would bring dishonor to Audubon's reputation.

National Audubon Society at the Crossroads

Historic Preservation Act...

Why would Audubon be any part of the exemption from NEPA of one of the potentially most polluting and environmentally and culturally destructive copper mines ever proposed in Arizona? The answer...is that the heirs of Arial Appleton, the recently deceased benefactor of NAS' Appleton-Whittel Research Ranch, would receive \$4,000,000 from RCC for their 1000 acres of land on the northern boundary of the Research Ranch. That land would become a BLM addition to the NAS ranch's 8000-acre mix of NAS, USFS, and BLM lands.

Reasons why NAS support and participation in this NEPA-exempt land exchange is wrong:

1. NEPA-exemption would circumvent oversight and scrutiny by the public and...agencies regarding the...inequity of the five environmentally mediocre USFS and San Pedro swap properties RCC is offering. RCC's San Pedro offering is devoid of broad-leaved, deciduous willow/cottonwood vegetation so vital to the San Pedro's renowned riparian ecology and birdlife. RCC chose not to purchase the readily available, quality cottonwood/willow riparian areas located upstream and downstream of their usually bone-dry 7-mile cottonwood/willow-treeless offer...

2. Without NEPA the public would be unable to comment upon pollution issues... Will toxic chemicals used in processing the ore pollute the surrounding soil, air, water table, and local streams? How will streambeds and aquifers be protected...in the event of rainstorm flooding or liner leaks of the acid leach pads... A massive blowout of the sulfuric acid leach pads into Pinto Creek's adjacent riparian watershed occurred in 1997 at another BHP copper mine just a few miles east of RCC's... site. Only by sheer luck was massive contamination of the priceless downstream Pinto Creek riparian area and Roosevelt Reservoir (a major source of Phoenix' drinking water) narrowly averted.

3. Without NEPA, RCC is not required to reveal how much water their mine will consume here in our water-deficient desert

environment? Without NEPA the public does not know which precious desert streamcourses or groundwater aquifers RCC may dewater or pollute.

4. Exemption from NEPA allows mountains of acid mine waste tailings...to escape public oversight with regard to how RCC would protect the fragile desert watershed and its underground aquifers...

5. By converting USFS land to private land...RCC will not have to expend cash to post a bond to underwrite the cost of repairing toxic spills...and for their pollution clean-up upon mine closure. Arizona has one of the weakest mining spill and clean-up bonding requirements of any U.S. state. Arizona mines have frequently walked away from their clean-up obligations by declaring bankruptcy. Asarco, very recently, declared bankruptcy and may leave millions in clean-up costs to taxpayers.

6. NEPA would provide analysis of the mine's proposed highly destructive "block-cave" mining technique with its inevitable collapse of the Apache Leap historic and Native American cultural site. Here 75 Apache leaped to their death rather than be taken by the U.S. Cavalry. NEPA would provide oversight as to how "block-cave" mining might collapse and/or dewater the strikingly beautiful nearby Devil's Canyon willow/ash/cottonwood/sycamore/walnut riparian jewel with its chain of breathtaking pools...

7. Bypassing NEPA... undermines the ability of the Endangered Species Act to protect harms caused by the mine's impact upon endangered species in the area including the beautiful, endangered, highly endemic, Arizona Hedgehog Cactus, *Echinocereus triglochidiatus* var. *arizonicus*.

8. NEPA would require evaluation of alternative... backfilling mining methods

that would prevent the implosion, collapse, and destruction of unique places like Apache Leap and the Devil's Canyon riparian treasure.

Summary: RCC says they will need at least 10-15 years before they are ready to start mining. This affords ample time for NEPA review. In light of NAS' laudatory current campaign championing NEPA, for NAS to be identified with this NEPA-exempt environmental... injustice, would needlessly tarnish Audubon's reputation and name.

NAS must insist upon:

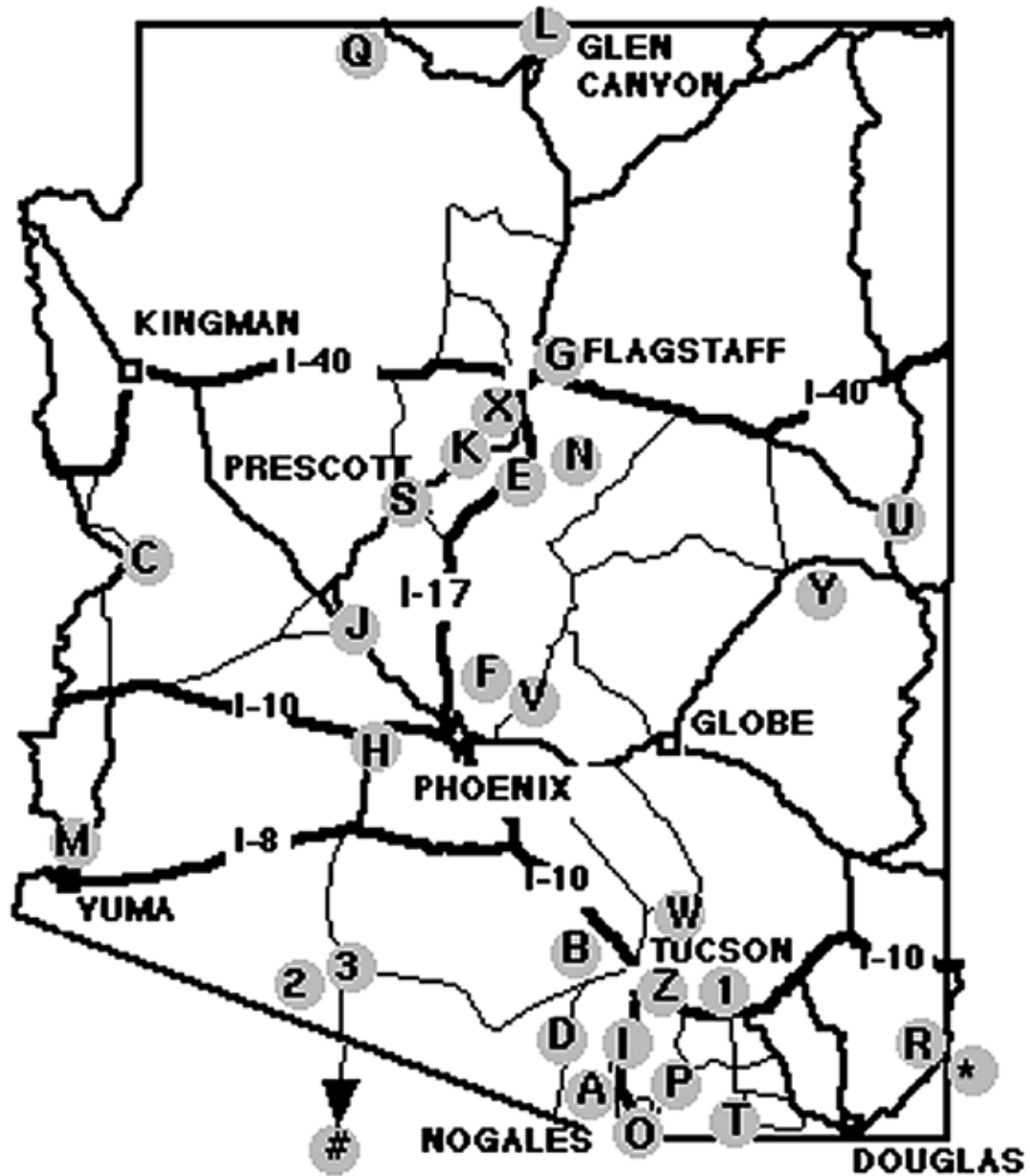
(1) NEPA oversight. **(2)** Prohibition of mining techniques in areas which will collapse Apache Leap, and the breathtaking Devils Canyon riparian area... **(3)** Require genuine bonding standards for pollution spills and for mine closure clean-up. **(4)** If these requirements are not followed, Audubon must withdraw from being a part of this highly destructive NEPA-exempt land exchange.



The BHP-owned Resolution Copper Company (RCC) proposed Oak Flat land exchange, if exempted from NEPA by congress, would not be required to inform the public about their mining technology or its safety. A massive blowout of the sulfuric acid leach pads of this nearby BHP copper mine into Pinto Creek's adjacent riparian watershed occurred in 1997. Only by sheer luck was massive contamination and pollution of the priceless downstream Pinto Creek riparian area and Roosevelt Reservoir (a major source of Phoenix drinking water) narrowly averted. It would be a disgrace for the National Audubon Society to be a part of RCC proposed NEPA-exempt travesty

Arizona (& Vicinity) Christmas Bird Count Schedule 2005-06

cbc map



The National Audubon Society has conducted Christmas bird 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 ornithological database that enables monitoring of winter bird populations and the overall health of the environment.

Participants are typically assigned to teams based on their bird identification skill level and endurance. Many counts hold a

compilation dinner at the end of the day where results are tabulated and stories shared. A \$5.00 participation fee defrays a portion of the cost of tabulating and publishing the overall count results. Help is needed on most of these counts, so find one that interests you and contact the compiler for more information.

Arizona (& Vicinty) Christmas Bird Count Schedule 2005-06

Date	Day	Code	Count Name	Compiler	Phone	E-Mail
12/14	We	V	Salt-Verde Rivers	Kurt Radamaker	480-837-2446	kurtrad@mexicobirding.com
12/14	We	Q	Pipe Spring Nat. Monument	Andrea Bornemeier	928-643-7105	andrea_bornemeier@nps.gov
12/16	Fr	D	Buenos Aires NWR	Bonnie Swarbrick	520-823-4251	bonnie_swarbrick@fws.gov
12/16	Fr	9	Phoenix-Tres Rios	Daniela Yellan	602-942-7791	danielay11@earthlink.net
12/17	Sa	B	Avra Valley	George Montgomery	520-682-8530	gmontgomery@desertmuseum.org
12/17	Sa	M	Martinez Lake-Yuma	Henry Detwiler	928-343-8363	henrydetwiler@earthlink.net
12/17	Sa	N	Mormon Lake	Elaine Morrall	928-526-1022	elaimorr@npgcable.com
12/17	Sa	O	Nogales	Michael Bissontz	520-577-8778	seetrogon@comcast.net
12/17	Sa	#	Puerto Penasco, Sonora, MX	Steve Ganley	480-830-5538	sganley@cox.net
12/17	Sa	W	Santa Catalina Mountains	Bob Bates	520-296-5629	batesr@u.arizona.edu
12/17	Sa	3	Ajo-Cabeza Prieta NWR	Curt McCasland	520-387-6483	curtis_mccasland@fws.gov
12/17	Sa	4	Timber Mesa	Jimmy Videle	928-537-5144	moonrise@wmonline.com
12/18	Su	E	Camp Verde	Anita MacFarlane	928-282-4063	ajmac@sedona.net
12/18	Su	S	Chino Valley	Russell Duerksen	928-925-5567	duerksen@msn.com
12/18	Su	P	Patagonia	Thomas Arny	520-394-0146	tarny@theriver.com
12/18	Su	T	Ramsey Canyon	Ted Mouras	520-803-0221	mourast@saic.com
12/18	Su	Z	Tucson Valley	Susan Birky	520-743-9390	sbirky@mindspring.com
12/21	We	7	Prescott	Carl Tomoff	928-778-2626	tomoff@northlink.com
12/26	Mo	8	Superior	Cynthia Donald	480-283-4515	planres@earthlink.net
12/27	Tu	H	Gila River	Troy Corman	602-482-6187	aplomado@cox.net
12/28	We	I	Green Valley-Madera Canyon	Reid Freeman	520-625-9895	wallcreeper@cox.net
12/28	We	5	Havas NWR	Norma Miller	520-578-1399	n8urnut@comcast.net
12/29	Th	C	Bill Williams Delta	Kathleen Blair	928-667-4144	kathleen_blair@fws.gov
12/30	Fr	J	Hassayampa River	Vanessa Montgomery	623-465-0012	hassayampacbc@hotmail.com
12/30	Fr	4	Dudleyville (date is tentative)	Tracy McCarthy	602-451-4179	tmccarthey@msn.com
12/31	Sa	G	Flagstaff-Mount Elden	Terry Blows	928-774-8028	terence.blows@nau.edu
12/31	Sa	*	Peloncillo Mountains, NM	Alan Craig	520-558-2220	narca@vtc.net
12/31	Sa	2	Sierra Pinta-Cabeza Prieta NWR	David Griffin	505-382-2080	djg1@zianet.com
1/1	Su	6	Elfrida	Tom Wood	520-432-1388	tom@sabo.org
1/1	Su	R	Portal	Larry Gates	520-558-1020	hummers@vtc.net
1/1	Su	X	Sedona	Dottie Hook	928-204-1894	dothook1@aol.com
1/2	Mo	F	Carefree	Walter Thurber	480-483-6450	wathurber@cox.net
1/3	Tu	1	Saint David	Tom Wood	520-432-1388	tom@sabo.org
1/4	We	K	Jerome	Betsy Feinberg	928-203-0756	betsyfpub101@catharon.com
1/4	We	L	Glen Canyon	John Spence	928-608-6267	john_spence@nps.gov

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 car pooling 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 October - March

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. At the time of going to press, the damage done to the area by the Cave Creek Complex Wildfire has not been assessed and the field trip may not be possible. Please contact Joy Dingley to check.

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 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

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

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 led 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.

December 14 - January 4 Christmas Bird counts

Please check the listing elsewhere in this issue. Also, check the website for latest information at www.maricopaaudubon.org.

Saturday, January 14 Scottsdale Ponds and adjacent area near Hayden Road at Royal Palm

There should be a good assortment of ducks including mergansers, shorebirds and other waterfowl. Last year there were 50 species on this trip including several surprises with more than one Lewis Woodpecker, two Eurasian Wigeons and an adult Bald Eagle only ten yards from the participants! Bring a scope if available, lunch and water. Meet at Chart

House restaurant east of Scottsdale Road. Contact leader for reservations or additional information.

Leader: Harvey Beatty at 480-991-9190 or email hbeatty@extremezone.com

Saturday, January 21 Arlington and Gila River Area

This trip will focus on the farm fields and riparian areas of the far southwestern valley, with an estimated species count of around 50+. We will be searching for Sandhill Cranes, ducks, sparrows and hawks. Past trips here have yielded Prairie Falcons, Ferruginous and Red-tailed Hawks, and Merlin. This ¾ day trip should produce a good variety of species as we look at sites along the Gila River, the AZ. Game & Fish Ponds, and desert areas. We will visit approximately seven well-known sites and some not so well known. Bring lunch, water, carpool money and a scope if available. We expect to return to Phoenix around 3 PM. **Contact Mike Rupp** at 602-388-4072 for more information and to register. Meet at office parking lot at 740 E. Highland Ave, Phoenix where we will carpool for prompt departure at 6:30 AM.

Wednesday, January 25 Badger Springs

Badger Springs is a part of the Agua Fria National Monument with a variety of habitats including desert and mesquite areas, a cottonwoods stand, and a trail leading down to the Agua Fria River where you will also find some petroglyphs on the cliffs. The river runs all year long at this location. A variety of birds has been seen here such as rock wren, gnatcatchers and tanagers. Yellow-billed Cuckoos have been observed nesting at one time or another. This trip has been one of my specialties, but I have never birded it in the winter before so it will be a discovery trip for all of us. Difficulty 1 to 1½ walking down the river with some rocks. We will meet at McDonald's on Carefree Highway at 7:30 AM. (Exit right off I-17, McDonald's is on the left. George will be driving a red Saturn VUE).

Leader: George Wall at 623-975-7057

Saturday, February 4 Le Conte's Thrasher Site

This is our nearly annual trip to this traditional site on the far west side of Phoenix at the intersection of Baseline Road & the Salome Highway. Resident Bendire's, Crissal and Curve-billed Thrashers may also be seen as well as Le Conte's and overwintering Sage Sparrows. Prairie Falcons have been observed on this trip in the past, and all of the typical low desert breeding birds should be present. The meeting place for those who wish to carpool will be Mike Rupp's office parking lot at 740 E. Highland Ave at 7 AM. Le Conte's are shy birds so we will limit the number of participants to 10 as we have done in the past. Call or email early to reserve a spot.

Leader: Harvey Beatty at 480-991-9190 or hbeatty@extremezone.com. Please call for reservations and additional information.

Saturday, February 11 Hayfield & Cobble Ponds and the Phoenix International Raceway Trail

Both the well-known Hayfields site and the Cobble Ponds across 91st Avenue are open ponds, with riparian habitat and trails that run along cottonwoods, mesquites and willows. These ponds have been a mecca for birders for years and can be depended on for an interesting list of birds including waterbirds, shorebirds, hawks, warblers and sparrows plus often a surprise or a rarity. This year we are adding the PIR site, another excellent riparian area, to the day so be prepared by bringing lunch, water and scope. Meet for prompt departure at the REI parking lot at the SW corner of Southern & Priest at 6 AM for carpooling or at parking lot at Mike Rupp's Office at 740 E. Highland Ave. at 6:30 AM.

Leader: Jeff Fustich at 623-327-0540 or fustich@yahoo.com

Saturday, February 18 Gilbert Water Ranch

The ponds and surrounding marshes attract migrating waterfowl, wintering raptors, and

continued on page 14

Maricopa Audubon Society Field Trips

continued from page 11

passerines. Borrowing owl colonies are well established and easily viewed. Close looks at all the common waders usually possible. 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 15.

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

Friday through Monday, February 24-27 Rocky Point (Puerto Penasco) e3 Cholla Bay, Mexico

We will bird sandy beaches and rocky shoreline habitats for gulls, terns, shorebirds, and pelagics with the possibility of land species that do not occur in Arizona. This area offers a great opportunity to brush up on your gull identification. Previous Christmas Bird Counts have yielded 100 to 140 species over a winter weekend. Spotting scope helpful. Early departure Friday, meeting site TBA. Return time flexible. All participants will share carpool gas and Mexican insurance costs. Double accommodations only. Limit 8. Level 2 - expect some long walking distances.

Leader: *Claudia Kirscher* at 623-934-5460 or antclaudia@aol.com

Saturday, March 4 Granite Reef Dam e3 Lower Salt River

We will bird the Salt River below Granite Reef Dam, using cars to cover hot spots along ten miles of road. A traditional favorite, excellent for waterfowl and raptors. This beautiful area usually produces a variety of species. There is a lake entry fee. Bring water, lunch, and a scope if available. We will meet at 7 AM at the Walgreen's parking lot at McKellips and Power (Bush Highway).

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

Saturday and Sunday, March 11,12 Tres Rios Nature Festival

This year's nature festival will be free, and offers a large variety of vendors, displays, all sorts of "nature" activities, and a host of lectures by professional biologists,

geologists, rehabbers, and naturalists. Activities include hiking, a fishing clinic for kids, field trips to local river sites, early-morning bird watching, canoeing on the Gila River, and much more. Due to this event, there will be no field trips this weekend, as several leaders are manning the Maricopa tent for the weekend. This is a great opportunity to learn about west valley birding locations, see lots of organizations, and educate kids. The Festival is at Estrella Mountain Park, 5 miles south of I-10 freeway off Estrella Parkway. It opens at 9AM, but will have early bird entry for birdwalks, etc. Follow signs from the freeway, and plan on spending most of a day here to enjoy the activities, the food, lectures, displays, entertainment, and vendors.

Wednesday, March 15 Native Flowers e3 Plants of the East Valley

Join us for a walk in the desert to look for wildflowers and other native plants. We will touch on identification techniques and ecology. A small loupe would be helpful. Bring binoculars, as we will be watching for typical desert birds. Limit 15.

Leader: *Mel Bramley* at 480-969-9893 in the evening for reservations or additional information.

Saturday, March 18 Flagstaff Lakes

On this field trip we will visit the lakes around Flagstaff looking for waterfowl and Bald Eagles. We also hope to find Red Crossbills, Cassin's Finches and Pinyon Jays. We will meet at Denny's Restaurant at the intersection of I-40 and I-17 at 8 AM. Bring a lunch, water, snacks and a scope will be very helpful if you have one.

Leader: *Charles Babbitt* at 602-840-1772 or cjbabbitt@cox.net

Saturday, March 25

Needle Rock, Box Bar, and Rio Verde Ranch

We will visit an area north of Scottsdale's McDowell Mountain Park and work our way down to the Rio Verde Ranch. This is interesting country with varied habitats and normally provides a good variety of species. Bring spotting scope if available, lunch, water and carpool money. Meet at parking lot by the north pond at Scottsdale

Pavilions on Indian Bend at 6:30 AM
Leader: *Matthew Toomey* at matthew.toomey@asu.edu or **contact Marjorie Eckman** at 480-368-1901 or desertjewelB77@aol.com

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 on the third Saturday of the month, from October 2005 through March 2006, with April 8 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.

The walks are open to all ages, individuals, and families, and are especially suited to let children experience, perhaps for the first time, the little known bird species that live right in our own neighborhoods- from beautiful Red-Tailed Hawks, and ground-dwelling Burrowing Owls that stand guard at their burrow entrances, to a good variety of ducks, sparrows, and sandpipers. Children are invited to play "Bird Bingo."

These birdwalks are a perfect way to introduce children and adults alike to local birdlife, and provide an educational family activity that will be long-remembered. Maricopa Audubon invites you and your little "naturalists" out for a fun morning of discovery and exploration.

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

AZ's Special Species – Crissal Thrasher

Jim Burns

If you're guessing "crissal" refers to some shade of red or some nineteenth century ornithologist, you're wrong.

The crissum is the area of feathers between a bird's vent and its tail, the undertail coverts. The crissum on Crissal Thrashers is distinctively colored and contrasts sharply with the rest of its plumage. As does the crissum of many other birds including another member of the immediate thrasher family, Le Conte's. The undertail coverts of our Crissal are deep chestnut. As are those of another member of the extended mimic thrush family, Gray Catbird. So . . . why not Crissal Catbird and Red-vented Thrasher? Just scratch your head and enjoy.

Ideal habitat for *Toxostoma crissale* is dense mesquite in desert riparian areas and dense chaparral up to 6000 feet in the mountains. It is resident from central Mexico northward through west Texas and southern New Mexico, across most of Arizona except the high mountains, into southeast California and extreme southern Nevada and southwest Utah.

Though Crissal is larger and far more widespread than the strictly local and highly sought Le Conte's, it is an extremely shy and secretive bird, much more difficult to observe than the latter at the frequently visited thrasher site along Salome Highway west of Phoenix. The habitat there, low, arid, and predominantly saltbush, with scattered mesquite along the washes, can be characterized as perfect for Le Conte's, good for Bendire's, poor for Crissal, and marginal for Curve-billed which pretty much summarizes as well your chances of seeing the four resident thrashers in that area.

Though It is fun to find Crissals at the Salome Highway site because of the opportunities for comparison with other thrashers, don't count on it. I have led field trips there for a dozen years and visit the site sometimes half a dozen times during breeding season. I rarely miss Le Conte's. I often miss Crissal. The current best place to find Crissals in central Arizona is the chaparral area around the Oak Flat campground east of the town of Superior an hour east of



Photo by Jim Burns

Phoenix. Other locations are washes on the Tonto National Forest Service roads north of Phoenix, particularly the dirt road to Seven Springs and the paved road which parallels the Verde River.

In southern Arizona the best places are Catalina State Park north of Tucson and the flat scrublands north and east of the town of Portal on the east slope of the Chiricahuas. There is usually a pair along Proctor Road below Madera Canyon, and Temporal Gulch behind the Nature Conservancy property in Patagonia has also been reliable in the past.

Crissals may begin nesting as early as January. Look and listen for them early in the morning early in breeding season while they are still establishing territories. The song is sweet, rather plaintive, and variable, with more repetitive phrases than other thrashers. This gives it a mockingbird-like quality, but Crissals typically repeat only once, mockingbirds three or more. Crissal also has a couple distinctive calls which are transcribed as "chorry" and "toit," also typically repeated once. Once actual nesting has begun, singing activity drops off dramatically.

The two crissal nests I have stumbled upon were relatively large masses of thorny twigs formed into a rough, oval cup in the crotch of a dense mesquite,

one three feet off the ground, the other five. Both were lined with soft grasses and, despite their size, impossible to see except from perhaps one angle through the impenetrable (to mammals and humans) tangle. One was oversheltered by an adjoining wolfberry bush in which both parents often lingered on the way out of the nest to pluck a ripe, orange berry.

The Crissal bill is just as thick and sturdy as the Curve-billed's, but even longer and more decurved. Crissals are expert rooters and diggers and, as expected, subsist primarily on insects, grubs, and seeds gleaned from ground debris beneath low vegetation. They are the largest of Arizona's thrashers, slightly larger than the similarly built Curve-billed, yet they can disappear easily for so large and bulky a bird. A favored strategy which I have witnessed countless times is the fly-hop, in which they veer away through the bushes at ground level simultaneously using legs and very shallow wingbeats.

The accompanying photo was taken last winter at the Salome Highway site. If you want a confiding look at Crissal Thrasher be prepared to spend a lot of time on a known territory in February and March. Probably many Februarys and many Marches.

Photo Quiz Answers

Jim Burns

Related? Well, I dubbed them “the triplets” just because they’re all about the same size and they look fairly compatible lined up right together on the same perch, but obviously there’s more than one species here. If you’re thinking maybe this is a composite photo, all I can say is that I wish I were that good with Photoshop. No, this was a serendipitous moment when I was in the right place at the right time to capture all three birds on the same snag at the same time.

So, are these birds related? They are all large and they all have dark body plumage, but is there anything else we can see in the photo to indicate they might have something more in common or possibly be in the same family? A close look at the birds’ heads reveals two things which should help us answer this question and identify the birds. The beaks of all three are long, strong, and hooked, and their faces are bare. These are the scavengers, nature’s undertakers if you will. The hooked beaks enable them to tear open carrion, and the featherless faces facilitate feeding inside carcasses without requiring extensive clean-up.

This is filthy and disgusting work, but somebody has to do it. The birds specifically designed by evolution for this work all have weak feet, poorly evolved for seizing and carrying prey items, but all have long, broad wings for sustained soaring over vast areas as they search for dead animals. There are four avian species in North America designed for this duty, and all are considered to be daytime raptors. These are the three members of the family Cathartidae—Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, and California Condor—and the odd and specialized falcon, the Crested Caracara.

A)—Good photo, easy bird

Three birds, large in the same frame, sharply focused. This isn’t a good photo. It’s a once-in-a-lifetime photo. Lucky, yes, but aren’t they all, and the result of a lot of dues paid. I’m going to deal with these birds from left to right as their heads appear in the frame. In other words, the lowest bird on the snag will be the second quiz bird, and the bird with its feet in the middle will be the third quiz bird. You’ll understand why at the end of the quiz.

Since our possibilities are limited to the four undertakers, our first quiz bird, the one on the left at the very end of the branch, must be the caracara. The large, crested head with its black crown and horn-colored face, and the long white neck and white breast barred with black are distinct and diagnostic for this species when it is seen perched.

Any proper discussion of Crested Caracara would be incomplete without mention of its flight pattern and mechanics and the several ways in which this species differs from the true falcons. In flight, from below, caracaras are distinctive for their striking, alternating pattern of light and dark areas—light chest, black belly and wings with white tips, and white tail with black tip. In south Texas, where this species is common, its distinguishing flight characteristic is that it flaps almost continuously and never seems to soar or glide. When they do soar, because of their long necks and flat wings, caracaras are most reminiscent of eagles.

Crested caracaras are not strictly carrion eaters but will take live large insects, small birds, and small rodents. They patrol the highways for roadkill in early morning hours before the vultures are up, and they harass vultures off carcasses and force them to regurgitate food. Unlike other falcons, caracaras build their own nests. The color of their bare facial skin can change from orange to bright red to pink to yellow, in seconds, depending on the mood of the bird. This is an active and aggressive species not known to tolerate vultures in close proximity. Notice, at the lower boundary of this caracara’s barred chest, the bulging crop. This may account for the bird’s presence on the same snag as its two competitors. It’s satiated, probably feeling a bit sluggish, and probably not likely to be harassing anything for awhile.

B)—Good photo, easy bird

Even here in sepia we can distinguish on our second quiz bird, the one closest to the camera, three distinct shades of color. The body feathers are very dark, the bare face appears to be a somewhat lighter color than the body, and the bill itself is very light, either horn-colored like that of the caracara or even white. And it’s obvious this bird has a patch of light skin completely surrounding its eye.

This combination of light-to-white areas on the head eliminates Black Vulture from consideration, but before we call this a Turkey Vulture let’s not forget the remarkable comeback in progress by the California Condor. Of course you know it’s too early in this relic’s recovery for it to overlap geographically with a Crested Caracara, but let’s eliminate it by size and structure as well. Our second quiz bird looks like it might be slightly larger than the other two, but a California Condor would be twice(!) their size, and its bare red head is a different shape, round and bulbous rather than elongated and flat like this Turkey Vulture’s.

As already implied, this would be an even easier quiz if our birds were all in flight. This TV would be flying with its wings in a dihedral (“V”), silver flight feathers contrasting with dark wing linings, with slow, methodical wingbeats and the whole body rocking back and forth. In flight caracaras, like the true falcons, always look like they’re going somewhere, but TV flight appears languid and desultory like the birds have nowhere in particular to go and they’re not in a hurry to get there.

Turkey Vultures, perhaps alone amongst all the avian species, have a well developed sense of smell, and find their food with this sense. It has been shown that they eat smaller food items than Black Vultures and are dominated at carcasses by the latter species, often by sheer numbers.

C)—Good photo, easy bird

Well, not too easy. Before you jump to the conclusion that our final bird is a Black Vulture because of the color, shape and greater expanse of the bare facial area above the neck ruff, consider this and beware: juvenile Turkey Vultures have dark heads. Many birders, including this one many times, have looked at a perched juvenile TV and called it a Black Vulture.

Most field guides show, or at least tell you, that juvy TVs’ dark heads lack the wrinkles and warts of the red adult head, but so do the dark heads of juvenile Black Vultures. Though our final quiz bird shows a great deal of wrinkling about its head which marks it as an adult Black Vulture, a careful observer will note the differences in head and bill shape between the two vultures. The head of Black Vultures is intermediate in shape between condor and TV, smaller proportionately than the former but certainly more rounded than the latter, and the Black Vulture bill is longer, thinner, and less massive looking than that of the Turkey Vulture.

Black Vultures in flight differ significantly from Turkey Vultures. The wing pattern of Blacks, from above or below, shows all black with large silver patches at the tips only. The flight jizz is different too, the shorter, squared tail of Blacks making them seem much smaller though they actually are not, and the flight mechanics of these two species are different as well, Blacks having a much quicker wingbeat and no perceptible dihedral.

The Triplets were photographed near a javelina carcass in Hidalgo County, Texas in October, 2004. Look for them in flight in some future Photo Quiz.

JUNE & JULY 2005

Two **Common Loons** were reported on Horseshoe Reservoir from early June at least through July 25 (PD0); there were no previous June records for the county and only two previous July records. **Western Grebes** continued to be seen at Painted Rock Dam (hereafter PRD) through the period, and throughout July several pairs were observed on nests incubating eggs (TC,LP,TMc). In the past the species has bred at PRD only on an irregular basis. It was also recently learned that small numbers of **Western Grebes** and **Clark's Grebes** have been breeding at both the Tonto Creek and Salt River arms of Roosevelt Lake in Gila County for over five years (JE fide TC).

The number of **Am. White Pelicans** at PRD increased from three on June 12 (PDe) to 15 on July 20 (TC,LP). Two **Brown Pelicans** were observed at Paloma Ranch Pond on July 4 (TC,TMc), one was seen in Tempe July 7 (RD), up to 15 were observed at PRD during July (TC,LP,BG,PL) and one was found in Arlington July 14 (TH). A **Neotropic Cormorant** was discovered in a new area – at Fountain Hills Lake July 3 (KR). Some Neotropic Cormorants were seen at PRD during July (TC,PL,TMc) and one was observed at the Lower River Rd. pond in Palo Verde July 20 (TC). The colony of nesting **Double-crested Cormorants** continued to be seen below PRD through the period (TC,PDe,TMc).

Three **Least Bitterns** were reported in the Sisson Rd. marsh near PRD July 4 (BG). A large colony of nesting herons, observed below PRD July 4, consisted of about 200 pairs of **Cattle Egrets**, 100 pairs each of **Snowy Egrets** and **Black-crowned Night-Herons**, and fewer numbers of **Great Blue Herons** and **Great Egrets** (TC,TMc). Five pairs of **White-faced Ibis**, found nesting in the flooded tamarisk trees below PRD July 20, included two large fledglings being fed by adults and four nests with eggs (TC,LP); this represented the first nesting record of this species for Maricopa County and only the second for the state. The first nest in the state was found at Cibola Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in the year 2000 (fide TC).

A pair of **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** were observed with three young at Hunter's Sludge Ponds, w. of El Mirage Pond July 4 (TC,TMc) and again on July 31, seven were counted there, including a pair with downy young (TMc). The juvenile **Greater White-fronted Goose**, that spent the winter and spring at Fountain Hills Lake, remained through the summer (KR), providing the first June and July records of this species for the county. A late-staying **Blue-winged Teal** was observed at PRD July 4 (BG); there have been only four previous July records for the county. A family of **Redheads** with grown ducklings, found below PRD July 4 (TC,TMc), provided only the third nesting record for the county and the second at this location.

An **Osprey**, uncommon in summer, was seen at PRD July 4 (BG), and two were reported there July 17 (PL).

Many young **Black-necked Stilts** were observed at Hunter's Ponds July 4 (TC,TMc). Two slightly early **Long-billed Curlews** were seen near Painted Rock Dam Road July 4 (TC,TMc). At least one **Short-billed Dowitcher** was heard calling among the several groups of **Long-billed Dowitchers** below PRD July 20 (TC).

Five immature **Ring-billed Gulls** were seen below PRD and a few more were seen above the dam June 12 (PDe); a few were observed there again July 20 (TC,LP). More unusual were the few **California Gulls** that were seen at PRD July 4 (BG), July 17 (PL), and July 20 (TC,LP). Twelve late or very early migrating adult **Caspian Terns** were observed at PRD June 12 (PDe); the species has rarely been recorded after early May or before the first of July. A few were reported at PRD July 4 (BG). **Six Forster's Terns**, also seen at PRD July 4 (PDe), were probably late or very early migrants as well.

Two hundred **Eurasian Collared-Doves** were counted at Paloma Ranch July 17 (PL) and one individual was found in central Phoenix July 30 (TG). A **Ruddy Ground-Dove** was discovered at Quigley Wildlife Management Area, n. of Tacna in Yuma Co., June 25 (TMc). A pair of displaying **Ruddy Ground-Doves** were

found near El Mirage Pond July 7 – 9 in the same area where they were found a year ago (RJ).

Dozens of **Burrowing Owls** were encountered along field roads on Paloma Ranch July 4 (BG), one family was observed at Hunter's Ponds July 31, and another individual was seen at El Mirage Pond the same day (TMc).

Two pairs of **Tropical Kingbirds** were observed at the Hassayampa River Preserve (hereafter HRP) July 2 – one pair was collecting nesting material and the other pair had at least three fledglings (TC,DY). One of the **Thick-billed Kingbirds** at HRP was seen collecting nesting material July 2 (TC,DY).

A **Prothonotary Warbler** was reported at Boyce Thompson Arboretum June 18 (fide RD). One or two singing male **Indigo Buntings** (rare summer visitors) were found at HRP July 2 (TC). A **Bullock's Oriole**, unusual in urban areas, was seen in a Tempe yard July 29 (fide HF). An **American Goldfinch**, an uncommon winter visitor, was found in a yard in Tolleson July 3 (BG), providing the first July record and only the second summer record for the county.

Following are highlights from s.e. Arizona during the spring. An immature **Reddish Egret**, observed at Patagonia Lake State Park July 22 – 24, represented the first record for Santa Cruz County. A **Black Turnstone** was discovered at Cochise Lake, Willcox June 2 - 4, providing the first record for the state. A pair of **Rose-throated Becards** were found across the road from the Patagonia Rest Stop in early July, and in mid-July they were seen building a nest and were still working on it the end of July. A **Streak-backed Oriole**, observed along the De Anza Trail at Tumacacori, represented the first record for Santa Cruz County (fide KKp).

Abbreviations: Hassayampa River Preserve (HRP), Painted Rock Dam (PRD).

Observers: Troy Corman, Pierre Deviche, Rich Ditch, Patrick Dockens, Jeff Estis, Herb Fibel, Tom Gaskill, Bill Grossi, Tom Hildebrandt, Roy Jones, Keith Kamper, Paul Lehman, Tracy McCarthy, Linden Piest, Kurt Rademaker, Daniela Yellan.

Field Trip Reports

Marjorie Eckman

Saturday, August 6 - Page Springs-led (and written) by Herb Fibel. As most people know who have participated on my field trips, satisfying one's nutritive needs is a high priority. This trip was no exception. Kathe Anderson and I met Bob and the other two other "Kathys" at the Box Bar Cafe at Casey's Corner in Cornville, where we started off our day with delicious homemade cinnamon rolls. Our first birding stop was at the Page Springs IBA, just south of the hatchery, which was established, and is maintained, apparently by the Northern Arizona Audubon Society. Belted Kingfishers, Phainopeplas, Black-headed Grosbeaks, American Robins, Cassin's Kingbirds, Yellow-breasted Chats, Lesser Goldfinches, and a female Summer and Western Tanager made their presence known to us along the trail. At the end of the trail, which terminates next to the covered hatchling ponds of the hatchery, and which at that point, runs along the creek, and features cottonwood-willow riparian habitat, we spotted our two best birds of the day, week and year, for that matter - an American Redstart and a Prothonotary Warbler - the latter a lifer for me and three of the others.

At the Page Springs Hatchery itself, we were able to feast on some ripe black raspberries, as yet uneaten by birds or other creatures, including people types. Here we added a couple of additional species to our day list, but the Yellow-billed Cuckoo remained unheard and unseen. Up the road a little further, at the Bubbling Ponds Hatchery, we were pleased to see our old friend, the Osprey, and bevy of Red-winged Blackbirds. We heard Common Yellowthroats in the ponds filled with cattails, but they would not cooperate by popping up to be seen. Being preadvised of their presence, I played

a Virginia Rail taped song, and received a response from at least three, one of which was right at our feet, but remained undercover. We ate lunch in the trailer park across the road, and concluded our day with decadent a la mode cobblers at the Page Springs Restaurant, where the dining tables overlook a muddy Oak Creek.

My thanks to Janie and Frank Agibush for their help. Janie is with the Forest Service, at the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest in Sedona, while Frank is employed by Arizona Game and Fish at the Bubbling Ponds and Page Springs Hatcheries.

Saturday, September 3 - Painted Rock Reservoir and Paloma Ranch Areas led by Bill Grossi (and written by Claudia Kirscher). Despite the promise of a hot day, a group of 17 enthusiastic birders carpooled out to Dysart Road & I-10 to pick up Bill for the drive out to Painted Rock Reservoir.

As we arrived at Painted Rock dam, (thankfully Bill had secured the key to the gate, thus avoiding a long, hot, and muggy hike to the shoreline) we were greeted by the sight of white birds everywhere - snowy, cattle, and great egrets seemingly in every bush and tree, and about 250 white pelicans, both on the water and in the air, thrilled us with aerial flock maneuvers - just breathtaking with that many birds in the air, wings flashing in the early morning sunlight. The water level in the reservoir has greatly diminished, pushing the remaining fish into the shallows. Birds were feasting everywhere. The Great Blue, Green, and Black-crowned Night Herons were having a field day. Other highlights were the Long-billed Dowitchers, a single Short-billed Dowitcher, a juvenile California Gull, American Kestrel, and Belted Kingfisher. The several Osprey

seen diving for fish never came up without a meal. As we turned to leave, a cliff swallow flew by low, slow, and within a few feet, offering a wonderful close up view.

After a quick stop at Painted Rock Monument with its beautiful petroglyphs, we were off to the Paloma Ranch area. Bill certainly knows these convoluted unmarked back roads well ! A few marshy areas yielded Black-necked Stilts, Greater Yellowlegs, and Least and Spotted Sandpipers. The birds in the Paloma Ranch environs were hard to come by. Dove hunters may have had something to do with this. Of special note were Northern Harrier and Burrowing Owls. A short stop at the ranch headquarters yielded a few warbling vireos, Wilson & Yellow warblers, female Western Tanager, Western Wood Pewee, and a Vermilion Flycatcher.

On the way back to Phoenix, lest we leave no pond or bird uncounted, we did a quick drive around the El Mirage ponds with more Snowy Egrets, Black-necked Stilts, and an American Avocet.

Arriving back at the carpool site, a tally showed a total of 68 species were seen on this trip. A good critter day too spotting a bobcat, AZ desert whiptail lizards, and a desert iguana or chuckwalla. Many thanks to Bill Grossi for a fine job leading this trip. Everyone agreed that the "tour" of the ranch back roads was certainly one of the highlights of the day. We were all amazed at the extensive agricultural fields and sweeping vistas to the west of Gila Bend. Many thanks also to Mike Rupp for his able driving in the comfort of his huge Suburban.

Friday-Sunday, September 9-11

- Sierra Vista Celebration (written by Janice Miano). Over 90 Audubon members representing seven of

Arizona's chapters, as well as visitors from Colorado, Texas and Vermont, staff from Audubon Arizona as well as National Audubon staff from the Chapter Services Office in Montana, the Science Office in Pennsylvania, and the Public Policy Office in Washington DC gathered together in Sierra Vista to participate in the Arizona Audubon Council's and Audubon Arizona's first ever joint "Celebration".

The program was kicked-off Friday evening with an inspirational message from Brock Evans, President of the Endangered "Species Coalition in Washington" and past Vice-President of National Issues for National Audubon. Saturday was a variety of different workshops from our "Important Bird Areas", "Fundraising Can Be Fun" to the "The Exciting Life of Bats". Saturday night keynote speaker, Kenn Kaufman, Field Editor for Audubon magazine and a regular contributor to every major birding magazine, entertained us with a wonderful program and made us laugh with his imitation of a male mourning dove's courting ritual.

seven field trips from Huachuca Canyon on the grounds of Fort Huachuca to the Sacaton grasslands and other riparian areas on the Appleton-Whittell Audubon Research Ranch. The participants of the Miller Canyon Field Trip saw eleven different species of hummingbirds.

Maricopa Audubon members attending the Celebration were: Randy Bain, Harvey Beatty, Ruth Greenhouse, Janice Miano, Dave and Nancy Pearson, Jan Pipes, Mike and Nancy Rupp, Walter Thurber, Theona Vyvial, and Bob and Janet Witzeman. The next Celebration is tentatively scheduled for September 14-16, 2007 in Prescott so mark your calendars!

Saturday, September 17 - Dateland Shrimp Ponds led (and written by Pierre Deviche). Eleven MAS birders spent the morning of Sept. 17 at the Dateland Shrimp Farm along I-8 where birding was rather good. Best birds seen were an immature Sabine's Gull (only gull seen), 2 Red Knots and a Common Tern in alternate plumage. Other species observed were: Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit, Willet, Pectoral, Stilt, Western, Least, Baird's, Spotted, and Semi-palmated Sandpipers, Snowy Plover, Greater Yellowlegs (50-100), Lesser Yellowlegs (50-100), Long-billed Dowitcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Wilson's Phalarope, Wilson's Snipe, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Killdeer for a total of 23 shorebirds.

Also seen were: Black Tern, Belted Kingfisher, Peregrine Falcon, White-faced Ibis, Eared, Western and Pied-billed Grebe. Ducks include Northern Pintail, American Wigeon and Northern Shoveler. On the way back everybody saw great looks at the Gillespie Dam resting and flying Black Skimmer, seen along the shore downstream of the bridge. Thanks to all the participants.

Pierre, I have to add a note here for in spite of the hottest day ever spent birding, I would have stayed until the sun went down if possible. That was the most exciting shorebird day many of us have ever had. It was absolutely great. Thank you so much for doing this for our members and visitors - we all deeply appreciate the time you spent with us. Marjorie

Saturday, September 24 - Fountain Hills, Sycamore Creek in Sunflower and Mt. Ord led by Kurt Radmacher. Nine participants enjoyed cooler temperatures to find 74 species of birds, and 16 species of butterflies with the help of Cindy and Kurt

Radmacher. Kurt was disappointed that more warblers were not seen but the unusual prevailing wind due to the influence of hurricane Katrina certainly did not help. Nevertheless a terrific view of a Nashville was enjoyed by all along with more brief looks at Black-throated Gray, Painted Redstart, Lucy's and Orange-crowned Warbler. Both Summer and Western Tanager were seen in addition to three nuthatches on Mt. Ord (Red & White-breasted Nuthatch, Pigmy Nuthatch). Great views of a low flying Black Hawk and at least 10 to 15 migrating Vaux's Swifts passed over the Sunflower location. Thank you both for an interesting trip.

Saturday, October 1 - Photography Seminar with Cindy Marple. This was our second photography workshop with Cindy with a group of very interested birders in attendance. We are starting a joint venture with Desert Botanical Garden on trips designed to be interdisciplinary, that is containing leaders and programs that appeal to both plant and birding enthusiasts and therefore will be presenting this program next year in the morning from 9 to 12 with much wider advertising. It is an excellent Power Point program by Cindy covering all aspects of composition, equipment, lighting, approaching your subject and exposure. Discussion of film versus digital cameras, proper advantage of newer higher megapixel digital cameras, what the basic bird purchase setup could consist of and other pointers for those buying their first digital camera were covered. Mike Rupp added greatly to the program by discussing video during the showing of one of his latest video efforts. Thank you Cindy and Mike for an excellent program.

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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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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