

VERMILION

FLY C A T C H E R

March–April 2010 | Volume 55, Number 2

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Tucson Audubon Society is dedicated to improving the quality of the environment by providing education, conservation, and recreation programs, environmental leadership, and information. Tucson Audubon is a non-profit volunteer organization of people with a common interest in birding and natural history. Tucson Audubon maintains offices, a library, and nature shops in Tucson, the proceeds of which benefit all of its programs.

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FRONT COVER: Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl by Sky Jacobs. Sky is a southwest native who loves birds, photography, and the Sky Island and Sonoran Desert region. See his photography and more at wildsonora.com or skyjacobs.com.

To have your photographs considered for use in the *Vermilion Flycatcher*, please contact Matt Griffiths at mgriffiths@tucsonaudubon.org.

Remember: Elected Officials Represent You

A guest opinion by Steve Arnquist, executive director of the Arizona League of Conservation Voters and the Arizona League of Conservation Voters Education Fund. Steve is proud to call Tucson home and his work takes him all over Arizona.

As our state struggles with its budget crisis, and our national economy grows less quickly, it is more important than ever to watch our state and federal government to ensure that they continue to invest in cleaning up our environment, and to ensure that they do not remove or waive environmental protections for which we all have worked so hard.

When our legislators, people we put in office, ought to be minding the budget or funding our parks or other vital state services, they are attempting to "reclaim" jurisdiction of Arizona's rivers to exempt them from Clean Water Act protections. When they should be thinking about Arizona's future water and energy needs, they are pulling out of the Western Climate Initiative or frittering away time on social issues as our state continues to bleed. Without a reversal in the political tide in Arizona we can expect more bad news. This is our responsibility (see quote on page 3).

We live in a democracy. Arizonans do not want to see parks closed, we do not want our air and water soiled or a relaxation of regulations that help to beautify our state and protect its residents. What Arizona needs is for all concerned Arizonans to increase pressure on our elected officials all year long and to vote "green" at the ballot box. If we

do not, our representatives will continue to treat our natural world as a disposable luxury.

The Arizona League of Conservation Voters produces a scorecard each for each of our legislators. AZLCV scores legislators based on their proconservation votes over the course of the session. This gives us an easy way to assess our legislators, and an opportunity for us to tell them what we think of their performance.

We must advocate to protect the Arizona that we all love for ourselves, for our children, and for our grandchildren, and we must make sure that our representatives know it! I challenge every person who reads this to commit to two (or two more) phone calls to one of their elected officials this year on a piece of environmental legislation and to **vote for environmental candidates this November**. Arizona is too important and too precious to do otherwise.

The non-partisan Arizona League of Conservation Voters works with members of both political parties to turn environmental values into Arizona priorities. For more information on AZLCV visit www.azlcv.org.





Changing Our Consumer Culture

The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time.

Terry Tempest Williams.

In the 2009 documentary *The Age of Stupid*, Peter Postlethwaite plays a man living alone in the devastated world of 2055, looking back at old footage from 2008 and asks: why didn't we stop climate change when we had the chance? Erik Assadourian, writing on *The Rise and Fall of Consumer Cultures* in *The State of the World 2010* opines that it has nothing to do with stupidity, and everything to do with changing our culture, since it is culture that determines what we think of as "natural," that shapes and constrains our actions.

We think it is natural to drive cars, fly planes, have large homes, use air conditioning: we don't think of these as being unnatural choices. We even promote them as ideals for millions of people in less developed countries. These activities are not sustainable. Worse still, our per capita consumption is rising, by 300 percent since 1960. Metal production increased six fold between 1950 and 2005, and gas consumption 14 fold. Do we believe we can sustain this ever increasing consumption of resources even as billions of new people aspire to the same?

The pressure to construct new mines is an outcome of our consumer culture. The exponential increase in carbon dioxide levels in our atmosphere over the last 250 years is just one of a series of environmental effects of our levels of consumption. Losing seven million hectares of forest each year is another. The growth in our economy that many are seeking within our current model equates to increasing the rate of conversion of finite natural resources (or capital) into man-made capital: is that what we really want? To sustain our civilization will require changing our consumer culture, a culture in which we find meaning, contentment, and acceptance through the consumption of goods and services. Our goal needs to be the creation a culture of

sustainability where our choices restore some of our ecological systems to health.

Changing culture when many of our leaders do not see either the crisis we face, or the opportunity to change in a planned manner, is one of our challenges. Bill Gates' announcement, on February 12, that climate change is the most important challenge on the planet offers a glimmer of hope. At the 10th John H. Chafee Memorial Lecture on Science and the Environment, Gus Speth, who for the last decade served as Dean of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, called for "A New American Environmentalism and a New Economy." Speth argued that, "America is now faced with several linked and worsening crises—economic, environmental, social and political—that require deep, transformative changes if they are to be met, and, that to drive systemic change, we need a new politics in which the various progressive communities come out of their silos and coalesce around building a common agenda and a unified political force."

Speth concludes that environmentalism is failing because "the full burden of managing accumulating environmental threats, and the powerful forces of modern capitalism driving those threats, have fallen to the environmental community. The burden is too great. The system . . . will generate ever larger environmental consequences, outstripping efforts to manage them. The system will seek to undermine (our) efforts and constrain them within narrow limits . . . working within the system puts off-limits major efforts to correct many underlying drivers of deterioration . . . what is needed is transformative change in the system itself." He called for a new American environmentalism centered on building a new, sustaining economy where the overriding economic priority is not profit and growth, but people and planet and quality of life for all. He set out policy and other prescriptions for building this new economy—creating, "an agenda for the new environmentalism."

Perhaps the main impediment to change is that many have a stake in the status quo. Listen carefully, and every day you will hear a variant on the following message: "We must do nothing whatsoever on climate change because it threatens our economy and jobs." Not addressing climate change (itself just a symptom of the problem) threatens our economy, jobs, and a great deal more—it threatens our survival!

Each of us must stand up to the madness represented by those with a shortsighted stake in the status quo, and focus our efforts on building a new, sustaining economy centered on the health and safety of people and planet.

Terry Tempest Williams also said, "I do not think we can look for leadership beyond ourselves. I do not think we can wait for someone or something to save us from our global predicaments and obligations. I need to look in the mirror and ask this of myself: If I am committed to seeing the direction of our country change, how must I change myself?"

What can you do in southeast Arizona to ensure a healthy quality life for your children and grandchildren? Inform yourself. Start with Gus Speth's review, *The Bridge to the Edge of the World*. Engage yourself in our local water issues: let's leave sufficient water to support our natural environment, which supports our human existence. Look to protect our streams and rivers from adverse impacts of development (see page 13). Think how you can reduce your water use (page 25). Protect our natural areas from those seeking to profit from decimating the last unspoiled natural habitats of our region at the expense of our long-term well-being (see page 18 on Rosemont). Read Steve Arnquist's article on page 2 to see what your elected representatives are doing about these issues, and bring some pressure to bear on them.

Please also support Tucson Audubon with your dollars to help us keep ahead of the curve on these issues that will directly affect the lives of your children and grandchildren. ■

Birdathon Takes Flight!

by Erin Olmstead, Special Projects

VIVIAN MACKINNON



How would you like to go birding in Ecuador at Thanksgiving? Been lusting after a new pair of binoculars? Looking for a few good birding buddies? Could you use a hint to ID some of those tricky species? Need an excuse to get outdoors this spring? If you've answered "yes!" to any of these questions, then Birdathon 2010 has something for you.

Choose your own adventure

Birdathon is an annual event for birders and nature lovers of all ages and experience levels. Teams go birding for up to 24 consecutive hours in an effort to tally as many species as possible. Family and friends cheer them on by pledging their support on a per-species basis or with a flat donation. It's the most fun you can have while raising funds for a great cause. You choose when and where to bird, with whom, and at what pace. If you are itching to join your birding buddies in search of Big Day glory, there are many southeast Arizona specialties waiting for you. But if you prefer to update your yard list with a cup of coffee on the patio, that's just as good—because Birdathon makes common (and sometimes overlooked) species exciting again!

New this season

In the last issue I hinted at a few exciting new features for this year's Birdathon. The biggest change is Online Registration—check out www.tucsonaudubon.dojiggy.com to sign up. You'll have the option to set up your personal fundraising page, complete with your very own pledge thermometer for tracking your goal.

The online format allows you to share the excitement and challenge of your Birdathon experience with sponsors who can then donate by credit card, thus eliminating the chore of collecting pledges after the birding is done. By linking to your page, your friends and family will be able to see how their support counts toward your target (as well as the overall Tucson Audubon goal) and help you win prizes including birding travel, optics, gear, fine dining, and education classes.

Another fun element of Birdathon is the chance to get out in the field this spring with a few of our friendly neighborhood bird tour professionals. Tucson "All-Stars" Gavin Bieber and Rich Hoyer of *WINGS*, Scott Olmstead of *Tropical Birding*, and John Yerger of *Adventure Birding Company* have all enthusiastically agreed to lead your Birdathon! A variety of outings from relaxed to hardcore are listed on page 5—don't miss these fun guided



SCOTT OLMSTEAD

GRAND PRIZE: Ecuador Birding trip for you and your best birding buddy!

Win two spaces on Tropical Birding's Andes Introtour: November 20–28, 2010. Explore the mega-diverse Choco bioregion in search of brilliant tanagers, hummingbirds, antpittas and more! 8days/7nights from Quito. Valued at over \$3,000! For tour itinerary and trip reports, check out www.tropicalbirding.com. Thanks to Birds & Business Alliance member Tropical Birding!



How to Win: First, you must register for Birdathon! This exciting prize will be awarded to the Birdathoner with the highest Total Score.

1 point per dollar raised + 2 points per bird species observed = Total Score

Raise \$50 and earn this cool souvenir T-shirt!

Thanks to Rick Wheeler for donating this beautiful image! **About the artist:** Arizona artist Rick Wheeler is best known for his scratchboard/watercolor work, as seen on this year's Birdathon T-shirt. This particular image, titled "Cactus Wren & Nest," was jury-selected to the "2004 Arts for the Parks Mini 100." Several national parks and monuments have commissioned Rick for his work, including Grand Canyon, Yosemite, Arches, Sequoia, and Joshua Tree, as well as several other companies. Anyone interested in learning this technique can inquire with the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Art Institute, as he teaches there on a regular basis. Or visit his website at www.rickarts.com for more information.



birding opportunities. Remember, space is limited. Contact me at 622-5622 for more information.

Think big!

Birdathon is a fun example of the cumulative power of many individual contributions of time, talent, effort, and spare change. Your participation counts, and all the money you raise will support Tucson Audubon's valuable conservation, education, and youth birding programs. Yes, Birdathon is a fundraiser (and an important one, at that) but it's about more than just raising money. It's also about raising awareness.

An opportunity

Birdathon is a great opportunity to learn more about birds and birding, and to increase appreciation of wildlife and habitat conservation in our area. If you've never done a Birdathon before, we encourage you to give it a go. Get your own team together or join one of



ELAINER WILSON, WWW.NATURESPICSONLINE.COM

Birdathon 2009 Stats

Number of teams: 20
 Total Money Raised: \$28,134.00
 Most Money Raised by Individual: \$2,195.45
 Most Species Seen by Team: 169
 Most Individual Pledges Collected by Individual: 45

ours. Veteran Birdathoners: Consider inviting a novice birder or new friend to come along! What a great way to start the new decade with a new tradition. Together we can make 2010 the biggest Birdathon ever!

BIRDATHON EVENTS

COUNT ME IN!

Treat yourself to one of these exciting Birdathon events! Registration is required. If you don't have a team, don't have the time to get one together, or don't know where to start in planning a Birdathon day, join one of our pre-arranged outings! It is a great way to meet other local birders and nature lovers. These Tucson Audubon expert-led "All-Star Fundraiser" teams are open to anyone, but group sizes are limited and a minimum fundraising effort is suggested (we hope you will collect many pledges, but you can donate this yourself).

All you do is sign up, collect pledges or donations, and show up ready to have a great time. To register contact Erin Olmstead at eolmstead@tucsonaudubon.org or 622-5622.

"Scott's Orioles" with Scott Olmstead of Tropical Birding. April 9

Calling all beginners: First time out? Want to see what Birdathon's all

about? Join the "Scott's Orioles" for daylight birding on Mount Lemmon, led patiently by Scott Olmstead of Tropical Birding. You are guaranteed to catch the buzz! Limited to 10 participants for this Birdathon kickoff outing. Transportation included. \$150.

"Kowa Digiscopathon" with Jim Danzenbaker of Kowa. April 16 & 17

Scope it out—this one's a two-parter! Join Jim Danzenbaker of Kowa for a Friday afternoon Digiscoping warm-up workshop at Tucson Audubon, and a low-carbon digiscope Birdathon at the Mason Center on Saturday. Participants must collect \$150 in pledges or donations for Saturday's outing, which is limited to 10 birders. Bring your own digiscope gear or test-drive the new Kowa setup! \$150

"High Rollers" with Gavin Bieber of WINGS. April 18

Go for it with WINGS leader Gavin Bieber on this relaxed all-day survey trip. Get the lowdown on Sky Island life zones from the top down! Explore the Huachucas from the mixed conifer of Carr Canyon down to riparian at

the San Pedro, turning up 100–140 species representing a choice cross-section of local bird diversity along the way. Limited to 10 participants. Transportation included. \$250

"Hoyer's Voyeurs" with Rich Hoyer of WINGS. April 25

Returning team champions "Hoyer's Voyeurs" will again be in hot pursuit of the feted "Most Species Seen" title. Join Rich Hoyer of WINGS for a full-on Birdathon around southeast Arizona. Starting with owls and other nightly audibles, this Big Day attempt starts with the assumption we won't need all 24 hours to tally a huge list. With 17.5 hours planned, this team will shoot for a whopping 175 species! Limited to 10 participants. Transportation included. \$250

"Gonzo Birders" with John Yerger of Adventure Birding Company. May 7

Hungry for a taste of hardcore birding? Immerse yourself in the ultimate Birdathon experience with Adventure Birding guide and veteran Big Day planner, John Yerger. It's a 17-hour, coffee-fueled frenzy filled



with almost every species imaginable. We'll hit a few hotspots like Madera Canyon and Patagonia, with some "secret" spots in between. We hope to see 150+ species of birds. Limited to 10 participants. Transportation included. \$250

"President's Choice" with Tucson Audubon President Herb Trossman and Executive Director Paul Green. TBD

We'll combine relaxed birding with good food. Minimum fundraising effort \$250 prior to the date. 10 participants.

Or, participate in one of the many fun and educational classes or field trips offered this season and make it YOUR Birdathon! See pages 8–9 and 20–22 for ideas!

Get Trained to Survey New Important Bird Areas!

Workshop March 5–6!

Scott Wilbor, *Important Bird Areas Program Conservation Biologist*



What makes the surveying for the Important Bird Areas (IBA) program different from regular birding and rare-bird chasing? We explore and survey hard-to-access areas, areas big in scale, often with very little bird population information, and frequently with pressing habitat threats. But, also they have potential conservation opportunities we have identified. Typically it is the birding community or

local bird guides who bring an area to our attention. We train our surveyors to follow a protocol, and we set certain date windows for our multiple (7–8) surveys at a site, which makes them repeatable as well as comparable across the state. You need to have at least an intermediate-level of birding skills, and be able to hike (sometimes off trail) a couple miles. Of course, you get to know your site really well

and you become our eyes and ears on the ground for IBA conservation (our IBA stewards). Teams are of two people. Our typical survey methods include transects, point counts, and wetland censuses, and sometimes we have options for special surveys to cover colony sites, marsh birds, and raptors. We also give you the option to be part of some especially fun adventuresome "backcountry" overnight trips to areas where we are focusing our efforts in a particular year. These are sites that may be quite remote, have complex logistics, require off-trail travel, and perhaps special permission or permits. In 2010 we are looking for new teams for sites at Amado, Cienega Creek, Lower San Pedro, Tanque Verde, Cienega Creek, and Patagonia. Our "backcountry" team surveys continue

in Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, and Patagonia Mountains, with some additional work on the Lower San Pedro River. A northwest Arizona site is also an option being explored.

Our two-day workshop, March 5th & 6th (Fri./Sat.) gives you the training to become part of all these efforts. Our first day will be at Arizona Game and Fish Department offices (Tucson) and along the nearby Santa Cruz River, and our second day, at Simpson Habitat Restoration site, Lower Santa Cruz River (good food provided, too). Give us a call to signup: Tucson Audubon IBA office 628-1730. Let's put your birding skills to work for IBA conservation and have a little fun and team camaraderie as well!



IBA workshop participants learning the fine points of bird survey data collection.

Gala Soars Again!

Sandy Elers, Development Chair

MATT BROOKS



KENDALL KROESEN



MATT BROOKS

Top: Kim McClean and Marie, the Harris's Hawk. Botton left: Wally Paton and Jackie Covey. Bottom right: Kate Galloway, Mich Coker, and Robert Glennon.

Tucson Audubon's second annual Gala, *Making a Splash for Wildlife*, took Tucson by storm on Tuesday, February 2, at the Arizona Inn. The lively cocktail hour saw guests bidding on silent auction items including an African Safari and bee habitat sculptures. Our Master of Ceremonies, Chuck George from KOLD 13, guided us through the program, kicked off by Jim Dawson of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. Jim flew his Harris's Hawk around the dining room to the delight of the audience. Our speaker for the evening, Dr. Robert Glennon, entertained and enlightened us on the water crisis in America today.

Our Honorary Chairmen were Julia Gordon and Mich Coker, and we were joined by some of our partners in conservation Bob Hembrode, Jennifer Martin, Carolyn Campbell, and David Yetman. Officials present included Rodney Glassman, Richard Elias, Ray Carroll, and Chuck Huckelberry.

Tucson Audubon President Herb Trossman, presented the first *Wally and Marion Paton Award for Outstanding Contributions to Birding* to the Paton Family. For many years,

Marion and Wally graciously opened their Patagonia backyard to birders from all over the world. Son Wally Paton and daughter Jackie Covey accepted the award for the family. Herb also presented a President's Award to Eng-Li Green for her many outstanding contributions in the graphic arts to Tucson Audubon. She has changed the face of the organization through her skilled revamping of our newsletter, pamphlets, brochures, letters, and the newly launched website.

We thank all who attended and donated, for their generosity and devotion to conservation and Tucson Audubon. We extend special thanks to our major gala supporters:

Rillito River Tables: Tucson Electric Power; Southern Arizona Paving and Construction; Salt River Project; Farhang & Medcoff, PLLC; Bureau of Land Management

Madera Creek Tables: Sandy and Karl Elers; Chris and Doug McVie; Cynthia Pruet; Bill and Alice Roe

Read a full report at our website www.tucsonaudubon.org.

Staff News: Welcome to Erin Olmstead, Special Projects

A chance encounter with a pair of Barred Owls got Erin hooked on birds nearly ten years ago. Since then, she has explored the Americas as an interpretive naturalist, helping people connect with nature and appreciate the value of biodiversity. Her adventures have taken her from the bustling hawk-watch platform at Cape May, NJ, and the briny shores of Mono Lake in California, to the pristine tropical beaches of Costa Rica and the spectacular rainforest canopy of the Amazon. Erin spent almost three years getting to know the birding community through her work with an ecotourism outfit in Ecuador before returning to the States last winter. After landing in Arizona, Erin spent a season monitoring breeding Bald Eagles near Phoenix and joined Tucson Audubon as our new Special Projects staffer in November.



MATT BROOKS

In addition to grant-seeking and writing and a variety of membership and development projects, she is coordinating this spring's Birdathon fundraiser. Erin will be birdathoning for the first time this year with her husband Scott, and hopes to see you out there!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Phil Abromowitz and Barbara DeLosier, Kathy Aldern, Tom and Nancy Allin, Albert and Lynn Andrew, Dante and Diana Archangeli, Jim and Ruth Barwick, Donna Bauer, Bill and Gail Beardsley, Laurel Bender, Andy and Kate Bessey, Emma Blake and Rob Schoen, Jerry Bock, Joyce Bolinger and Lavina Tomer, Linda Bonotto, Arthur and Martha Boright, Laura Branton, Cindy Brocius, Michael Brookshier, Shirley Casebolt, Bill Chambers, Athol Cline, Wendell and Mary Clutz, Mark Cocker, Beverly Cosper, David and Deborah Cowan, Joseph Dolan, James C. Dudley, Tura Eisele, Roy Emrick, Joan Feldman, Annette Felix, Derre Ferdon, Don Feyrer, Patricia Francis, Bruce Fulton, Betty Funk, Peter Gignac, Chelsea Rae Ginn, Ann Givey, Sara Grimm, Bob Groendyke and Deborah Kuechel, Curtis Hahn, Constance Hammond, Charles Hassen and Jan Abington, David Hawkins, Debbie Hicks, Douglas Higgins, Peter Hubbell, Michael and Jane Jarrett, Mark Jensen, Dr. Judy Johnson, Larry Johnson, Mary Johnson, James Karp, Anthony and Kathleen Kent, Lou King, Karen LaFrance, Victoria Lanphier, Leo Leonhart, Steve Lindblom, Wendy Marcus, Kelley Matthews, Ann Mavko, Carolyn McGorray, A Meija, Andrea Michaels, Bonnie Moon, Tom Nimlos, Dan Norton, Chuck Palm, Marjorie Paxton, Sharon Pettus, Eben and Christy Polk, Juliata Portillo, Quentin Powers and Carrie Dupre, Mike Quigley, Judith Reeve, Shirley Ridgway, M Brown Riley, Michael and Carol Rosenzweig, H Nelson Rowley, Suzette Russi, Karen Sawyer, Judith Schenck, Heidi Schewel, Adam Sewell, Jeff and Gail Shank, Tim and JoAnn Siemsen, Robert Singler, John Spence, Becky Spencer, Joan and Richard Spencer, Robert and Elizabeth Starks, Edward and Patricia Tobin, Ann Tousley, Barbara Warren, Sally Wills, Margaret Willson, Lee Wilson, Blair and Amy Windley

Birds and Business Alliance New Members

Copper Level: Farhang & Medcoff, PLLC; Salt River Project; Southern Arizona Paving & Construction

Silver Level: Loews Ventana Canyon

Jean Barchman, Membership Coordinator

Volunteer News Roundup

Becky Aparicio, Volunteer Coordinator

New Volunteers:

Betty McElhill—Outreach
Elizabeth Snoke—Library research
Kathleen Fullin—IBA data entry
Carla Danforth—Education and Outreach

Thank You to ALL who helped with Wings Over Wilcox, the Crane bus trip, the Youth Birding Club and Education outreach as well as our shop volunteers who keep sales humming. A very special thanks to all the Gala volunteers who made our 2010 event a great success, great fun and a solid fundraiser. Gala chairperson Sandy Elers and silent auction chair Rosie Bennett led the team of volunteers and staff.

March and April will be busier still and your help is invaluable in completing our tasks and meeting Tucson Audubon's mission.

Please put the following dates on your "dance cards" and volunteer your time to help. Call or email Becky at 622-2230 or 760-7881, baparcio@tucsonaudubon.org

Festival of Books—March 13 & 14. Many of you have committed to this event and signed up. We still need sales and outreach volunteers for this exciting community activity at the University of Arizona. Visit www.tucsonfestivalofbooks.org to discover more about this event. Contact Becky or Jessie Shinn jshinn@email.arizona.edu.

Arizona Trail Association—April 3, 10 AM–1 PM: Colossal Cave Mountain Park is hosting a family day of activities and we'll need two volunteers to assist with this outreach. Call or email Becky.

Tucson Children's Museum Earth Day Festival—April 10, 10 AM–2 PM: This special event to promote an appreciation of the environment in families will be held on a free day at the museum. Volunteers are needed to assist with this outreach. Call or email Becky.

Tucson Bike (and Bird) Fest—Saturdays, April 10 and 17, 8–10 AM: Matt Griffiths leads the bike/bird trip on April 10 at Ft. Lowell Park. Becky Aparicio leads this family event on April 17 at Reid Park. Free admission to all who bike to the zoo that day. Helmets are mandatory. Two more volunteers are needed for each ride to make them safe and fun. Call or email Becky or visit dot.ci.tucson.az.us/bikefest/index.php.

Together Green Weed Removal—April 10 & 17: 7:30 AM–noon: Help fight the "scourges of Tucson canyons". On April 10 Kendall Kroesen leads giant reed removal teams around Sabino Creek properties and on April 17 the challenging job of removing fountain grass in Tucson Audubon property in Esperero Canyon. The latter involves a short but rocky hike in, and rough work in a stunning of-limits area. Contact Kendall at 971-2385 or kkroesen@tucsonaudubon.org.

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Tim Helentjaris is an "Important-Bird-Area man." What does that mean? Well, every once in a while the IBA Program is blessed by an exceptional volunteer who takes the initiative to be part of the program in all aspects, from bird survey planning, to forming an IBA Team, mapping the survey route, taking part in all backcountry surveys offered, and making sure the bird data gets entered and used for conservation purposes. In 2009 Tim was always there at every opportunity.

Tim, a plant geneticist and former UA scientist, started volunteering for the IBA Program in February 2007, helping and then leading IBA Team efforts at potential IBA sites. Tim's big year, though, was last year. He volunteered approximately 100 hours and drove over 1,400 miles.

Tim volunteered for all four Lower San Pedro River surveys, which required parts of two days away from home and staying overnight in San Manuel, Arizona (and eating at two Mexican restaurants per trip! "No problema," right, Tim?). Tim made another special trip with me to San Manuel to check on raptor nesting outcomes in July 2009 (in the midst of our tropical heat wave). Tim also volunteered for both Patagonia Mountain backcountry camping survey trips in May & June 2009. Finally, Tim led an IBA Team with seven surveys in the Santa Rita Mountains, and led surveys in the Patagonia and Santa Catalina Mountains, and the Santa Cruz River. Tim also does his own data entry.



FOUR QUESTIONS

Why IBA? The data-gathering aspect is particularly appealing to me, because as a trained scientist I understand the greater value that data can provide for IBA documentation, and the utility that this data can provide for conservation decisions.

Best bird sighting, while IBA surveying? Thick-billed Kingbird along the Lower San Pedro River IBA! They were challenging to find, but once found, they were really fun to watch around their nest site with all their antics.

Coolest IBA you've been to (so far)? The Lower San Pedro IBA for the sheer number and diversity of birds, and the Patagonia Mountains for the wild country and scenery.

Favorite Mexican Restaurant (Tucson)? The Mosaic Café at Grant & Silverbell: consistently good food and close to home; but in Mammoth, Arizona, I recommend two, the only two!

Scott Wilbor

Local Rarities Highlight First Youth Birding Field Trip

Scott Olmstead and Kendall Kroesen

Six enthusiastic young birders (and three parents) joined leaders Rob Payne, Scott Olmstead, and staff liaison Kendall Kroesen on the inaugural Tucson Audubon youth birding club field trip on January 30. We birded around Reid Park under partly overcast skies (and in a wintry breeze!) most of the morning and saw a total of 42 species.

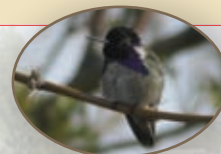
Bird highlights included Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin (left), American Robin, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Belted Kingfisher, and the local Vermilion Flycatchers. The ponds held an excellent variety of ducks and we had dazzling close-up views of Canvasback, Redhead, Lesser Scaup, and Ring-necked Duck. Four Hooded Mergansers and

a male Cinnamon Teal were unusual sightings for the park. Later we birded a short stretch of the Rillito River Park, where we enjoyed watching an American Kestrel hunt from his perch and several Anna's and Costa's (above) Hummingbirds engage in territorial antics.

Over lunch back at Reid Park we decided that a good destination

for the February trip would be Reddington Pass, with a stop at Agua Caliente Park on the side.

Club members and leaders will be working together to set field trip priorities, to structure club organization, and decide on participation in various possible citizen science projects. If you are a youth from 8 to 18 years old, or know one, come join us for the next field trip on March 27. See the field trip section on page 21 for a description of the March trip. ■



TUCSON AUDUBON EVENTS AND CLASSES

JIM & DEVA BURNS. WWW.JIMBURNSPHOTOS.COM



Learn with the Experts! Institute of Desert Ecology • April 15–18

Space is limited in the upcoming 40th annual Institute of Desert Ecology, so sign up today! Join us for a world-class learning experience in a spectacular setting. Desert ecology will be right at your fingertips in this hands-on, four-day institute. Learn from experts in the fields of herpetology, entomology, ornithology and more! This is a wonderful chance for you to interact with like-minded, inquisitive adults in the unique

landscape of southern Arizona. Don't miss the opportunity! Location: Catalina State Park. Cost \$425, Tucson Audubon members (\$460, non-members; includes membership fee). Fees include gourmet food, all instruction, and camping fees. To sign up, call the Nature Shop at 629-0510 or email education@tucsonaudubon.org. Also visit www.tucsonaudubon.org/what-we-do/education/eduadult/ide.html.

Take Bird ID Beyond Guess Work Moving to Mastery and Specialty Workshops • Fall 2010–Spring 2011

If you consider yourself an intermediate birder or will complete our Backyard Birding and Beyond class this spring, you should consider the next step in developing your skills as a birder. Take identification beyond guess work and provide a framework in which to hone your skills by moving beyond the basics with our Moving to Mastery course. Or, if you have a special interest in a particular bird family, check out our Specialty Workshops. For more information call 622-2230. To sign up, call the Nature Shop at 629-0510 or email education@tucsonaudubon.org.

Cost for *Moving to Mastery*: \$250 (\$285 non-members, but includes membership)
Cost for *Specialty Workshops*: \$110 (\$145 for non-members, but includes membership)

Moving to Mastery

Classroom sessions: Wednesdays, October 13, 20, 27 and November 3 & 10, 2010
Field trips: October 16, 23, 30, and February 6

Specialty Workshops

Warblers: September 1 & 4, 2010
Flycatchers: September 8 & 11, 2010
Sparrows: January 26 & 29, 2011
Raptors: February 2 & 5, 2011



MATT BROOKS

Hurry! There's space for only two more families! Riparian Family Institute • March 20–21

Do your children (or you!) want to get their hands muddy and explore the river ecosystem of the San Pedro? Are you interested in camping with your kids in a safe location with other fun families? If so, then join us for Riparian Family Institute. We have many activities planned such as river walks, bird walks, blacklighting for nighttime invertebrates, habitat restoration, a campfire and a country-style cookout. The fee covers a family of four (price varies for more or fewer people) and includes camping, instruction and wonderful food. Don't hesitate; contact the Nature Shop to sign up 629-5010 or education@tucsonaudubon.org.

Above: Intrepid explorers learn about river ecosystems.



JAMES PRUDENTE

Combine Spring Birding with a Workshop on the Birds of Mt Lemmon

April 22 and 24 — For All Birders



RETURN OF THE IRONWOOD EDUCATION FESTIVAL!

Back by popular demand, the Ironwood Education Festival will be held on **Saturday, May 15, 2010**, at the Mason Center, 8:00 AM–12:00 PM

This festival provides an opportunity to learn all about the Ironwood Forest; from the National Monument to the backyards of Northwest Tucson. Additionally, there will be live critters, trail walks and sustainable design demonstrations (solar, water harvesting, and composting toilets!)

Check out the Mason Center web page for more information: www.tucsonaudubon.org/what-we-do/education/mason.html

The festival is **FREE** and open to the public



JIM & DEVA BURNS. WWW.JIMBURNSPHOTOS.COM

Spring is right around the corner and this workshop will get you tuned up for spring migration and summer birding. Whether you're trying to remember the song of the Red-faced Warbler or learning to identify new species, this workshop is for you. With the diversity of habitats that occur in sky islands like the Catalinas there is the opportunity to understand the interaction of birds and plants in varying habitats. With a one-hour workshop and an all-day field trip, you will learn about and experience a variety of birds and plants along the way. This can even be your day to support Birdathon. (See page 4 for details).

Taught by Lynn Hassler, an expert on birds and plants and author of numerous books. Don't miss the opportunity to study and bird with her.

Classroom session: Tucson Audubon, Thursday April 22, 6 PM (one hour)

Field Trip: Saturday April 24, 7 AM–3 PM; meeting location to be announced.

Cost of the workshop: \$90 for members and \$125 for non-members which includes a membership in Tucson Audubon.

Raptors, Raptors, Raptors

April 21–May 22 — For All Birders

Arizona is prime territory for a wide variety of raptors, both year-round residents and Neotropical breeders in the spring and summer. This provides a great opportunity to study a large variety of species at this prime time of year. In this class you will learn to cut through the many ambiguities of raptor identification and broaden your knowledge of the habitats and natural history about these top-of-the-food-chain birds. You will study both resident species and the migrant species residing here for part of the year. This interactive class will give you increased knowledge and ID skills, and will include an element of fun with challenging quizzes—on the honor system, of course.

Raptor biologist Jim Dawson, an authority on the Harris's Hawk, author, and raptor conservation biologist with the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, will teach the course. This is an excellent

opportunity to study with this respected scientist and excellent instructor.

The course will consist of five two-hour classroom sessions and one eight-hour field trip.

Classroom session: Tucson Audubon, Wednesdays, April 21 through May 19, 6:30–8:30 PM

Field trip: Saturday, May 22. Start time and location to be announced.

Cost of the workshop: \$185 for members and \$220 for non-members which includes a membership in Tucson Audubon.

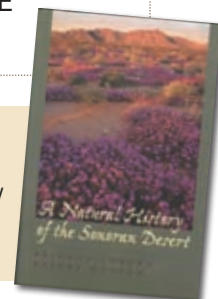


PHIL PRITCAHRD

To sign up for any of the courses, call our main Nature Shop at 629-0510, or email education@tucsonaudubon.org, or drop by the store at 300 E University Blvd.

AVAILABLE IN OUR NATURE SHOPS

A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert. \$24.95. Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Press. This book provides the most complete collection of Sonoran Desert natural history information ever compiled. It's the perfect introduction to the Sonoran Desert, and the perfect companion to your education at the Institute of Desert Ecology.



Tucson Audubon's Living with Nature Lecture Series

TUCSON Living with Nature Lecture Series / Member Meetings

DuVal Auditorium, NE section of the University Medical Center Bldg. 501 N Campbell Ave. Program begins at 7 pm, second Monday of each month September through May.

GREEN VALLEY Living with Nature Lecture Series

Joyner-Green Valley Library, 601 N La Canada Dr. 594-5295. Program begins at 10 am, third Saturday of each month October through May.

Contact Jean Barchman, 622-5622 or jbarchman@tucsonaudubon.org for more information or visit tucsonaudubon.org.



JIM BURNS

March 8 • Tucson EVOLUTION OF A PHOTOGRAPHER with Jim Burns

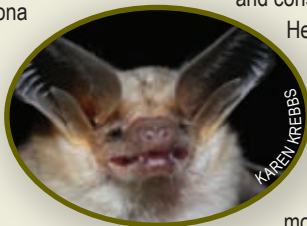
Jim Burns is an outdoor writer/photographer based in Scottsdale, Arizona. He graduated from the University of Kansas with a degree in English Literature and became hooked on birding while backpacking with his wife Deva, trying to place proper labels on the birds they were seeing along the trail.

During this entertaining program, Jim will highlight the progress in his bird photography from documentation snapshots and simple portraits to intimate glimpses into the lifestyle of his avian subjects. The goal in his photography now is to capture action and behavior that the average birder never sees or doesn't see well enough to fully appreciate. His latest book *Jim Burns' Arizona Birds: From the Backyard to the Backwoods*, will be available after the presentation

March 10 • Green Valley

THE EXCITING NIGHT LIFE OF BATS! with Karen Krebbs

Did you know Arizona is home to 28 species of bats? Karen Krebbs, Conservation Biologist at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum's Center for Sonoran Desert Studies and local bat expert, will talk about the natural history of these amazing animals and some of her research projects. Bats are fascinating and interesting creatures. Join us for an entertaining and educational program and learn more about these beneficial mammals of the evening! Karen will also present a live bat after the lecture.

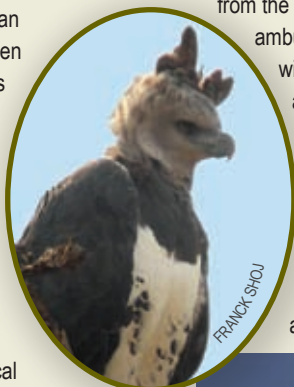


KAREN KREBBS

April 12 • Tucson

BIRDS & NATURAL HISTORY OF MATO GROSSO, BRAZIL with Mark Pretti

With large regions of undisturbed tropical forest, an abundance of rivers and wetlands, a tremendous diversity of flora and fauna, and outstanding birding and wildlife viewing, Mato Grosso, Brazil, is one of the world's finest natural destinations. Here, a 500-mile long transect passes through some of Earth's richest habitats where over 200 species of mammals and almost 750 species of birds make their homes. In the far south, one finds the world's largest freshwater wetland, the Pantanal, while in the north is pristine Amazonian rainforest. In between these two biomes is the vast cerrado, an area of grasslands, dry forest and the southernmost hints of Amazonia. In this presentation we'll explore the biological richness of Mato Grosso and learn about many of the animals and plants that are found there.



FRANCK SHOJ

Mark Pretti is a perpetual student of nature as well as a humble teacher focusing on birds, natural history, and conservation. Based in Hereford, AZ, he worked for seven years as a naturalist at The Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve. He has also moonlighted as field trip coordinator and trip leader for the Southwest Wings Birding and Nature Festival, as board member and trip leader for the Huachuca Audubon Society, and as office manager, trip leader, and head dishwasher for Mark Pretti Nature Tours. Good fortune has allowed him to lead many trips in Arizona, Mexico, Belize, Ecuador, and Brazil where he's greatly enjoyed seeing and learning about the birds and natural history of these wonderful places.

April 17 • Green Valley

PREDATORS IN MINIATURE: Spiders of Southern Arizona with Jillian Cowles

Curious about how spiders hide, hunt, breed and raise their young? Join us for an informative program covering the range and diversity of spiders found in our area, with a focus on their natural history. Local spider expert Jillian Cowles will share a colorful and photogenic array of jumping spiders, and spiders camouflaged to look like bird droppings. Learn about bold and aggressive hunters and stealthy kleptoparasites that steal food from the webs of black widows, ambush hunters that blend with the petals of flowers, and pirates that raid the webs of other spiders and prey on them, weavers of large webs, and spiders that subdue their prey by spitting venom and glue at them!



JILLIAN COWLES

EVENTS CALENDAR

March 5 & 6. Southern Arizona IBA Bird Monitoring Workshop in Tucson (details p 4)

March 8. *Living With Nature* lecture: Evolution of a Photographer with Jim Burns (Tucson) (details left)

March 10. *Living With Nature* lecture: Night Life of Bats with Karen Krebbs (Green Valley) (details left)

March 13 & 14. Festival of Books (details p 25)

March 18. Birds and Beer. BYOB, meet other birders, share sightings and photos. Tucson Audubon HQ.

March 20 & 21. Riparian Family Institute (details p 8)

April 9. All-Star Birdathon day: *Scott's Orioles* (details p 5)

April 10 & 17. TogetherGreen weed removal (details p 7)

April 10 & 17. Tucson Bike (and Bird) Fest (details p 7)

April 15. Birds and Beer. BYOB, meet other birders, share sightings and photos. Tucson Audubon HQ.

April 12. *Living With Nature* lecture: Birds of Mato Grosso with Mark Pretti (Tucson) (details left)

Apr 15-18. Institute of Desert Ecology (details p 8)

April 16-17. All-Star Birdathon day: *Kowa Digiscopathon* (details p 5)

April 17. *Living With Nature* lecture: Predators in Miniature with Jillian Cowles (Green Valley) (details left)

April 18. All-Star Birdathon day: *High Rollers* (details p 5)

Apr 21-May 22. Raptors, Raptors, Raptors course (details p 9)

Apr 22 & 24. Birding by Habitat: Birds of Mt Lemmon workshop (details p 9)

April 25. All-Star Birdathon day: *Hoyer's Voyeurs* (details p 5)

May 7. All-Star Birdathon day: *Gonzo Birders* (details p 5)

May 15. Ironwood Education Festival (details p 9) ■

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Interesting stories about birds with interesting names

Western Tanager

LARRY LIESE

I'll never forget the sighting of my first male Western Tanager, perched high in a pine tree on Mount Lemmon with the sun lighting up its orange-red head, with the bright yellow and contrasting black feathers granting me show-stopping pause. What fun! Tanagers are a colorful bird family, and the Western Tanager is no exception. It's the most north-ranging of the family, with birds breeding up into the Yukon in Canada. Wintering in Mexico and Central America, these birds end up spending as little as two months on the breeding grounds up north.

One might think that the male's head coloration is derived in the same manner as the reds of our other tanagers, but not so. Those other birds' colors are derived metabolically from relatively common precursors in the birds' diets, but the male Western Tanager's red-orange color comes directly from diet, without modification from harder to find sources; in fact, researchers have not been able to pin down exactly which food sources provide it (presumably, insects that have themselves acquired the pigment from plants). Also unknown is whether the males' head coloration influences females' choice

Although widespread in the West, Western Tanager populations have waxed and waned over the years, and certain population models even predict local extirpations.

of mates. In contrast, the male Scarlet Tanager's bright colors do attract the females. But with increased visibility causing subsequent increased risk of predation, he soon molts back to a plumage resembling the female, following the breeding season.

Although the derivation of the name Western Tanager is straight forward, the scientific name *Piranga ludoviciana* has a nice story to it. *Piranga* is the native name for a kind of South American bird. Similarly *tanager* is from *tangara*, a kind of bird in Tupi, a South American Indian language. The species name *ludoviciana* is stated to be Modern Latin for 'of Louisiana.' Named by Wilson not for the state but for the Louisiana Territory from which the bird described by him was brought back by Lewis and Clark, who collected it in Idaho.

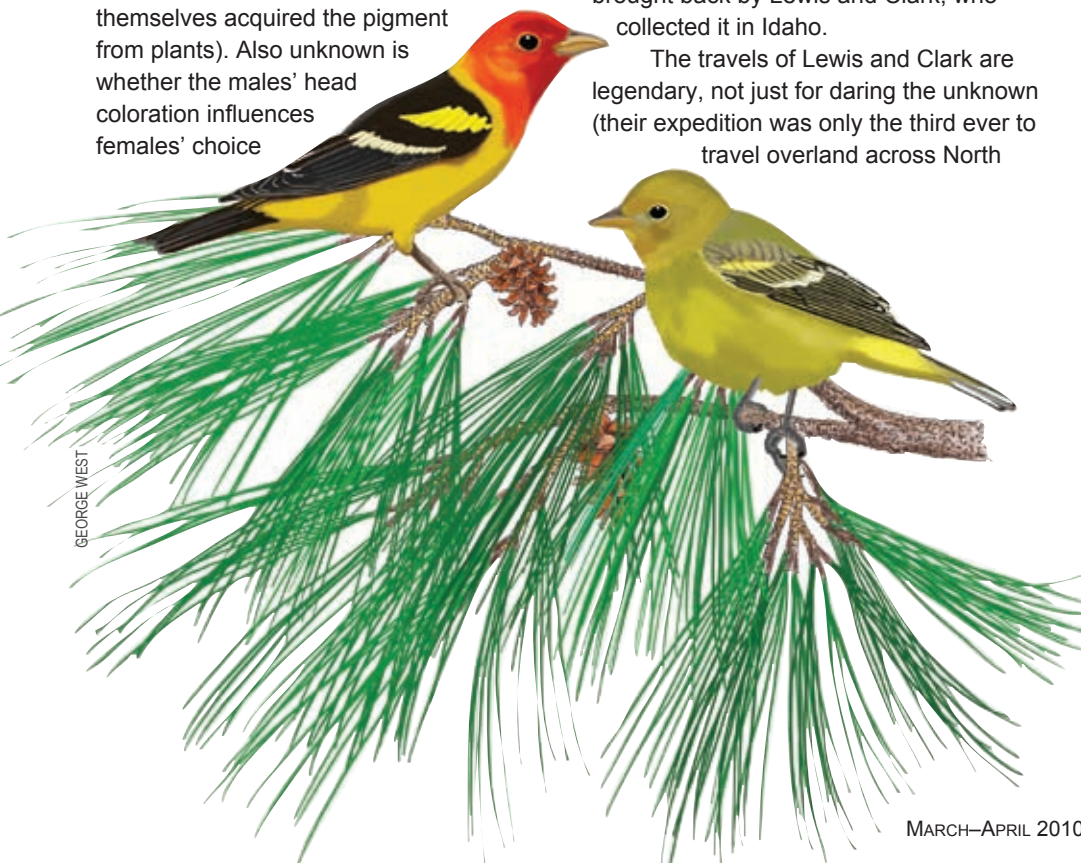
The travels of Lewis and Clark are legendary, not just for daring the unknown (their expedition was only the third ever to travel overland across North

America by white men, and the first by Americans), but also for the scientific accomplishments. One hundred seventy-eight new plants and 122 species and subspecies of animals were documented on the journey; among them were seven species of birds new to science, including Lewis's Woodpecker and Clark's Nutcracker, named in their honor.

Although widespread in the West, Western Tanager populations have waxed and waned over the years, and certain population models even predict local extirpations. Interestingly, certain logging practices can have beneficial effects due to changes in tree density and amount of brush covering the ground. Parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds has been found to be as high as 100% in some studies, yet the tanagers mostly overcome this burden by breeding early and having a moderately high clutch size (usually four). The tanager nestlings can thus compete with the cowbird chicks and fledging success is generally not low.

In southeast Arizona we find Western Tanagers to be a quite common migrant, easily found in most habitats (even urban areas). It breeds here at medium and higher elevations, particularly in the Transition (ponderosa pine) and Canadian (conifer forest) Zones in our Sky Islands, one of the southernmost parts of its breeding range. Although not highly conspicuous on its breeding grounds, its frequent calls during summer make it readily observable in places like Bear Wallow and the Mount Bigelow area on Mount Lemmon.

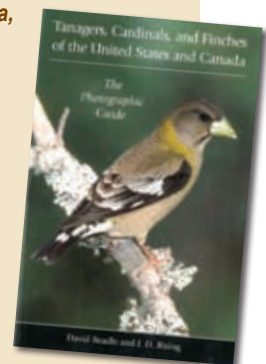
So, as late April brings us the host of migrants and breeders that make birding here in southeast Arizona such fun, keep an eye out for this beauty. You might even get one as a yard bird. Good luck! ■



GEORGE WEST

AVAILABLE IN OUR NATURE SHOPS
Tanagers, Cardinals, and Finches of the United States and Canada, The Photographic Guide.

\$29.95. Princeton Press. This book covers 46 species, including the Western Tanager, and introduces the reader to the biology, identification, molts, vocalization, and distribution of each.



Visible Migration Along Our Avian Highways

RICHARD FRAY

March and April are months of great activity and change in our bird communities, and we're lucky here to have several opportunities to witness "visible migration." We are blessed with several important migration corridors, most notably the Santa Cruz and San Pedro River valleys. These avian highways are on our doorstep, and now is the time to hit the sidewalk and watch the traffic.

Perhaps the most visible overhead northern migration is the spectacle of migrating hawks and vultures, with the first Turkey Vultures appearing in early March. In recent years, it has become a tradition for birders to gather along Bridge Road at Tubac (or anywhere with good riparian overviews) on mornings in mid-March to witness the northward passage. The most notable species in these movements is Common Black-Hawk, which breeds in the lower San Pedro valley and at Aravaipa Creek. Zone-tailed Hawks join the party towards the end of March, as do Gray Hawks in early April, with some continuing north and others arriving on territory.

Swainson's Hawks begin to migrate through our region around mid-March as well, and by April are on territory across desert grasslands. One good place to see them is the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area, the Important Bird Area that covers most of the valley from the Mexican border north to St. David. This jewel of a birding site is worth a visit in April to look for the many passerines that migrate into and through southeast Arizona.

April gives us the best chance to get to grips with flycatchers, and San Pedro House is the perfect place to see many different species. In addition to Black and Say's Phoebes and dazzling Vermilion Flycatchers, many of our more tricky species are feeding along the river. Hammond's and Dusky Flycatchers pass through in April and can be seen side-by-



KENDALL KROESEN



KENDALL KROESEN



GEORGE WEST

side at times, along with the Gray Flycatchers that have been present all winter. Any Western-type flycatcher you see at San Pedro House in April is almost certain to be a Pacific-slope, which is a common migrant during the month (Cordilleran isn't usually seen until May, and normally at higher elevations). Also check out the Kingfisher Pond for Green Kingfisher, probably the best place to see them in southeast Arizona. A female was seen by the pond in early February, so be vigilant and listen for the distinctive squeaky, rattling call.

The first Western Wood-Pewees arrive around the middle of April, but Willow Flycatcher won't be seen until May. Northern Beardless-Tyrannulets start to appear in April, to add to the small flycatcher confusion. In the slightly larger flycatcher category, you might see Greater Pewees on migration at the end of March, and the occasional Olive-sided Flycatcher by the end of April. Our three regular *Myiarchus* flycatchers can be seen side-by-side along the river in May, but a visit in the latter half of April should produce Dusky-capped along with the Ash-throated that began arriving mid-March. And rounding out what could be an amazing flycatcher day, both Western and Cassin's Kingbirds arrive in mid-March.

Warbler migration heats up in April and a visit to San Pedro House may yield as many as ten species. Hepatic and Summer Tanagers can both be seen in April (Western doesn't normally arrive until May), as can Hooded, Bullock's and Scott's Orioles, adding a splash of outrageous color. You could also encounter any or all of Cassin's, Plumbeous, Hutton's, Warbling and Bell's Vireos.

Above left: San Pedro Riparian Conservation Area. Above, top to bottom: Zone-tailed Hawk, Kingfisher Pond, and Western Wood-Pewee. Below left: Violet-crowned Hummingbird.

As many as ten species of hummingbird use the San Pedro as a migration corridor. Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory conducts hummingbird banding sessions at San Pedro House, which give a unique opportunity to see these special creatures up-close-and-personal. Check www.sabo.org for details. And of course, the first Violet-crowned Hummingbird will return to the Patons' feeders at some point in late March or early April. Let's hope that we'll be able to see these charming birds at Patons' long into the future. ■

Richard is a member of the Tucson Audubon Society Board of Directors, and started Fun Birding Tours in January 2010, guiding birders around SE Arizona. www.funbirdingtours.com

Please visit Tucson Audubon's Nature Shops for CDs, DVDs, books, and computer software to help you identify our many avian migrants. Call us at 629-0510 for information.



RICHARD FRAY

Political Hurdles for Our Desert Ecosystems

Navigating our way to sustainability: our choice is not between thriving natural areas and people, it is between a rich or an impoverished existence for us all.

ED VERBURG, PAUL GREEN, AND CHRIS MCVIE

We have killed the Santa Cruz River where it used to run through Tucson, and we have killed the Rillito River. The groves of cottonwood trees are gone due to poorly managed pumping of ground water. The vegetation we have is the result of putting back a tiny part of what we have taken from our environment. So do you sometimes wonder if the water in the Tucson area is being well managed for our best interests in the future? The City Council of Tucson and the Pima County Board of Supervisors wondered the same thing, and more than two years ago they commissioned a committee to assess our water resources and to provide a framework that our community might follow to ensure a sustainable water supply.

The Joint Water and Wastewater Committee met over a two year period and invited public input during 32 open meetings. They reviewed, and made available to the public, a vast array of scientific, engineering, and statistical reports, aided by County and City staff. They listened to many different points of view related to future supplies of water, use of this valuable resource, and how to address competing demands.

The Joint Committee issued its first report in May 2009, which examined

infrastructure and supply issues. The second report was released in December 2009. This recommended a new paradigm to provide balance across all requirements for water to serve people, economics, and our natural environment. The report presents a set of goals and recommendations for the City and County to consider as they make decisions that would establish a path towards a sustainable water future for the City and County. You can read the report at www.tucsonpimawaterstudy.com.

When the Pima County Board of Supervisors and Tucson City Council met to discuss the report, the County Board voted to adopt the Joint Committee's report as a framework for future discussions. However, the Mayor and City Council decided to seek additional public input over a 30-day period. The many comments from the homebuilders and their allies in the development community argue that some of the policy recommendations could negatively affect "job creation, near-term economic and fiscal conditions, and the long-term economic development and security of the community."

Ironically, the topic that sparked the greatest number of comments from both the conservation and development communities is a bit of a red herring: they focused on was the Conservation Effluent Pool (CEP). This represents 10,000 acre feet of water, of a total available supply of 217,444 acre feet (which is not yet being totally allocated) or about 4.6% of the total. The City, County, and Department of the Interior designated the CEP in 2000 as a set-aside for riparian restoration projects. However, there was concern about the CEP being worth as much as \$50 million? This is the red herring—charges to an operator are figured annually and are currently either 300 or 700 \$ per acre foot, depending on the type of service sought. and the impact on ratepayers of setting aside this amount of effluent. Of course, this argument

ignores the significant aesthetic, quality of life, and economic benefits of allowing wildlife (think trees, think birds) to use this effluent in riparian habitat areas that may far outweigh this estimate—often presented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in its periodic National Fishing and Hunting Surveys. It also ignores a recent U.S. Geological Survey report that documents ecosystem collapse in Western states tied to dwindling water supplies. It also ignores the fact that our human existence is dependent upon functional integrity of our ecosystems, which provide us with clean air, water, food, and clothing. It also ignores the fact that, in order for City and County infrastructure projects and HCP's to go forward, riparian restoration is one way to get credit for mitigating our actions. And finally, it ignores the fact that the City's option to receive and recharge CAP water, and to pump ground water, all stem from the national and tribal settlements that have occurred, which resulted in the IGA currently under consideration. The proposed supplemental IGA only begins to describe ways of developing implementation tools to fulfill our existent legal obligations.

The City Council held a public hearing on February 9 to consider the various perspectives. At the end of the session, more than one City Council member made it clear they do not see a dichotomy between the economics of development and the use of water resources for environmental purposes, pointing to the importance of ensuring sound use of this important resource in a balanced manner. On February 17, they voted in favor of accepting the resolution and approving of the report which will inform future regional dialogue regarding water issues. ■

Dr. Ed Verburg, President, Tucson Mountains Association, and former Assistant Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



BOTH PHOTOS MATT GRIFFITHS

The lush, green habitat at Tucson Audubon's Simpson Farm restoration site (pictured above and top right) supports a diversity of wildlife and is maintained mainly by effluent flow.



Research and Recovery of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls in the Sonoran Desert

AARON D. FLESCH

For nearly ten years, efforts to protect a small population of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls near Tucson pitted environmentalists against developers in a heated clash reminiscent of the controversy that surrounded the Spotted Owl in the Pacific Northwest.



AARON D. FLESCH



SKY JACOBS

In 1997, when the US Fish and Wildlife Service listed the Pygmy-Owl as endangered under the Endangered Species Act, we had little biological information available to guide the debate. Efforts to survey large portions of southern Arizona began soon after in 1998 and 1999. We soon discovered that Pygmy-Owls were rare and that most occupied sites were in xeroriparian woodlands and adjacent desert scrub and grassland with saguaros, as well as in native and exotic vegetation on the outskirts of northwest Tucson. However, we found very few Pygmy-Owls along major river valleys where they were described as common in the early 1900s, probably due to the loss of large riparian forests. By 2000, there was still little information on the status of Pygmy-Owls in adjacent Mexico and on important habitat attributes.

Much has changed over the last ten years. In 2006, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) removed Pygmy-Owls from the endangered species list for reasons unrelated to

recovery. Soon after, a coalition of conservation organizations petitioned the USFWS to relist the owl. A decision is expected sometime during 2010.

We now know a lot more about the ecology and genetics of Pygmy-Owls, which should help guide conservation, recovery, and urban planning in Arizona. Most importantly, in spite of changes in its legal status, efforts to augment and recover populations of Pygmy-Owls began immediately after it was delisted.

Recent recovery efforts have taken two forms: a passive approach to improve local habitat conditions by erecting nest boxes on the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge in areas that are otherwise suitable but that lack nest cavities, and a more active approach by the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) to breed Pygmy-Owls in captivity. Since 2006, AZGFD has removed 11 Pygmy-Owls (mainly juveniles) from the wild in Arizona and they have produced six fledglings over three breeding seasons, none of

uginous sert

which has been released into the wild. Additional attempts at captive breeding will be needed before these efforts can contribute to recovery in Arizona.

So what have we learned from recent research and what are the implications of these results? In 2006, Glenn Proudfoot provided compelling evidence that populations in Arizona are genetically similar to those in adjacent Sonora and Sinaloa, and different from those in southern Texas and elsewhere in Mexico (see distribution map, right; map provided by <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu> and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology). These findings will form the basis for revising the current taxonomy and may affect the USFWS decision on listing the species as endangered.

Although efforts to systematically monitor populations of Pygmy-Owls in Arizona are lacking, only 37 adults have been found since 1999 and only approximately 20 adults have been found during any year since 2003, suggesting that populations have recently declined. Pygmy-Owls are now extirpated from the Tucson area; AZGFD removed the last-known Pygmy-Owl in 2006 and the last verified record of a wild bird was near Red Rock in 2007. In the past two years, Pygmy-Owls have occurred in Arizona, in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, in and around the Altar Valley, and on the Tohono O'odham Nation.

In 2000 and 2001, I documented a population of Pygmy-Owls in northern Sonora that can provide an important source population for augmenting numbers in Arizona. At the same time, I also began to monitor populations and have since estimated declines in abundance totaling approximately 27 percent over 10 years. The structure of the vegetation at sites I have monitored has been largely stable, and drought seems to be driving the decline. Declines have been greater at sites with smaller areas of riparian vegetation and less structural complexity of riparian vegetation, fewer potential nest cavities, and greater land use by humans. I have also found that reproductive performance is higher in nest cavities with smaller entrances, greater height, and larger internal volume, and that these resources at

small spatial scales are extremely important even relative to resources at larger spatial scales in areas up to 6 acres around nests. My studies of Pygmy-Owl movement and dispersal indicate that individuals tend to avoid large vegetation gaps when dispersing from their natal sites. The probability a dispersing Pygmy-Owl will pair, settle, and establish a territory declines as vegetation disturbance in the landscape surrounding habitat patches increases.

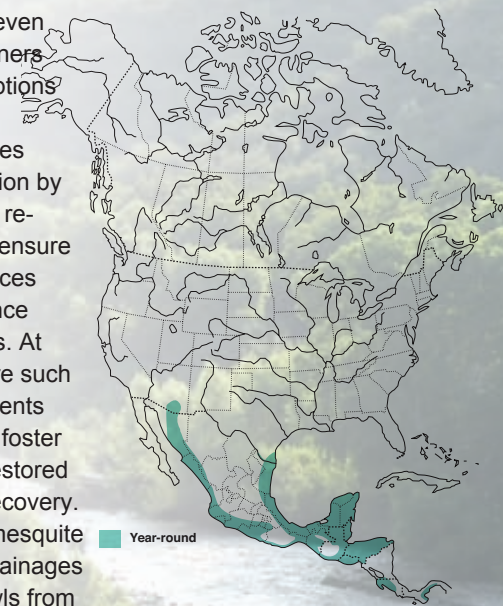
Findings from recent research have important implications for recovery of Pygmy-Owls in Arizona. While managers tend to consider declines due to drought as being beyond our control, high-quality habitat may buffer the effects of drought. Therefore, maintaining and enhancing riparian woodlands and the abundance of potential nest cavities should help because populations in areas with these characteristics have declined less even despite drought. While conservation planners often work with general models or descriptions of habitat as targets for conservation and mitigation, resources at small spatial scales are of enormous importance to reproduction by Pygmy-Owls. Therefore, we may need to re-evaluate these general habitat targets to ensure they are consistent with the actual resources and conditions that promote the persistence and growth of populations of Pygmy-Owls. At larger regional scales, landscape structure such as vegetation disturbance affects movements by Pygmy-Owls. Therefore, linkages that foster dispersal among existing or soon to be restored patches of habitat may be essential for recovery.

Finally, we should consider restoring mesquite woodlands at large scales along major drainages in southern Arizona, and translocating owls from areas in Sonora where we know abundance has been stable or increasing in recent times. Priority sites for translocation will be those that owls have recently occupied or that are now occupied by unpaired owls, and those that have habitat features known to foster high levels of demographic performance by Pygmy-Owls. Experienced adult owls from adjacent Mexico are a better source for bolstering captive populations than juveniles from Arizona, which may be essential for local persistence. Good future prospects for populations of Pygmy-Owls in Arizona will require focus, effort, resources, and public support. ■

Aaron is a Senior Research Specialist at the School of Natural Resources and the Environment at University of Arizona, and a graduate student in the Division of Biological Sciences at University of Montana. You can find more information about his research on the following website: www.aaronflesch.com.



AARON D. FLESCH



Acknowledgements

I thank Scott Richardson of USFWS for contributing information on the status of Pygmy-Owls in Arizona and results on recent recovery efforts. I thank Bob Steidl and Sky Jacobs for contributing to the research reported on here.

Power Lines Threaten Lower San Pedro River

CHESTER F. PHILLIPS, PAUL GREEN, AND CHRIS MCVIE

The Lower San Pedro River valley, an Important Bird Area of Global Significance, is without parallel in the American Southwest. Within the span of a few miles, the Chihuahuan Desert scrub reaches its westernmost limit and folds into the saguaro-dotted hills of the Sonoran Desert. The valley's high biodiversity, including more than 400 bird species, comes from the Rocky Mountains to the north and the Sierra Madre Mountains to the south.

The proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Project, designed to carry power over two 500-kilovolt (kV) lines from central New Mexico to Phoenix and southern California, now threatens this unique area. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is evaluating alternative routes, some of which pass through the Lower San Pedro valley. If constructed, up to 300 sixteen-story towers would run the length of the valley, with an access easement up to 1000 feet wide and access roads to every tower. Vegetation beneath the lines would be cleared.

In addition to the initial access corridor, SunZia's planners have requested that a **one-mile wide** corridor be approved by the BLM for future expansion. It is difficult to conceive of a mile-wide utility corridor along the narrow San Pedro Valley.

What is the biological importance of the San Pedro River Valley?

- It provides a home to the densest population of endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatchers in Arizona, and gives safe haven to the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl and other important bird populations, including Bell's Vireo, Lucy's Warbler, and Gray Hawk.
- Its canyons provide wildlife with water and migration corridors to move between the Rincon and Catalina Mountains to the west and the Galiuro and Winchester Mountains to the east of the valley. With climate change expected to raise area temperatures in coming years, species will be able to



MATT GRIFFITHS

Above: Lower San Pedro Valley. Above right: Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

move upward to cooler ground only if we preserve intact canyon corridors.

- It is one of the most important north-south migratory bird flyways on the North American continent, with more than half of all bird species in the United States making use of the San Pedro valley at one time of year or another.
- Eighty-seven mammal species, the largest number in the continental United States, call the San Pedro valley home. The valley also hosts several threatened and endangered fish species, 65 species of reptiles and amphibians, and 200 species of butterflies.
- Both state and federal agencies and conservation groups hold mitigation lands in the San Pedro valley meant to balance endangered species protection with provision of water to Phoenix from Roosevelt Lake. Utility lines through or near them would compromise the mitigation value of these lands.
- Private land owners have also placed substantial acreage under conservation easements to limit future development. These easements are the result of ongoing collaborative efforts by the valley's rural communities to protect their natural and cultural heritage.

Effects

The BLM holds conservation easements in the valley to protect both archaeological sites and wildlife habitat. A giant utility corridor through the area therefore runs counter to the BLM's own stated conservation goals in the San Pedro watershed. No sufficient mitigation options exist for the damage that new roads and infrastructure development would do to this fragile area.

Studies have found that collisions with towers and power lines are among the top human-related causes of bird mortality in the United States. Construction and maintenance would likely cause substantial erosion and lead to silting of valley streams and the river, threatening endangered fish species like the loach minnow and spikedace. Road embankments would create barriers to the movement of small mammals and reptiles, including the Sonoran Desert Tortoise. Habitat fragmentation would be further exacerbated by increased off-road vehicle use along access roads, bringing increased light, noise, and human presence to previously undisturbed lands. New roads through wild areas often lead to the spread of invasive species that out-compete native plants and animals, further degrading the habitat.



JOHN HOFFMAN

Managing future urban growth

Some planners have predicted that by 2050 a vast metropolitan region will stretch from Prescott to the Mexico Border. The San Pedro watershed is too fragile for urban development, since additional ground water pumping would kill both the river and the habitat it supports. However, if we plan and protect it from threats like SunZia, the lower San Pedro valley can provide wildlife habitat and recreational amenities not far from the urban outskirts.

The long-term protection of this river valley is a top priority for Tucson Audubon. We should not have to choose between renewable energy and intact wildlands. Instead, alternative routes for the SunZia project should be chosen along existing highway corridors, avoiding biologically and culturally sensitive areas like the San Pedro watershed.

What you can do

Educate yourself about the issues, spread the word, and send your opinions to NMSunZiaProject@blm.gov or to Adrian Garcia, Bureau of Land Management, SunZia Transmission Line Project, P.O. Box 27115, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0115; phone 505.438.7424.

www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/more/lands_realty/sunzia_southwest_transmission.html

www.cascabelworkinggroup.org/gpage.html

Chester (Chet) Phillips is a Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona whose research focuses on collaborative conservation planning and protection of instream flows in the lower San Pedro watershed.

Do we need new power transmission lines?

Faced with the degradation of the Lower San Pedro River valley, a rich, intact, natural area, by a power transmission corridor you may be asking yourself, "Do we need these significant new transmission lines?" Why can't we use or upgrade our existing grid? Is it necessary to sacrifice unique natural areas so that people further west can have more energy?

Why do we need to transmit the power over such a distance?

The load centers in New Mexico, Albuquerque and Las Cruces, will tap into the same wind and solar resources as the SunZia project. Analysis by the Western Governors' Association reveals that the area where SunZia begins in New Mexico holds potential for more than 11,000 MW of wind development, exceeding what Albuquerque and Las Cruces can use. These renewable resources, along with the wind and solar available along the SunZia route, will be more attractive to load centers in Tucson, Phoenix, and further on in Las Vegas and California.

While there are renewable resources in those areas too, the pressure which state-mandated Renewable Portfolio Standards place (California = 33% by 2020; Arizona = 15% by 2025; New Mexico = 20% by 2020) on delivering renewables to market will mean building some projects in areas not currently served by transmission lines.

Why not use the current grid?

The current grid is aging, with many power lines more than 40 years old, and already at capacity with electricity from existing generation plants. While we free up capacity in the future by shutting down coal plants, we'll have to get renewable energy plants online to replace them first.

Can we upgrade the current grid to cope? We have opportunities to upgrade the grid in key places, and we are pushing for that in transmission planning processes in Arizona, the west, and across the nation. These are not easy fixes; often transmission lines need to be closed down for months during upgrades. Power that was running on those lines has to reach its destination in the interim and an over-taxed grid limits the opportunities for upgrades. Predicted increases in demand mean that we will need more than upgrades alone can provide. While we think the San Pedro valley should be off limits for utility development, we must work together to identify more acceptable routes. In addition, electricity sells for 50 percent more in California than in New Mexico and Arizona, and demand greater: California imports nearly twice as much electricity as it generates itself.

How do we balance our energy needs with conserving natural areas?

Developing energy supplies from renewable sources like wind and sun offers opportunities to avoid environmental degradation from drilling and mining in wildlands, and carbon dioxide pollution of our atmosphere from fossil fuels.

We need a diverse approach to reach a more sustainable energy future. This will involve:

1. decreasing demand through a combination of conservation, efficiency, and smart grid technologies;
2. distributed generation, like rooftop solar and community wind, which limits transmission needs by creating power where it is used;
3. developing utility-scale wind, solar, and geothermal plants that will replace existing coal-fired power plants.

Renewable resource development is not appropriate everywhere, and we should develop responsibly by using sites closest to load centers and existing infrastructure, and on degraded land. Some new transmission will be needed to access renewable resources in remote locations, and to support renewable energy generation to replace dirty fossil fuels. They will need to be sited and built to minimize environmental impacts.

The goals of preserving our natural areas and developing a clean energy future are possible. To that end, the Wilderness Society has developed a series of principles one of which, *Transmission for the Transition*, provides guidelines on how to avoid impacts to important wildlands, and to support the transport of renewable energy rather than new fossil fuel sources.

We will need to exploit alternative clean energy opportunities, such as incentivizing gains in energy efficiency, requiring demand-side management, or wringing the slack out of the existing grid, to the full to ensure that only truly essential large-scale facilities are constructed. For the SunZia line, the power generation facilities have yet to be built, as their construction is dependent upon the transmission lines being planned. If we build new transmission lines, let's make sure we do so consciously and carefully, avoiding sensitive areas and facilitating access, construction and maintenance. Let's incorporate wildlife linkages and corridors into the design phase to ensure that we do not create barriers to animal movement.

It's obvious, isn't it, that the least environmentally damaging clean energy projects are those that never need to be built. We should always remember, in our personal lives, that saving energy saves lands, and habitats for birds.

Some information courtesy of The Wilderness Society's website, www.wilderness.org/campaigns/energy/renewable-energy-public-lands

Army Corps Cites Pinal County for San Pedro River Violations; Settlement Reached by Conservation Groups

The Arizona Important Bird Area (IBA) program, initiated in 2001 by Tucson Audubon, seeks to protect the state's most important areas for birds. The Lower San Pedro River IBA has been recognized as being of global importance, harboring Bell's Vireo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Gray Hawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Lucy's Warbler.

Tucson Audubon has been involved in this area for more than 20 years through our Riparian Family Institute and our ongoing research documenting this area as an IBA. We have consistently advocated that the lower San Pedro River would best be managed by the USFWS as a National Wildlife Refuge.

We reported in the July–August 2008 *Vermilion Flycatcher* on how Tucson Audubon joined with the Center for Biological Diversity and Maricopa Audubon Society to seek injunctive relief in support of Paul and Sarah Schwennesen's Double Check Ranch conservation easement, held by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The easement, created in 1996, applies to the ranch in its entirety and protects sensitive San Pedro River streamside habitat from cattle grazing and off-road vehicle use.

Pinal County seized easement property by eminent domain, claiming an "emergency," and testifying that it did not "believe BLM will raise any objection to the condemnation proceeding." No emergency existed;



Pinal County heavy machinery caught in action, illegally blading a road across the San Pedro River in designated Critical Habitat for the federally endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

Bureau signs on the property reading "NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES, ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY" refuted the county's testimony. Pinal County then illegally dredged and filled parts of the San Pedro River at this location.

Pinal County violated the Clean Water Act (CWA) by failing to obtain a 404 Permit from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by not consulting with the ACOE and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), prior to blading a road across the San Pedro River in designated Critical Habitat for the federally endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

Though BLM was slow to uphold the conservation easement entrusted to them, the county's action violated

the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution of the United States of America.

BLM filed a complaint with the ACOE and threatened to file a trespass complaint against Pinal County, some months after Pinal County's egregious actions.

The Army Corps of Engineers has cited Pinal County for its illegal activities. Pinal County has agreed to pay the conservation groups' legal fees. We have accomplished the goals of our action. We will follow the Army Corps and the BLM closely as they now assume the proper defense of the preserve. We encourage you to do so too. See www.tucsonaudubon.org for more information on the lower San Pedro River.

Aubrey Valley Wind Farm

By Zen Mocarski, Arizona Game and Fish Department



CHAZZ LAYNE

The Aubrey Valley is a vast area west of Seligman, Arizona, that includes the Aubrey Cliffs, the proposed site for a wind farm. This area has been found to be a major flyway for migratory birds and serves as home to several species of nesting raptors, including the Golden Eagle. While the Arizona Game and Fish Department supports the use of alternative energy, recent studies in the Aubrey Valley area have raised concerns about potential impacts to a number of bird species using this corridor. The AZG&F has submitted four letters since 2005—the first including an attachment regarding background information on the raptors found in the area—and sited the fact that the area is known for raptor migration. In addition, Game and Fish has met with the company to provide input regarding their pre-construction studies. Bat species, also known to migrate from the canyon to the valley area to forage, may also be impacted. It is believed the prairie dog population, along with jackrabbits and cottontails, provides a strong hunting ground in the valley for raptors.

Other notable raptors of interest in the area include Ferruginous Hawks, Peregrine Falcons, Rough-legged Hawks, Swainson's Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harriers and American Kestrels. While Bald Eagles have also been spotted in the area, the Golden Eagle is most often associated with the cliffs because of the strong thermals and multiple perching and nesting sites. Aubrey Valley also serves as home to the endangered black-footed ferret.

Tucson Audubon urges members to contact USFWS (Flagstaff regional office) and Coconino County Development Services to voice their concerns about this project.

We can't let environmentalists run and ruin this economy. *John McCain*

Visiting Sahuarita in January, Senator John McCain heard that the Rosemont Mine was unpopular for many reasons, not least of which were the issues of water around the mine (more on this in a

future *Flycatcher*). Last month, in a response to questions from Pima County Supervisor Ray Carroll, McCain replied, "Frankly, I'm sorry, but we can't let the environmentalists run and ruin this economy."

McCain added that he could not reject the proposal because of its job creation potential.

Visit www.scenicantaritas.org to stay up to date with developments on the Rosemont Mine.

Kathy Jacobs Earns White House Appointment



Tucson Audubon knows Kathy Jacobs as a member and a birder (and member of the "AveVentura" Birdathon team), and we have long valued her expertise and insight on issues related to water policy and conservation. She has often brought her broad and diverse knowledge to bear on advising and bringing clarity to the NGO community on issues related to water policy.

Kathy has been honored by an appointment within the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), which has the broad mandate to advise the President on the effects of science and technology on domestic and international affairs. We congratulate her!

Kathy took up her new post as OSTP's Assistant Director for Climate Adaptation and Assessment within

the office's Energy and Environment Division on January 4, 2010 while retaining her position as a professor in the Department of Soil, Water, and Environmental Science at the University of Arizona. While in Washington, D.C., she will work with the U.S. Global Change Research Program agencies and others to help coordinate climate assessment and adaptation strategies and activities.

Kathy has worked on drought and climate change issues since 1998, serving on the National Assessment Synthesis Team during the Clinton administration and helped write the water sector chapter for the first report under the U.S. Global Change Research Act. She has served on numerous other climate and assessment-related National Academy panels. Most recently chairing a panel on Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change, due to be released in the next few months.

For four years, she served as deputy director of Sustainability of semi-Arid Region Hydrology and Riparian Areas, or SAHRA, a National Science Foundation science and technology center located at the University of Arizona. Kathy directed

the Arizona Department of Water Resources' Tucson office from 1988 to 2001, where she helped establish groundwater rights, conservation programs for agriculture, industry and municipal water users and rules that provide for assured water supplies for new residential development.

Kathy has a long and distinguished career in the fields of water policy and climate change adaptation while working to bridge the gap between academic research and real-world decision-making. Most recently, she helped build the Arizona Water Institute, serving as its director from 2006 until it was dissolved last summer. The institute was a collaborative effort of Arizona's three universities to help solve water sustainability and water quality issues in the state.

Kathy commented, "Climate issues are very significant for this administration and there is a broad objective of limiting the emissions of greenhouse gases as well as supporting state and local efforts to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate."

We wish her well in her new endeavor!

Tucson Audubon to Move?

For a number of years, Tucson Audubon has been looking at alternative venues for its offices and main shop. Some benefits of an alternative location would include natural habitat, opportunities for hosting more events, improved parking, decreased rental costs, and being closer to core concentrations of members.

We are currently evaluating a County-owned property on the north bank of the Rillito River on the west side of Craycroft Road, just south of River Road. If you have comments on the suitability or otherwise of this location we would like to hear from you, especially if you would be more or less likely to visit us at this location, either to use the Nature Shop there, or to attend events.

Please send comments to Herb Trossman herbtrossman@gmail.com or Paul Green pgreen@tucsonaudubon.org.

Cuts at the City of Tucson

Among those included in the 80 or more staff reductions at the City of Tucson were David Schaller and Jamie Brown, both with the Office of Conservation and Sustainable Development. David Schaller was the staff lead on the City of Tucson's Advisory Committee on Climate Change and was responsible for designing a comprehensive energy efficiency strategy for the City of Tucson, building upon funding from the US Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant. David worked with Jane Pointer to establish The Local Trust, with whom Tucson Audubon is partnering to accept offset payments to establish urban forestry projects.

Jamie Brown has been leading the development of the City of Tucson's Habitat Conservation Plan. Tucson Audubon members will remember Jamie as being responsible for the Mason Center some years ago. ■

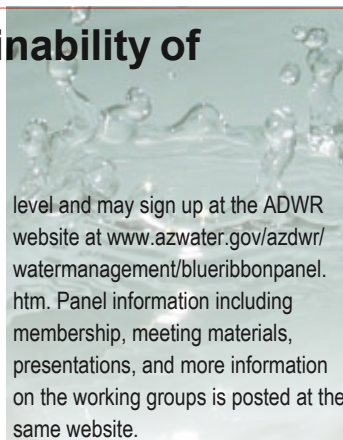
Blue Ribbon Panel Addresses Sustainability of Arizona's Water Supply

By Linda Stitzer

A Blue Ribbon Panel on Water Sustainability has been meeting monthly in Phoenix since January to develop strategies to improve the long-term sustainability of Arizona's water supplies through increased conservation, recycling and reuse of reclaimed water. The panel, formed in August 2009 by Governor Jan Brewer, is co-chaired by Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) Director Herb Guenther, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) Director Ben Grumbles, and Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) Chairman Kris Mayes. The panel consists of 40 members representing legislative leadership, state agencies,

federal, local, city, and tribal governments, universities, and private utilities. The only panel member from the environmental community is Brenda Burman of The Nature Conservancy.

At the February 5th meeting the panel further discussed its goals and the formation of 5 working groups that will develop water sustainability recommendations. The groups are: 1) Public Perception/Acceptance; 2) Regulations and Permitting; 3) Infrastructure Retrofit; 4) Water Conservation/Recycling/Efficiency/Energy Nexus; and 5) Economic/Funding. The public is invited to participate at the working-group



level and may sign up at the ADWR website at www.azwater.gov/azdwr/watermanagement/blueribbonpanel.htm. Panel information including membership, meeting materials, presentations, and more information on the working groups is posted at the same website.

The panel is to produce an interim report by the June 2010 meeting that will be a compilation of working group progress on identifying issues, priorities and solutions, with a final report due November 2010. The final report may include recommendations for changes to policies and rules and/or propose legislation.

TUCSON AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

DARLENE SMYTH | FIELD TRIP COORDINATOR

GOING NORTH TO:

Do you live way north of Tucson, want to bird with Tucson Audubon, but find it to be frustrating because trips seem to always head south, making it difficult for you to meet for early carpooling? The Field Trip Leaders are making a real effort to include our valued northern members at least once per month as we offer “**Going North to:**” trips. Please look for these trips to be listed each month and, if you like the idea, please encourage the leaders by dropping them a note.

March

March 2—Tuesday 6 AM

Patagonia Lake State Park

We'll look for waterbirds, flycatchers, gnatcatchers and whatever else we can find. We'll walk a couple of miles on mostly level but not always clearly delineated trails. Expect mud, so wear appropriate footwear. Bring lunch and park fee or pass. We may visit other sites in Patagonia and/or Nogales as well. Meet at the Fry's at Irvington and I-19 at 6 AM or at the Green Valley McDonald's (Continental Road Exit) before 6:30 AM. 140 miles roundtrip. Leader: Dave Dunford (571-0535) or ddunford@dakotacom.net



March 6—Saturday 9 AM to 10:30 AM

Sweetwater Wetlands Family Outing Series (first Saturday of every month)

Do you enjoy sharing the joy of outdoor activities with your children or grandchildren? A new series of monthly field trips will connect children (ages 4–14) and their families with ecology, nature, conservation and BIRDS! Join Tucson Audubon and Sunnyside School District's Student Urban Naturalists as they provide guided and independent activities for families. Join the activities anytime between 9 and 10:30 AM. A parent or grandparent must accompany each child present. Leader: Deborah Vath at dvath@hotmail.com or 490-4835

March 7—Sunday 8 AM

Native Seeds / SEARCH (NS/S) Farm in Patagonia

NS/S farmer, Chris Lowen will give us a short tour of the farm where Native Seeds/ SEARCH grows out the seeds in its collection. Along the way we'll enjoy the many species of birds that visit the farm located just north of Patagonia proper. After our



Native Seeds / SEARCH Farm in Patagonia

NATIVE SEEDS / SEARCH

tour we'll explore a short section of new trail that passes through the farm, and then head over to Patons' to view the feeders and enjoy our lunch. Back to Tucson by 2 PM. Limited to 15 birders. Please contact the leader, Vivian MacKinnon, at arcvivian@yahoo.com or 323-6452 to sign up.

March 9—Tuesday 7 AM

Going North to: Catalina State Park

We'll welcome in Bell's Vireos and Lucy's Warblers with a visit to this park that combines a great mix of desert, riparian, and foothill habitats. We'll be going on dirt trails with some up-and-down walking, so wear sturdy footwear. Bring a lunch. Done by 2 PM. Meet at Tucson Audubon carpool site #1 (commuter parking lot one block west of Ina & Oracle, south side). State park fee area, so bring your pass if you've got one. Leader: Larry Liese (743-3520) larryliese@prodigy.net

March 14—Sunday 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM

SPECIAL EVENT!

Bird with Jon Dunn at Sweetwater Wetlands

Jon Dunn, one of the chief editors of National Geographic's *Field Guide to the Birds of North America* (he actually wrote nearly the entire book) is in town for a book-signing at the Tucson Festival of Books (U of A) and has generously agreed to meet in the field with local birders for a few hours of relaxed birding. Bring along your field guide and he will be happy to sign it. Meet in the parking lot of Sweetwater Wetlands to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to meet this author, lecturer, and senior tour guide for WINGS. Leader: Jon Dunn. Contact person: Darlene Smyth dsmyth3@comcast.net

For the latest or expanded field trip information

visit www.tucsonaudubon.org or call us at 520-629-0510

General Information

Tucson Audubon field trips are free. For general information call field trip coordinator Darlene Smyth 297-2315. For specific information about a trip, contact the leader of that trip. Please dress appropriately for your field trip. Always wear sturdy shoes, a hat, and use sun protection. Bring plenty of snacks and water for yourself. Always bring your binoculars, field guide, and for most trips a scope can be useful. Bring money to cover your share of the carpooling and any required entry fees (eg for state parks).

Arrival Times

Please arrive before listed departure times. Trips will leave promptly at the time given.

Carpooling Sites

- 1 NW Tucson: Ina and Via Ponte—commuter parking lot one block west of Oracle and Ina, south side of Ina.
- 2 SW Tucson: I-19 and Irvington—Fry's parking lot.
- 3 Green Valley: I-19 and Continental Rd exit 63—McDonald's parking lot.
- 4 NE Tucson: Tanque Verde Rd/ Catalina Hwy—McDonald's parking lot.

Tucson Audubon strongly encourages carpooling and for some trips it may be required. Check the trip listings for meeting/ carpooling sites. You are expected to reimburse the driver for the actual cost of fuel. Drivers and trip leaders are not expected to contribute.

Rare Bird Alert

Listen to the latest rare bird alert at 798-1005. Report rare birds to the RBA compiler at 798-1005 or rarebirdalert@tucsonaudubon.org

After Your Field Trip

Don't forget to stop in the Tucson Audubon Nature Shop to check out new books, see wonderful nature items, and chat with volunteers.



SARA PIKE

DON'T FORGET TO STOP IN OUR NATURE SHOP FOR YOUR FIELD AND ID GUIDES, AND OTHER BIRDING SUPPLIES.

**March 16—Tuesday 6:30 AM
Tubac Black-Hawk Liftoff**

A well known annual event, join Tucson Audubon for one of southeastern Arizona's marquee avian highlights. We'll watch for migratory Common Black-Hawks (and other raptors) lifting off from and soaring over the forest along the Santa Cruz River from the Tubac bridge. A walk north of the bridge will complete the morning. Meet at 6:30 AM at the Fry's on Irvington and I-19 (leader not present) or at the Green Valley McDonald's on Continental Road at 7 AM. Back by noonish. Roundtrip of 100 miles. Leader: Clifford A. Cathers AZCliffy@q.com



ROBERT SHANTZ



**March 20—Saturday 7 AM
Tubac Bridge**

Celebrate spring by walking along the De Anza trail looking for migrating raptors, especially Black- and Gray Hawks. Easy pace on uneven dirt trail. Meet at 7 AM at the Fry's parking lot on Irvington just east of I-19 or at 7:30 AM at the Green Valley McDonald's. Done before noon. Round-trip of 100 miles. Leader: John Higgins 578-1830, jghiggins@comcast.net



**March 23—Tuesday 7 AM
Mt. Lemmon Life Zones—Desert to Mt. Lemmon**

Bird five life zones in one day! Meet at McDonald's at Tanque Verde and Catalina Hwy at 7 AM. About 60 miles roundtrip. Leader: Richard Carlson rccarl@pacbell.net

**March 27—Saturday 6:30 AM
Esperero Canyon: Botany and Birds**

Tucson Audubon and the Arizona Native Plant Society jointly host this field trip to a dramatic, limited-access canyon. We will be looking for resident and migrant birds, spring wildflowers and other unique vegetation of the lower Santa Catalina Mountains. Tucson Audubon owns 15 acres here, between Ventana and Sabino Canyons. Done by noon. Mileage negligible from meeting place. Limit of 20 participants, who must be sure-footed enough to do negotiate the rocky canyon bottom. Contact leader to sign up and learn where to meet.



KENDALL KROESEN

Leaders: Kendall Kroesen 971-2385, kkroesen@tucsonaudubon.org, Frank Rose, and Jim Verrier.

**March 27—Saturday TBA
Tucson Audubon Young Birders Club Field Trip Destination: TBD**

The destination of this trip will be decided by the Young Birders Club members. More information may be found by checking www.tucsonaudubon.org/fieldtrips.html, or contact one of the leaders listed below. Subsequent trips are planned for the fourth Saturday of each month. Those with an interest in birds, from age 8 to 18, are invited to come along. Leaders: Robert Payne vermilion233@hotmail.com 867-0490. Scott Olmstead sparverius81@hotmail.com 840-9567

**March 27—Saturday 11 AM
Beginning Birding at Sweetwater Wetlands**

If you have always wanted to try birding, now is your chance! We will chat about anything that interests you about birds. The leader will have a scope for viewing some of the more cooperative birds. At the end there will be an opportunity for those who so desire to accompany the leader to the Nature Shop to try out some binoculars and birding equipment. Register with the leader for specifics and to determine if you will need loaner binoculars. Leader: Darlene Smyth 297-2315 dsmyth3@comcast.net

**March 30—Tuesday 6:45 AM
Going North to: Boyce Thompson Arboretum**

This trip will include a leisurely walk around the beautiful and usually birdy grounds of Boyce Thompson Arboretum State Park. Wintering birds and migrants are possible. We may visit one or more locations in Pinal County on the way back to Tucson, possibly including Oak Flats Campground and Kearny Lake. Late afternoon return. Bring State Park pass if you have one. Limited to 11 participants in three vehicles. About 200 miles roundtrip. Sign up with leader Philip Kline beginning March 15. pgkline_uk@yahoo.com 419-5086



April

**April 3—Saturday 6 AM
Benson Birding Trail, St David Monastery**

This trail can have some exciting birds and the property abuts the San Pedro River. Come explore and enjoy this fairly short trail, then off to St David Monastery to enjoy more riparian habitat. We will return to Benson and check out the Wilcox Wastewater Treatment Plant. Bring snacks and lunch. Meet at Houghton Road just north of I-10 to carpool at 6 AM. (Leader not present) or at 6:30 AM at the Safeway parking lot in Benson. Take exit



Tucson Audubon Young Birders Club field trip

KENDALL KROESEN

303 off I-10, drive about 1 mile south; Safeway and Wendy's are on the right. Approx. 100 miles roundtrip from Tucson. Leader: Lainie Epstein Lainie95us@yahoo.com 720-8976

**April 3—Saturday
Sweetwater Wetlands Family Outing Series (first Saturday of every month)**

Rescheduled to April 10 this month only due to the school's spring break.

**April 6—Tuesday 5:30 AM
Madera Canyon Environs**

Heck, it's always a good idea to visit this jewel of southeastern Arizona (and on a Sunday for something different)! We'll start in the low desert, climb through the grasslands, check the Proctor Road area and end up in the canyon for a morning sampling of spring's progression. Meet at 5:30 AM at the Fry's on Irvington and I-19 (leader not present) or at the McDonald's in Green Valley at 6 AM. About 90 miles roundtrip from Tucson. Leader: Clifford A. Cathers AZCliffy@q.com



**April 10—Saturday 9 AM to 10:30 AM
Sweetwater Wetlands Family Outing Series (changed to 2nd Saturday in April due to Spring Break)**

Do you enjoy sharing the joy of outdoor activities with your children or grandchildren? A new series of monthly field trips will connect children (ages 4-14) and their families with ecology, nature, conservation and BIRDS! Join Tucson Audubon and Sunnyside School District's Student Urban Naturalists as they provide guided and independent activities for families. Join the activities anytime between 9 and 10:30 AM. A parent or grandparent must accompany each child present. Leader: Deborah Vath at dvath@hotmail.com or 490-4835

**April 10—Saturday 7 AM
Pima Canyon**

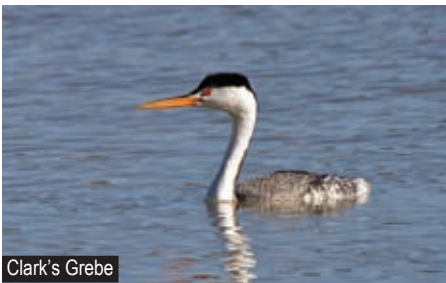
Scenic Pima Canyon, in the Santa Catalina Mountains, is popular with hikers. It also holds much of interest to birders. We'll have the opportunity to observe residents of the Sonoran Desert, as well as migrants. We'll ascend the canyon to at least the "First Dam" and possibly higher. The trail is rocky and of uneven tread. There may be wet stream-crossings. Return by

TUCSON AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS



Pima Canyon

KENDALL KROESEN



Clark's Grebe

JAMES PRUDENTE

2 PM. Contact the leader for further details and to sign up. Leader: Ethan Beasley 300-0049 ethanbeasley@yahoo.com

April 13—Tuesday 8 AM IBA Sabino Canyon



We will walk trails and paved roads looking for typical desert birds and spring migrants. May walk up to 3 miles and will finish by lunch time. USFS fee area. Meet inside the parking lot close to the entrance booth. Limited to 10 participants so please contact the leader Mary Ellen Flynn me.flynn@comcast.net 797-1743.

April 17—Saturday 6 AM

Going North to: San Carlos Lake

When it is full San Carlos L., located on the San Carlos Apache lands east of Globe, is one of the largest lakes in Arizona. It is home to a large year-round population of *aechmophorous* grebes. We'll look for waterfowl, waders, early shorebirds, gulls, and possibly a few Bald Eagles. Most of the traveling will be by car, but there may be some walking to get nearer to mudflats. Expect mud so wear appropriate footwear. Bring lunch, \$10 each for day pass onto the reservation, and scope if you have one. Trip is limited to 12. Sign-up will begin April 1. About 220 miles roundtrip. Leader: Doug Jenness (909-1529) or d_jenness@hotmail.com

April 20—Tuesday 7:30 AM

Going North to: Honeybee Canyon

We will walk for 2+ hours in Honeybee Canyon in sometimes heavy sand looking for familiar desert and canyon birds and hopefully some



MATT GRIFFITHS

Honeybee Canyon

visiting migrants. A Great Horned Owl has nested under the bridge for the last several years. Special attention will be given to beginning birders. Honeybee Canyon is located 3 miles west of Oracle Road on Rancho Vistoso Blvd. in Oro Valley. The park and parking lot are on the south side (left) of Rancho Vistoso Blvd. There are no signs into the park. After crossing the bridge over Honeybee Canyon, make a U-turn at the first interchange and proceed back over the bridge into the parking lot. Leader: Dick Sauer sweetsauers@yahoo.com

April 24—Saturday TBA

Tucson Audubon Young Birders Club Field Trip Destination: TBD

The destination of this trip will be decided by the Young Birders Club members. More information may be found by checking www.tucsonaudubon.org/fieldtrips.html, or contact one of the leaders listed below. Subsequent trips are planned for the fourth Saturday of each month. Those with an interest in birds, from age 8 to 18, are invited to come along. Leaders: Robert Payne vermillion233@hotmail.com 867-0490; Scott Olmstead sparverius81@hotmail.com 840-9567

April 24 to 26—Saturday–Monday Saracachi Ciénega and Rancho La Brisca, Mexico

Tom Van Devender (Arizona Native Plant Society, Sky Island Alliance) and Robin Baxter (Tucson Audubon) will lead a camping trip in the Saracachi Ciénega and Rancho La Brisca area near Cucurpe, Sonora on April 24 to 26. They will visit a few cultural areas, do some birding and some botanizing in scenic areas. Observations will go into SIA's Madrean Archipelago Biodiversity Assessment (MABA) database (Madrean.org/maba/symbfauna/). For more information contact Tom (yecora4@comcast.net, 887-6401). Registration is limited to 20 campers.

April 27—Tuesday 6 AM

Mt. Lemmon

Meet at 6 AM in the parking lot at the NE corner of Tanque Verde and the Catalina Highway. Bring lunch, water, and a pass for the national forest. We'll bird our way slowly up, from Mexican birds at the bottom to Canadian birds at the top.

Many of the breeding birds should be back and many migrants will be coming through, so it is an exciting time to go up the mountain. About 60 miles roundtrip. Back by 2 PM. Leader: Bob Bates 296-5629; batesr@cox.net

May

May 1—Saturday 7 AM

Century Run

Have you ever seen 100 bird species in a day? If not, maybe you'd like to join Larry as he celebrates, leading his 100th Tucson Audubon field trip with a Birdathon event, trying to see 100 bird species. It'll be a more-the-merrier event that should be lots of fun! To accomplish our goal we'll keep moving, but at an unhurried pace. Some easy trail walking involved. We'll start at Sweetwater Wetlands and make a loop south to Madera, Rio Rico, then up to the Patagonia area. Participants are expected to get \$100 in Birdathon pledges to attend. Tucson Audubon will be providing refreshments at our finish in Patagonia. To sign up, contact Jean Barchman or Erin Olmstead of Tucson Audubon at 622-5622. Leader: Larry Liese

May 1—Saturday 9 AM to 10:30 AM

Sweetwater Wetlands Family Outing Series (first Saturday of every month)

Do you enjoy sharing the joy of outdoor activities with your children or grandchildren? A new series of monthly field trips will connect children (ages 4–14) and their families with ecology, nature, conservation and BIRDS! Join Tucson Audubon and Sunnyside School District's Student Urban Naturalists as they provide guided and independent activities for families. Join the activities anytime between 9 and 10:30 AM. A parent or grandparent must accompany each child present. Leader, Deborah Vath at dvath@hotmail.com or 490-4835

May 4—Tuesday 4:30 AM

Fort Huachuca

Birding on foot in some of the canyons on Fort Huachuca. Because the Army limits the number of participants on the trails, this trip will be limited to twelve participants (including the leader) in three high-clearance vehicles. Contact the leader by email to reserve a place. All participants must have a government-issued picture ID, and all drivers must have drivers license, car registration, and proof-of-insurance. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please let the leader know when you make your reservation. Be prepared to hike on rough rocky trails that are steep in places. Bring lunch. 160 miles round trip. Leader: Jim Hays jhays@iname.com (preferred) or 895-3299

BIRDING TRAVEL FROM OUR BUSINESS PARTNERS

ADVENTURE BIRDING COMPANY

www.adventurebirding.com
info@adventurebirding.com • 495-0229

Big Bend National Park: West Texas Birds and Scenery. April 28–May 2, 2010, \$1065. Leaders: John Yerger and/or Keith Kamper. Big Bend is perhaps the most remote birding hotspot in the United States, and hosts spectacular scenery. This is the only place in the U.S. to find Colima Warbler, our main target. Ideal for those desiring lots of birds on limited vacation time. Painted Buntings and Golden-fronted Woodpeckers are among the other goodies we'll seek on this fun-filled adventure!

South Texas: Specialties and Migrants in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. April 3–11, 2010, \$1890. Leaders: John Yerger and/or Keith Kamper. Join us in "the other" premier U.S. birding destination, with guides who have lived and birded there. With specialties like Great Kiskadee, Green Jay and Altamira Oriole, how can you miss? We'll sample all habitats from tidal mudflats to subtropical thornscrub to prime Chihuahuan Desert. Visit both classic hotspots and lesser-known local secrets for rarer residents like Clay-colored Robin and Hook-billed Kite. This trip is timed to catch loads of spring migrants, and probably a few Mexican rarities!

NATURE TREKS AND PASSAGES

www.naturetreks.net
info@naturetreks.net • 781-789-8127

Rancho Esmeralda Birding and Nature Weekend. April 2–5, 2010, Join Pinau Merlin and Larry Liese for 4 pleasurable days of exploring the beauty and diversity of Rancho Esmeralda in Sonora, Mexico. During the bountiful spring season, we'll enjoy birds, plants, butterflies, reptiles, amphibians, and other wildlife on our daily hikes and night walks. Includes transportation, 3 nights at the Rancho Esmeralda Lodge, all meals and guides. \$1049.00 pp.

Alaska: Birding from Denali to the Sea. June 7–17, 2010. Tour several of Alaska's prime birding spots: Anchorage, Denali National Park, Denali Highway, and the Kenai Peninsula including Seward. Anticipate seeing a number of bird species and hopefully all of the "Big 5" large mammals - grizzlies, caribou, Dall sheep, moose, and wolves. June is a spectacular month to view Alaska's returning and breeding birds, along with the early vibrant blooming summer flowers. \$4399.00 pp.

RANCHO ESMERALDA

www.ranchoesmeraldanogales.com
326-9686 ext. 19

SOLIPASO TOURS

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Sonora in the Spring and Summer! Solipaso is offering several departures to Sonora this spring and summer. Having lived in and lead trips throughout Sonora for the last 15 years, we can offer our guests the most in depth, thorough,

interesting trips to this region, combined with great birds, and the best food and lodging anywhere in Sonora. In Alamos, we stay at our own hotel, El Pedregal Nature Lodge, where you can sit in the shade of your portal and enjoy the birds and the beautiful natural setting. Leader: David Mackay. See such birds as Elegant Quail, Black-throated Magpie Jay, Mexican Parrotlet, Blue Mockingbird, Russet-crowned Motmot and many more. Upcoming departure to Alamos: April 8–13, \$1500. Check the website for additional 2010 dates

Yucatan Endemics and Biospheres. October 9–17, 2010. \$2800. Leaders: David and Jennifer Mackay. This new itinerary to the Yucatan Peninsula focuses on the endemics and other rarities of the region, most of which are found within the vast biosphere reserves that have been established to protect the rich natural habitat of the Yucatan. Starting in Cancun, we visit botanical gardens, Tulum ruins, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Sian Ka Biosphere, Laguna Bacalar, Calakmul biosphere and ruins, Sabancuy wetlands, Campeche, Celestun biosphere and end our trip with a night outside of Merida. We will offer a pre-trip extension to Cozumel for the island endemics. Contact us for more information and a detailed itinerary.

TROPICAL BIRDING

www.tropicalbirding.com
info@tropicalbirding.com • 1-800-348-5941

Eastern Ecuador: High Andes to Vast Amazon. March 5–19, 2010. \$3690 from Quito. Starting from the magnificent high Andes dotted with snow-capped volcanoes towering over 18,000 ft, we head all the way down to the ultra-diverse Amazon lowlands. Well over 1,000 bird species occur in this region, but we can see them in comfort as we stay in some of the best lodges in Ecuador,

including San Isidro, Wild Sumaco, and Sacha Lodge which has the only canopy walkway in the country. Tropical Birding's main office is in Quito, so we know this wonderful country like no one else, and our tour leaders are second to none.

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(512) 328-5221 • info@ventbird.com

North Carolina. May 29–June 5, 2010; \$2,795 in double occupancy from Wilmington. Our first-ever North Carolina tour focuses on specialty landbirds and waterbirds of the southeastern United States. We'll search hardwood swamps and pine forests for such prizes as Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Swainson's Warbler and Bachman's Sparrow. On the famed Outer Banks we should see a diversity of coastal specialties such as Piping Plover, Sandwich Tern, and Seaside Sparrow. Two pelagic trips into the Gulf Stream should produce up to 10 species of seabirds, including Black-capped Petrel, and possibly other oceanic creatures such as dolphins, whales, sea turtles, and sharks. Michael O'Brien, co-author of the acclaimed Shorebird Guide, and one of the continent's top field observers, leads.

Grand Alaska: Gambell/Nome. June 2–10, 2010; \$4,295 in double occupancy from Anchorage. Early June is the best time to visit these remote outposts. Highlights include cliffs filled with nesting seabirds, and lakes, ponds, and arctic tundra hosting raptors, shorebirds, jaegers, buntings, longspurs, and more. The spectacle of thousands of breeding and migrating birds makes for one of North America's most sensational birding experiences. Bristle-thighed Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Bluethroat, Eastern Yellow Wagtail, Arctic Warbler, and Northern Wheatear, are specialty birds found nowhere else. Other attractions include spectacular scenery and chances for moose, caribou, and musk ox. Kevin Zimmer and David Wolf lead. ■



This leucistic Vermilion Flycatcher enchanted and entertained many viewers at Hidden Pond in Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson. First reported on December 26, 2009, it was still present towards the end of February.

THE TAS-IFIEDS CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified and display ads are accepted from individual members and members of our Birds & Business Alliance. Visit tucsonaudubon.org/vfly for rates or contact Matt Griffiths mgriffiths@tucsonaudubon.org to book an ad.

BIRDING BUDDIES Looking for three people for a March 8–21, 2010 trip to Cana in the Darien Province of Panama. Please contact Sue Kozacek at 520-979-9100.

EDUCATION SUPPORT SPECIALIST NEEDED BY TUCSON AUDUBON. We seek a part-time (20h/week) person to support our growing education program. The successful applicant will assist in the coordination of administrative aspects of our environmental education program classes and events. You can find a full job description and application instructions on our website at www.tucsonaudubon.org.

EL PEDREGAL Nature Lodge—Alamos, Sonora, Mexico—Five luxurious guest casitas and central lodge set on 20 acres of intact tropical deciduous forest. Delicious regional cuisine, unrivaled local knowledge and warm hospitality. Birding tours, river trips, yoga classes and more available. Special Tucson Audubon package available. For more information: www.solipaso.com

THE OASIS AT WAY OUT WEST B&B/Private Nature Preserve. A secluded trail side location offers close-up wildlife observation and colorful mountain sunsets. Bird our trails (135+ House List) or the Catalinas. 20+ feeding stations, Naturalist/Photographer on-site, Wi-Fi, Hydrotherapy spas, Bike rentals, Eco-Excursions. WOWarizona.com. 520.825.4590.

PATAGONIA BIRDING INVESTMENT. Arizona birder seeks business partners for joint ownership of a significant Patagonia-based birding location. Please send your contact details to Paul Green pgreen@tucsonaudubon.org, Executive Director of Tucson Audubon, who will forward the information to the interested party.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED: The Arizona Important Bird Area Program had a great database volunteer, but no longer. So, we could again use help with the data management side of our AZ IBA Program? Do you like to learn about what birds were seen where, across our Arizona IBA survey network and all the species specific data collected? Then the AZ IBA Program could use help with IBA bird survey data entry at the TAS-IBA office possibly one day a week (3 hours, Tuesday or Thursday afternoon would be ideal). You must have a willingness to delve into the technical language of ornithological surveys and be open to learning our database structure and codes. Call Scott Wilbor, AZ IBA Program Conservation Biologist, at (520) 628-1730 to help.

JOIN TUCSON AUDUBON AT THE SECOND ANNUAL TUCSON FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

Saturday, March 13 and Sunday, March 14 on the University of Arizona Campus

The Tucson Festival of Books is a celebration of literacy, where authors gather to speak about their work and sign books. This free event features writing workshops, panel presentations, children's activities, storytelling, artists, musicians, and a food court. The 2010 Festival promises to be even bigger and better than last year's, with more than 400 authors and a wide range of both local and national book vendors, including our Tucson Audubon Nature Shop. In addition, a number of this year's events will focus specifically on promoting environmental literacy. A sampling of events is listed below. For a full schedule visit tucsonfestivalofbooks.org.

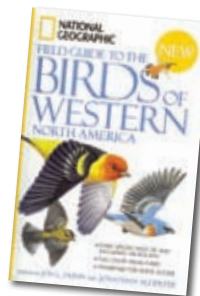


Saturday, March 13

11:30–12:30 AM "Unquenchable: America's Water Crisis and What To Do About It", featuring author Robert Glennon, Professor of Law and Public Policy at the University of Arizona.

1–2 PM Book signing with Jon Dunn at the Tucson Audubon Booth. Dunn was chief

consultant to the National Geographic Society's *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, as well as host and editor of *Hummingbirds of North America*, and co-writer and host of the two-video set *Large and Small Gulls of North America*.



2:30–3:30 PM "Birds and Birding I, Field Guides Past, Present and Future", with Elizabeth Rosenthal, *Birdwatcher: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson*, and Jon Dunn, chief consultant for the

National Geographic *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, 5th Edition.

4–5 PM Book signing with Elizabeth Rosenthal at the Tucson Audubon Booth.

Rosenthal's *Birdwatcher: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson* has been described by birding guru Kenn Kaufman as a "wonderful biography, bold and surprising and lively, crackling with the adventures of the man who did more than anyone else to create the modern popularity of birdwatching."



Sunday, March 14

1–2 PM Book signing with Lynn Hassler at the Tucson Audubon Booth. Hassler, a

volunteer coordinator at the Tucson Botanical Gardens, has been birding for over 25 years. Her most recent book is *The Raven: Soaring through History, Legend & Lore*, and she is the co-author of *Hot Pots: Container Gardening in the Arid Southwest*. Hassler's other books include *Roadrunners*, *Gambel's Quail*, *Birds of the American Southwest*, and *Hummingbirds of the American West*.



2:30–3:30 PM "Birds and Birding II, Writing about Birds," with Stacey O'Brien, *Wesley the Owl, The Remarkable Love Story of an Owl and His Girl*; Lynn Hassler, *The Raven: Soaring Through History, Legend, & Lore*; and Sheri Williamson, *A Field Guide to Hummingbirds of North America*.

All the books pictured here are available for sale at the Nature Shops. ■

WANTED: VOLUNTEER GARDEN

COORDINATOR to manage the Mason Center gardens including irrigation maintenance, pruning, replacement planting, mulching and other tasks as agreed upon with Mason Facilities Coordinator. Must be experienced in Sonoran Desert, native plant gardening and willing to work under the sustainability principles promoted by Tucson Audubon. Must be able to work at the site at least one day a week throughout the year. Contact Lia at 971-6238 or lsansom@tucsonaudubon.org for more information and to apply. ■



Rainwater harvesting cisterns at the Mason Center

KENDALL KROESEN

TUCSON AUDUBON'S BIRDS & BUSINESS ALLIANCE



Tucson Audubon thanks our Birds & Business Alliance Members, who have shown their support for bird conservation through annual contributions and in-kind donations. **Please show them you appreciate their support for us by supporting them.** Please choose these progressive companies when you need a service. Visit www.tucsonaudubon.org for more information about our Birds & Business Alliance members, including links to their websites.

STERLING

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Nature Treks & Passages
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Rancho Esmeralda • 326-9686
• www.ranchoesmeraldanogales.com
Solipaso Tours • www.solipaso.com
Tropical Birding • 800-348-5941
• www.tropicalbirding.com
Victor Emanuel Nature Tours
• 800-328-VENT • www.ventbirds.com

SILVER

*Loews Ventana Canyon
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The Oasis at Way Out West
• 520-825-4590 • www.wowarizona.com
Snell & Wilmer • www.swlaw.com
Tucson Electric Power • www.tep.com

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Bed & Bagels of Tucson • 520-760-5595
Lou Benson Construction • 520-797-1237
Brooklyn Pizza Company • 520-622-6868
Buffalo Exchange • 520-795-0508
Casa Adobe B&B in Rodeo, NM • 877-577-2275
Casa de San Pedro B&B • www.bedandbirds.com
Coyote Wore Sideburns • 520-623-7341
Desert Toyota of Tucson • 520-296-8535
Down By the River B&B • 520-720-9441
Economy Birding Services • 520-762-3201
El Conquistador Resort Patio Homes Association
Farhang & Medcoff, PLLC
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Fiore Tile Works • 520-971-0677
Greenfire Ecological Landscaping • 520-429-7306
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Hughes Federal Credit Union • 520-794-8341
Kimberlyn Drew, Realtor • 520-237-1408
Lori Pascarella, Financial Consultant • 520-747-6167
Naturalist Journeys • 866-900-1146
Ravens-Way Wild Journeys • 520-425-6425
Riverpark Inn • 800-551-1466
Salt River Project
San Carlos Aquatic Adventures
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Spirit Tree Inn B&B • 520-394-0121
Sundance Press • 800-528-4827
TyrannoTours • 520-577-6546
The Lodge at Ventana Canyon
Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson • 520-795-995

*New member

Please welcome our newest Birds & Business Alliance Member



LOEWS VENTANA CANYON has partnered with the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson Botanical Gardens, Friends of Sabino Canyon, and now Tucson Audubon Society to create an on-property educational nature trail featuring a hummingbird and butterfly exhibit and indigenous plant life, with guest appearances from native birds, reptiles and mammals. Throughout the trail visitors will find signs with detailed information about the plants and animals of the area, as well as the stories of the geology of Tucson, the life of a saguaro and the history of the resort.

"As our property was built with nature in mind, we decided to find ways that we could expand on this legacy," said Brian Johnson, the resort's managing director. "The Loews Ventana Canyon Window Trail allows us to share with all of our

guests the unique aspects of the Sonoran Desert that visitors sometimes don't have the opportunity to enjoy. It's an opportunity to really learn about the flora and fauna that live in our own backyard."

As the newest Birds & Business Alliance Silver member, the resort is excited to be teaming up with Tucson Audubon Society to create even more bird-friendly and birder-friendly amenities.

Located at 7000 North Resort Drive and nestled in the Santa Catalina Mountain foothills, the 398-guestroom resort features two Tom Fazio-designed PGA golf courses, a full-service spa and fitness center, lighted tennis courts, and hiking trails. The AAA Four-Diamond resort was named #2 in *Sunset Magazine's* Top 10 Hotels for Nature Lovers! Visit www.loewshotels.com or call 299-2020. ■

Sustainability Corner!

How much water do you use? In a city where 75% of water use is residential, this is a crucial question to all who value wildlife. Although less than half of our potable water currently comes from groundwater, pumping is still unsustainable and has killed our major rivers. About 60% now comes from the Colorado River, where we are taking it from the wildlife of that river system, especially in the river's delta.

To calculate your monthly use of potable water, consult your water bill and find how much water you have used in the past month (it's rounded off to the nearest 100 cubic feet, or 748 gallons). By looking at the current and previous dates when your water meter was read, figure out the number of days in the month. Divide the total gallons used by the number of days in the month. Then divide that by the number of people in the household.

Average residential use in Tucson is currently a bit below 100 gallons per person per day (GPD). While this is somewhat lower than many other western cities, it is still unsustainable. How do you stack up? Much lower numbers are possible. I know people who have reduced their usage to 20-30 GPD. The target for most large cities in Australia is 35 GPD. I'll write more about what you can do to lower your water use in future issues! ■

Kendall Kroesen, Restoration Program Manager



NICOLE KOEHLER

Support Tucson Audubon... Become a Friend Today!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Senior Supporter* | Guardian \$500 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Senior Discount* | Steward \$1000 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Student* | Leadership Circle \$2500 <input type="checkbox"/> |
- *Individual

Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

- New membership Renewing membership
- Please email me about Tucson Audubon events and conservation issues.
- Please do not share my contact information.
- Please do not mail me *Vermilion Flycatcher*. I'll read it online.

DONATION

- I would like to support Tucson Audubon Society with an additional contribution of \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250.
- Tucson Audubon Frequent Flyer Monthly Donor Program: I authorize the charge of \$_____ per month for _____ months to my credit card (\$10/month minimum).

Tucson Audubon Society will use the full amount of your tax-deductible gift for its environmental, educational and recreational programs.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

- Check (payable to Tucson Audubon Society)
- MasterCard Visa AMEX

Credit Card No. _____

Expiration Date _____ Amount \$ _____

Signature _____

Please send your application with payment to
Tucson Audubon Society,
300 E. University Blvd, #120,
Tucson, AZ 85705
(Attn: Jean Barchman,
Membership Coordinator)
OR join, renew or donate online at
www.tucsonaudubon.org



TUCSON AUDUBON NATURE SHOPS

Tucson Audubon's Nature Shops provide for your needs in natural history books and guides, birding optics and accessories, and gifts right here in Tucson. We offer a great selection, the best prices, and member discounts. Remember to shop locally.

Get geared up for Birdathon! The Nature Shops can help. Below are some items to consider when planning your Birdathon:



- **Binoculars!** The Nature Shop can help you get set up with a pair that is right for you to enhance your Birdathon day with great views of the birds!
- Where to go? How to plan your Birdathon? These tools can help:
 - » A copy of **Finding Birds in Southeast Arizona** — This will get you everywhere you need to go for an official Big Day, or for a fun-filled day with friends. \$24.95 (\$22.46 for members!)
 - » **Arizona Atlas and Gazetteer** — The best road map for your vehicle — it covers all the main streets and the back roads — and all of those nooks and crannies to find the birds! \$19.95
 - » Looking for a simple guide that highlights the main birding locations in southeast Arizona? Pick up a copy of the **Southeast Arizona Birding Trail** map. It will highlight for you the main birding hot spots and the main roads to get there for your Birdathon planning. \$3.00
- New to birding and the Birdathon? These items will get you started in identifying the birds and tracking them on your Birdathon day:
 - » **A birding field guide** — Your choice from the classic Peterson or Kaufman guides to more recent versions of National Geographic, Sibley, or Princeton. Any are sure to help you in making a positive identification. \$18.95 and up.



- » **Tucson Audubon's Checklist to Birds of Southeast Arizona** — Keep track of your bird sightings on Birdathon with this easy checklist. Purchase one for every member of the team and use to compare notes at the end of your Birdathon day! 75 cents
- Don't forget the essentials for birding in the southeast Arizona desert
 - » A Sunday Afternoon **sun protection hat**. \$20 and up. UPF 50!
 - » A Sunday Afternoon **sun protection shirt** for men or women. \$59 and \$56. UPF 40!
 - » A Tucson Audubon **stainless steel water bottle** to keep hydrated. \$22.00



KENDALL KROESEN

Watching Warblers West

Judy Fieth and Michael Male. 2009. DVD. \$35 in Tucson Audubon Nature Shop

Several years ago we visited Magee Marsh Wildlife Area in northwest Ohio to witness the spectacular spring migration of warblers and other species as they reached the southern shore of Lake Erie to feed and rest before attempting the flight across the lake for Canada and beyond. It did not disappoint, and we never looked at warblers the same way again. It made us want to know more about each beautiful bird, where it came from, where it was going, how it survives. This DVD answers these questions for the western warblers by showing the beauty and life history of each species. Although the western U.S. does not have areas of such pronounced migration, the western warblers are no less beautiful or interesting. Who can forget a spring day in Madera Canyon with Painted Redstart, Townsend's, Black-throated



Gray, Hermit, Grace's, Red-faced and Olive warblers flitting overhead.

Watching Warblers West is a beautifully filmed documentary of 24 warbler species that breed in Texas and west of the Great Plains (U.S. and Canada), and is a companion to the 2004 DVD *Watching Warblers East*. The photographers give the viewer an exceptional experience for either educational or recreational purposes. The western warblers are incredibly diverse and have adapted to some of the most magnificent areas in the world including deserts, mountains, boreal forests and the arctic.

The profile of each warbler lasts several minutes with gorgeous, close-up photography. Each shows a singing male for its species in its habitat, along with three-dimensional range maps showing breeding and winter range, and migration routes. For each species it gives the habitat preferences and discusses the particular nesting and foraging habits, in addition to distinguishing markings and features. Also a comparison is made between the male and female plumage, and the narration includes basic facts along with little-known and interesting information on each species. Judy Fieth and Michael Male are outstanding photographers who have done in-depth research on each species.

The film can also be viewed with natural sounds that make the DVD even more versatile, and has enough visual information on the screen to follow along. Other options include an alphabetical index to find a segment on a particular bird and a chorus segment that shows a selected bird singing.

Other DVDs in this series, available in the Nature Shop, include *Watching Waders*, *Watching Warblers East* and *Watching Sparrows*. Fieth and Male have also made films for National Geographic, Nature, and the BBC. ■

Sheryl Kistler and Susan Birky

AVAILABLE IN OUR NATURE SHOPS

The San Pedro River, A Discovery Guide by Roseann Hanson. \$17.95. The University of Arizona Press.

The Ribbon of Green by Robert H. Web, Stanley A. Leake, and Raymond H. Turner. \$75. The University of Arizona Press.

Mark Your Calendars!

For two special days in the Nature Shop

Green Day Sale!

Wednesday, March 17th only

17% off entire purchase
For any customer who:

- **Wears green clothing**
- Arrives at our shop via foot, bicycle, bus or hybrid vehicle
- Purchases a recycled bird seed feeder*
- Purchases a recycled-cotton Tucson Audubon T-shirt*
- Purchases a reusable, stainless steel Tucson Audubon water bottle*
- Purchases a copy of *Rainwater Harvesting for Dry Lands**
- Purchases a pair of Nikon EcoBins compact binoculars*

The Green Generation Earth Day Sale!

It's Earth Day's 40th Anniversary and we plan to pass the celebration to you!

Thursday April 22nd only

20% off entire purchase of \$40 or more
15% off purchases under \$40

For any customer who:

- Arrives at our shop via foot, bicycle, bus, or hybrid vehicle
- Purchases a recycled bird seed feeder*
- Purchases a recycled cotton Tucson Audubon t-shirt*
- Purchases a reusable, stainless steel Tucson Audubon water bottle*
- Purchases a copy of *Rainwater Harvesting for Dry Lands**
- Purchases a pair of Nikon EcoBins compact binoculars*

*while supplies last



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TUCSON AUDUBON NATURE SHOPS

When you support your local Tucson Audubon Society you are supporting birds and bird habitat conservation. Thank you!

SHOP HOURS

MAIN SHOP

Monday–Saturday 10 AM–4 PM,
except Monday & Thursday until 5 PM
Phone: 629-0510

On the southeast corner of University Blvd and 5th Avenue.

AGUA CALIENTE PARK SHOP

March & April: Thursday, Friday & Saturday,
9 AM–3:30 PM
Phone: 760-7881

From Tanque Verde Rd and Houghton, continue east on Tanque Verde 2 miles. Turn left (north) onto Soldier Trail, continue north for 2 miles. Turn right (east) onto Roger Rd, continue ¼ mile to the park entrance on the left (north).

THURSDAY BIRD WALK 8:30 AM

Loaner binoculars available, meet in front of the ranch house. For more information call Pima County Parks and Rec. 615-7855.

For permit requests and general information about park rules and regulations call 749-3718

When you need a book, think of Tucson Audubon Nature Shops first! Support your local book store. 520-623-3476



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Vermilion Flycatcher

Volume 55, Number 2 March–April 2010

The *Vermilion Flycatcher* is the newsletter of the Tucson Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. National Audubon Society members and members of other chapters may receive the *Flycatcher* by joining the Friends of Tucson Audubon. See membership at www.tucsonaudubon.org.



Top 5 reasons to BIRDATHON this season!

ILLUSTRATION DONATED BY RICK WHEELER



SCOTT OLMSTEAD



KENDALL KROESEN



5. Excuse to go birding, and better yet, involve others in birding! Get your friends together for a fun day's birding and help increase appreciation for birds and wildlife habitat in Southern Arizona!

4. Your own personalized fundraising page. Set a pledge goal and track your progress online! Get the word out to your family and friends the easy (and painless) way by sharing your link.

3. Limited edition t-shirt! Raise at least \$50 and earn this cool souvenir featuring local artist Rick Wheeler's Cactus Wren and Nest!

2. Great Prizes. Go for the Grand Prize: an exciting Ecuador Birding trip for two from Tropical Birding!

1. TAS All-Star Birdathon teams: something for everyone! Don't miss out on the chance to go birding with Tucson's own professional tour leaders. Treat yourself to one of these fun team outings!

WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU! The more the merrier, and the better for birds! See page 4 for more details!

Register online at www.tucsonaudubon.dojiggy.com or call Erin Olmstead at 622-5622.

Visit tucsonaudubon.org for event updates • See page 10 for Living with Nature/Membership Meeting details.