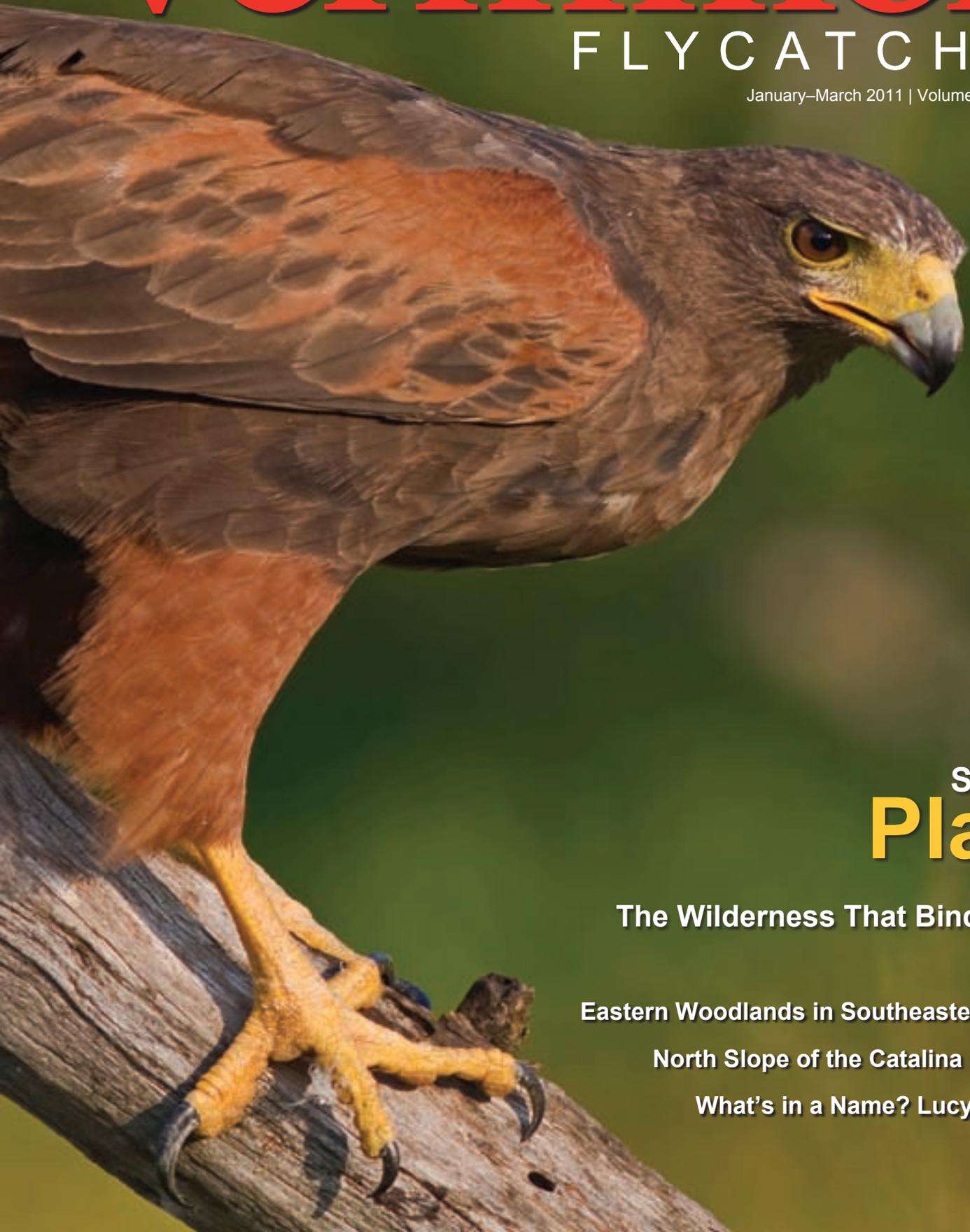


THE QUARTERLY NEWS MAGAZINE OF TUCSON AUDUBON SOCIETY | TUCSONAUDUBON.ORG

Vermilion

FLYCATCHER

January–March 2011 | Volume 56, Number 1



Sense of **Place**

The Wilderness That Binds Us All

Eastern Woodlands in Southeastern Arizona

North Slope of the Catalina Mountains

What's in a Name? Lucy's Warbler



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.

Tucson Audubon Society
300 E. University Blvd. #120, Tucson, AZ 85705
629-0510 (voice) or 623-3476 (fax)
All phone numbers are area code 520 unless otherwise stated.
www.tucsonaudubon.org

Board Officers & Directors

President Herb Trossman
Vice President Mich Coker
Secretary Julie Gordon
Treasurer Lindsey Quesinberry

Directors at Large Gavin Bieber, Richard Carlson, Sandy Elers, Richard Fray, Julie Gordon, Linda Greene, Cynthia Pruett, Ruth Russell, Jessie Shinn, Linda Stitzer
Board Committees *Conservation* Chris McVie & Linda Stitzer, *Development* Sandy Elers, *Education* Cynthia Pruett, *Finance* Lindsey Quesinberry, *Membership* Jessie Shinn, *Nominating* Linda Greene, *Personnel* Mich Coker

Programs & Activities
Field Trips *Darlene Smyth* 297-2315
Library *David West* 629-0510
Membership Meetings *Jean Barchman* 629-0510
Rare Bird Alert *Andrew Core* | Report Rare Birds 629-0510

Staff (unless otherwise stated, dial 629-0510 plus extension)
Executive Director *Paul Green* ext 7001
Accountant *Michelle Bourgeois* ext 7003
Finance ext 7014
Membership Coordinator *Jean Barchman* ext 7002
Special Projects *Erin Olmstead* ext 7009
Education & Outreach Specialist *Matt Brooks* ext 7007
IBA Conservation Biologist *Scott Wilbor* ext 7004
IBA Program Assistant-Biologist
Jennie MacFarland ext 7005
Habitats Program Manager *Kendall Kroesen* ext 7006
Field Supervisor *Rodd Lancaster* 256-6909
Restoration / Communications Specialist
Matthew Griffiths 971-7924
Operations / University Shop Manager *Sara Pike* ext 7008
Volunteer Coordinator / Agua Caliente
Shop Manager *Becky Aparicio* ext 7011

Tucson Audubon Nature Shops
300 E University Blvd #120 ext 7015
623-3476 fax / 629-0510 Shop Manager
Hours: Mon-Sat 10 AM-4 PM
Agua Caliente Park, 12325 E Roger Rd 760-7881
Hours: 9 AM-3:30 PM
Thu, Fri, Sat (JANUARY-MARCH)

Vermilion Flycatcher is published quarterly. For address changes or subscription problems call 629-0510, or write to Membership Coordinator, Tucson Audubon, 300 E. University Blvd, #120, Tucson, AZ 85705. Submissions are due the 1st of the month, two months before the date of the issue. Please send submissions as Microsoft Word or RTF documents, or plain text files, to Matt Griffiths at mgriffiths@tucsonaudubon.org.

Coordinator *Matt Griffiths* 971-7924

Proofreaders *Jane & Warren Tisdale* 749-2139 and
Tucson Audubon staff and board members, and volunteers

Design / Layout *Eng-Li Green*

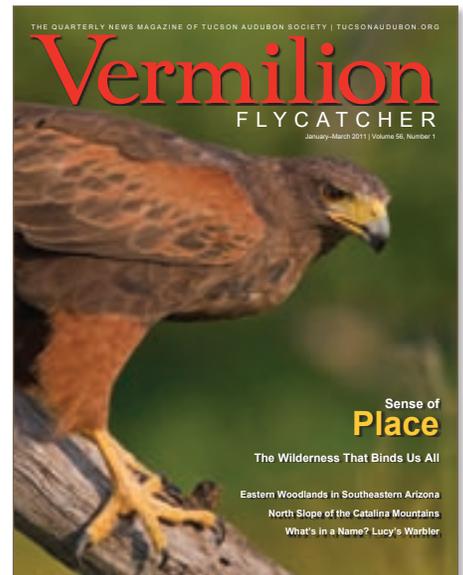
© 2011 Tucson Audubon Society

Features

- 11 North Slope of the Catalina Mountains
- 12 What's in a Name? Lucy's Warbler
- 13 Field Identification of Eastern Woodlands in Southeastern Arizona
- 14 The Wilderness that Binds Us All
- 16 Sense of Place

Departments

- 3 Commentary
- 4 Events and Classes
- 4 Events Calendar
- 7 News Roundup
- 18 Conservation and Education News
- 21 Field Trips
- 24 Birding Travel from our Business Partners
- 25 Birds & Business Alliance
- 25 Classified Ads
- 26 Nature Shops
- 27 Bookends



FRONT COVER: Harris's Hawk by Stephen Pollard. Stephen has chosen education as a career, but any time he can, he enjoys the outdoors mostly with his camera in hand. He is an amateur wildlife photographer with a particular interest in avian photography. View more of Stephen's work at www.capture-the-pixel.com.

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

A Place of Sense

Jean Barchman, Paul Green, Matt Griffiths, Kendall Kroesen, and Erin Olmstead

As we mentioned in the last issue of the *Vermilion Flycatcher*, some of Tucson Audubon's staffers have relocated their offices to our Mason Center for Environmental Education and Ironwood Preservation on West Hardy Road and Thornydale on the northwest side. Immediately around us, sit twenty acres of Saguaro-Ironwood Forest. To our south lie a further 60 acres that we would like to one day manage. To our north is Arthur Pack Park with its magnificent Hardy Wash and lush desert vegetation, saved some years ago through the actions of Tucson Audubon and our friends.

Out of the windows of our new offices at the Mason Center are the landscape and soundscape of the Sonoran Desert Uplands. Ironwoods, acacias, palo verdes, chollas and saguaros mix to form the distinctive look of the upland desert. Cactus Wrens sing their coughing song, Curved-billed Thrashers call "whit-whit" and the cries of Gilded Flickers come from a distant saguaro top. The passing seasons will be easily perceptible to us when the first Lucy's Warblers sing in spring and reptiles emerge from their burrows.

When we compare this scene with our old offices at the Historic Y, we are reminded of Tucson Audubon's Winter Appeal, *Birds and A Sense of Place*. While the Y is a lovely historic building, the soundscape outside could have come from most any Western city. The cooing of Rock Pigeons and the scratchy sounds of European Starlings combine with the calls of House Sparrows coming to drink at the fountain.

At Tucson Audubon we work to conserve the landscape, and soundscape, of the Sonoran Desert. Our Mason Center protects 20 acres of such habitat, and in myriad other ways we work toward a world that is far from uniform and predictable—with intact plant and animal communities that allow one to remember where in the world we are.

We hope you will come and sit with us on the veranda and enjoy our birds and "place of sense" with us! 

COMMENTARY

PAUL GREEN | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



How Would You Know Where in the World You Are?

One morning when you have some time, try this. Make yourself a cup of coffee or tea, go outdoors, and sit in a comfortable chair. Close your eyes and listen for ten minutes or so and then ask yourself: would I know where I am just from the sounds that I hear?

When I did this, I heard the chip of a Verdin, a scream from a Harris's Hawk, the wheel-squeak of the Abert's Towhee, the call of the Gambel's Quail, and more besides. Taken together, these sounds—all from birds—provide a soundscape that is quite particular. It compares dramatically with the combination of Ovenbird, Veery, Wood Thrush, and Pileated Woodpecker of my previous home in Pennsylvania, typical of the vast expanse of eastern deciduous forest. Our southern Arizona soundscape, on the other hand, can define where we are to quite a remarkable degree.

I imagine though that some readers in town will report a mix of House Sparrow, European Starling, and the wing clap of Rock Pigeon as their soundscape, a universal one that could be heard in many places in North America and Europe.

The difference between the "Tucson soundscape" and what I'll call the "House Sparrow soundscape" is like pulling off Interstate 10 at the Ina Road exit for a coffee versus pulling off at Texas Canyon. At one you know where you are, at the other you may not. It's like the difference between visiting the Oro Valley Market Place, with its native plantings and rainwater harvesting, and most other shopping centers in the greater metropolitan area. It's like the difference between housing developments such as Milagro and Sonoran cohousing on the one hand, and Willow Ridge on the other.

Birds give us a sense of where we are in the world. Our sense of place. By joining with us to save, create, and restore the natural spaces where birds live, you can help our community maintain a true sense of place in a world that is heading to uniformity.

It is still common to see sites around Tucson where rich collections of plants and animals are scraped clear and developed into a landscape that could be in southern California, Texas, or even Georgia, with a plant palette that our birds may not know how to use.

Recently, one well-known large retailer removed shade-giving mature mesquite trees from its parking lot and replaced them with tiny trees, showing some insensitivity to the value of large native trees. It was thus a pleasure this year to be introduced to the Oro Valley Market Place whose green design, construction, and operations plan represent a model for future retail development in Arizona. We celebrate those planners and developers who plan and develop housing, recreation, and industrial areas that shout "Arizona" and not "Anonymous, USA."

Development that celebrates and adapts to our unique living landscape increases our quality of life. Because so much development does not do these things, Tucson Audubon receives an increasing number of calls to become involved in new issues arising in our community at a time when many of our staff are working reduced hours because of budget cuts. Staff time is critical to the continued success of our organization, to lead, plan, and organize programs, to take responsibility for budgets and fundraising, as well train and coordinate our skilled volunteers who do an

enormous amount of work for us. You can of course help because bringing our staff back to full strength is a question of funding.

The need for Tucson Audubon's work in our community in 2011 continues to grow. It includes:

- Getting people outdoors, experiencing this unique place in which we live, building their wildlife and birding awareness and skills;
- Teaching people how the natural world works;
- Raising awareness in our community of the issues that confront us, promoting an ethic of natural resource conservation;
- Changing peoples' behavior towards a commitment to sustainable resource use in our neighborhoods and throughout our community;
- Teaching people how to advocate for our environment.

We are in the midst of our Winter Appeal that lasts until the end of January. Your financial help enables Tucson Audubon to work on your behalf for our birds and our natural world. You will have received a letter from me and maybe an email also, encouraging donors to double their gift this year. I have also been encouraging those of you who have never given to Tucson Audubon before to start with a small gift—\$10 is a great start and valuable to us.

Please join with other supporters to keep our outdoors in southern Arizona sounding like it should. Thank you for your support. ■

L TO R: SARA PIKE, DORIS EVANS, LOIS MANOWITZ



Catalina State Park



Purple Martins



Gambel's Quails

TUCSON AUDUBON EVENTS AND CLASSES

Landscape for Wildlife and You

Landscaping for Wildlife and Sustainability: Introduction and Tour

January 27, 6–9 pm

Introduction and Principles, Tucson Audubon's Mason Center

January 29, 8 am–noon

Tour of Wildlife-friendly and Sustainable Landscapes

The Thursday night class gives you a detailed look at the birds of the Tucson area and how to landscape or garden for them. We take a particularly close look at some species that have declined in recent years and what their specific habitat needs are. The Saturday class visits several properties that have some wildlife-friendly and sustainability features discussed in the class.

Right, top to bottom: Screwbean, chuparosa flower, netleaf hackberry bark, landscaping at University of Arizona's visitors center.

Landscaping for Wildlife and Sustainability: Practical Techniques and Workshop

February 17, 6–9 pm

Practical Techniques, Tucson Audubon Nature Shop, Historic YWCA

February 19, 8 am–noon

Hands-on Implementation of Rain-water Harvesting and Native Plantings

The Thursday night class covers practical principles and techniques for implementing wildlife-friendly and sustainable landscapes. The Saturday morning class is a hands-on workshop in which you will practice brainstorming how to implement principles and techniques learned in the course.

For more information and to sign up, contact Kendall Kroesen at 520-971-2385 or kkroesen@tucsonaudubon.org.



ALL PHOTOS KENDALL KROESEN

TogetherGreen and Learn and Serve Volunteer Day: Martin Luther King Day Buffelgrass Removal at Julian Wash

Monday, January 17, 8 AM–noon

We will be working with SASUN (the Sunnyside-Audubon Student Urban Naturalists) and Tucson Clean and Beautiful to remove buffelgrass along Julian Wash near Lauffer Middle School (off Valencia, just southwest of the Pima Air and Space Museum).

Buffelgrass is one of the most serious non-native invasive plant threats in our area. It can bear fire through our normally not fire-prone desert uplands, killing native plants and spreading more buffelgrass. If not controlled, it has the potential to convert our saguaro-filled desert vistas into non-native grasslands.

Washes like Julian Wash can be important refuges for native plants, and important habitat for wildlife. Unfortunately, washes can also be ways that buffelgrass seeds spread downstream. So it is important to remove buffelgrass along this wash, one of Tucson's longest.

This is the second year Tucson Audubon has been working with SASUN. You will be impressed to meet these kids who are learning about birds, nature and how to serve the community. SASUN is an important model for Tucson Audubon to use to build more interest in birding and nature among youth in Tucson.

The SASUN 6th graders will teach volunteers about buffelgrass and lead the buffelgrass removal effort, with support from Tucson Audubon and Tucson Clean and Beautiful!

Wear work clothes, sturdy shoes (no sandals), and a hat, and bring water. We will have tools, gloves, snacks and extra water to refill your canteen.

To sign up and get directions to the work site, contact Kendall Kroesen at 971-2385 or kkroesen@tucsonaudubon.org. TogetherGreen is a program of National Audubon Society funded by Toyota.

January 10. *Living with Nature* lecture (Tucson): Ecuador: Andean Adventure with Sally Johnsen and Doug Moore (see p 6).

January 12, 19, 26 and February 2 & 9. Beyond Backyard Birding class (see p 5)

January 14, 15, 16. Nature Shop at Wings Over Wilcox (see p 26).

January 15. IBA survey: Bingham Cienega Preserve bird survey, Lower San Pedro River IBA, for trained IBA volunteers (see p 10)

January 15. *Living with Nature* lecture (Green Valley): Dancing Rattlesnakes and Walking Frogs with Paul Hamilton (see p 6)

January 17. Martin Luther King Day Buffelgrass removal at Julian Wash (see below left)

January 18. Tucson Audubon's 3rd Annual Gala (see p 8)

January 20. Birds & Beer (see p 26)

January 26 & 29. Specialty Workshop: Sparrows (see p 5)

January 27 & 29, February 17 & 19. Landscaping for Wildlife and Sustainability course (see left)

February 2 & 5. Specialty Workshop: Raptors (see p 5)

February 5. Beat Back Buffelgrass Volunteer Day (see p 9)

February 12. IBA survey: San Rafael Grasslands bird survey, for all intermediate+ birders with sparrow proficiency (see p 10)

February 14. *Living with Nature* lecture (Tucson): From the Gulf to the Arctic with Taldi Walter (see p 6).

February 16. Volunteer Development and Orientation (see p 9)

February 16 & 19. Specialty Workshop: Ducks & Geese (see p 5)

February 17 & 19. Landscaping for Wildlife and Sustainability course (see left)

February 17. Birds & Beer (see p 26)

February 19. *Living with Nature* lecture (Green Valley): Experience Sandhill Cranes with Mike Smith (see p 6).

February 26. IBA survey: BHP San Manuel desert bird survey, Lower San Pedro River IBA, for trained IBA volunteers (see p 10)

March 12, 13. Nature Shop at Festival of Books (see p 26).

March 12. IBA survey: BHP San Manuel desert bird survey, Lower San Pedro River IBA, for trained IBA volunteers

March 14. *Living with Nature* lecture (Tucson): The Roadrunner with Jim Cornett (see p 6).

March 17. Birds & Beer (see p 26)

March 19. *Living with Nature* lecture (Green Valley): Invertebrates of the Sky Islands with Vincent Pinto (see p 6).

March 25–26. IBA survey: BHP San Manuel nocturnal and Gray Hawk survey, Lower San Pedro River IBA, for trained IBA volunteers

April 1–2. IBA survey: Patagonia Mountains, Harshaw Creek, nocturnal & raptor survey, for trained IBA volunteers



BOTH PHOTOS SARA PIKE

The 41st Annual Institute of Desert Ecology

April 28–May 1, 2011 • Catalina State Park

“It’s like a four-day master’s program on desert ecology” ~IDE participant

Ever wanted to get up close and personal with a Gila monster? Or learn about the many incredible insects of the Sonoran Desert? Or discover how grasshopper mice can eat scorpions? You can do all of these things and more in a fabulous outdoor setting at the next Institute of Desert Ecology. Whether you consider yourself a desert expert or a desert newbie, you will come away from

this program with new knowledge and a sense of wonder at the desert surrounding us.

Desert ecology will be right at your fingertips in this hands-on, four-day institute. Learn from local 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. For 41 years, our amazing faculty has been teaching Sonoran Desert ecology to people from around the continent. We are proud to have more than 2000 graduates of the program, many of whom have gone on to careers in a similar field or used the knowledge gained in teaching others. Join us for a once-in-a-lifetime educational experience.

Space is limited, so sign up today! Don't miss the opportunity!

To register or for more information, contact Matt Brooks, Institute Director, at 629-0510 x7007 or education@tucsonaudubon.org. Online sign-up and more information is available at www.tucsonaudubon.org/what-we-do/education.html.

KENDALL KROESEN

Expand your Birding Skills this Winter

Sign up now for upcoming education courses

Specialty Workshops

Is that a Grasshopper Sparrow? Or is it a Baird's? What about the hawk on that pole? Is it a Ferruginous Hawk? Or just a Red-tailed? These individual workshops focus on the identification points of some of the more challenging families of birds. This spring's courses include sparrows, raptors, and waterfowl. Each class will focus on a specific family and boost your identification skills. A new class we are offering in May is **"Birding by Ear."** This later course will focus on identification by vocalization. More info to come in the next *Vermilion Flycatcher*.

SPARROWS: January 26 & 29—Sold Out!

RAPTORS: February 2 & 5 (taught by Homer Hansen)—a couple spaces left

DUCKS & GEESE: February 16 & 19 (taught by Larry Liese)—a couple spaces left

New! BIRDING BY EAR: May 4 & 7 (taught by Homer Hansen)



Osprey

Each workshop consists of one classroom session and one all day field trip.

Cost is \$110 per workshop (\$145 for non-members but includes membership)

Class size is limited to 10 people.

For more info or to sign up please contact us at 520 629-0510 x7007 or education@tucsonaudubon.org.



Blue-winged Teal

Backyard Birding and Beyond

Wednesdays, January 12, 19, 26; February 2, 9, 2011

Cost: \$135 for members; \$185 for non-members

Learn why southeastern Arizona is such a great place for birds and why birdwatching is so much fun. Taught by Lynn Hassler, longtime birder, educator, and noted author, this course is designed for beginners. The focus will be on identifying local birds and discovering their characteristics and adaptations for surviving our challenging environment. Identification by field marks and vocalizations will also be covered. Get the lowdown on binoculars and field guides, birding vocabulary, and etiquette in the field. Course includes three two-hour classroom sessions (9:00–11:00 AM at Tucson Audubon's Mason Center on the southwest corner of Thornydale and Hardy) and two half-day field trips (Wed 9:00–11:30 AM; location TBD).

Corrected Dates!

ALAN D. WILSON, WWW.NATURESPICSONLINE.COM

DAVID QUANRUD

RICHARD FRAY

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 March.

Contact Erin Olmstead, 629-0510 ext. 7009 or eolmstead@tucsonaudubon.org for more information or visit tucsonaudubon.org.

January 10 • TUCSON

ECUADOR: ANDEAN ADVENTURE—HUMMINGBIRDS, ORCHIDS, BUTTERFLIES AND PEOPLE with *Sally Johnsen and Doug Moore*

Join Sally Johnsen and Doug Moore for a presentation of birds and nature in the

Andes Mountains of northern Ecuador. About the size of Arizona, Ecuador has one of the greatest biodiversities on earth, including 25,000 plant species and 1,600

bird species. The country boasts 130 species of hummingbirds and more orchid species than anywhere else! The program explores habitats and life in the west and east cordilleras of the Andes flanking the capitol of Quito, from tropical cloud forest to Páramo Alpine tundra. The audience will also see local people working to conserve their lands and live sustainably with nature to provide a heritage for their children.

January 15 • GREEN VALLEY

DANCING RATTLESNAKES AND WALKING FROGS: REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS OF THE SONORAN DESERT AND ITS SURROUNDINGS with *Paul Hamilton*

PAUL HAMILTON



The Sonoran Desert of Arizona and northwestern Mexico offers spectacular visions of flora and fauna—worth saving. Paul S. Hamilton, PhD, takes you on a photographic journey through arid desert and surrounding montane ecosystems featuring some outlandish reptilian and amphibian stars. From the gaudy collared lizards to dancing rattlesnakes and walking frogs, it takes a cold heart not to appreciate these cold-blooded critters. Paul will discuss conservation issues facing this unique fauna, and what you can do to get involved.

Paul S. Hamilton is director, biologist, and photographer for Reptile & Amphibian Ecology International, a Tucson nonprofit organization dedicated to discovering, documenting, and saving the diversity of life. He has worked on evolutionary and conservation biology in the Southwest and Ecuador for the last 20 years: his photographs are published worldwide in dozens of publications and are hanging in over a hundred homes.

February 14 • TUCSON

FROM THE GULF TO THE ARCTIC: ENERGY CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES with *Taldi Walter*

Although the oil leak in the Gulf has stopped, the damage it has caused to the Gulf Coast's most vital and diverse habitats has dire implications for both people and wildlife. Taldi Walter, Assistant Director of Government Relations for the National Audubon Society, will present an update of Audubon's on-the-ground efforts in the Gulf region and how the gulf spill provides

JOHN SCHOEN



a cautionary tale for how our country approaches energy development.

Migratory bird species depend on at-risk habitats like those along the Gulf Coast and the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Our energy choices will have both long- and short-term impacts on wildlife and sensitive habitats throughout the U.S. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge provides habitat for more than 180 species of birds for nesting, breeding, staging, and molting. Bird species from six continents use the Arctic Refuge while others migrate to states throughout America. However, this and other vital Arctic habitats are under threat of development, as the nation turns to Alaska to meet our domestic energy needs. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We must make every effort to continue to preserve the extraordinary natural values of the Coastal Plain.

February 19 • GREEN VALLEY

EXPERIENCE SANDHILL CRANES with *Mike Smith*

The migration of the Sandhill Cranes is one of Jane Goodall's top 10 must-see sights in nature; it is one of amateur astronomer-turned birder Mike Smith's top 3. Mike is an intermediate birder in terms of knowledge and interest, EXCEPT when it comes to *Grus canadensis*, the Lesser Sandhill Crane! He will share footage and stories from his time as a volunteer at Rowe Sanctuary in Nebraska, where he guided groups to the viewing blinds during crane migration, and also had the remarkable experience of being alone in the blinds when the cranes "blow off" the river in the morning. Mike says there's a lot he doesn't know about Lessers, but there is a lot he *does* know and will share with you in this awe-inspiring presentation!

MIKE SMITH



March 14 • TUCSON

THE ROADRUNNER: ALMOST HUMAN! with *Jim Cornett*

Did you know that roadrunners pair for life? Or that the female roadrunner only selects a mate that brings the right kind of gift? Or that roadrunners readily gobble down dangerous scorpions? These and other roadrunner topics will be discussed in Jim Cornett's colorful presentation on the Southwest's best-known bird. Cornett has been conducting research on roadrunners for the past fifteen years, discovering much about their behavior—including the possibility that some hibernate in winter. Copies of Jim Cornett's book *The Roadrunner*, and others, will be available for sale and signing at the lecture. **NOTE: This presentation will be held at an alternate venue. Check the website for updated location info!**



DORIS EVANS

March 19 • GREEN VALLEY



VINCE PINTO

INVERTEBRATES OF THE SKY ISLANDS with *Vincent Pinto*

Join naturalist Vincent Pinto as he guides you through a fascinating and detailed look at the often ignored and hidden world of invertebrates. Spiders, scorpions, insects, snails, and other unexpected creatures come to life as we explore their natural history as well as their complex interactions with humans. You won't want to miss this unforgettable journey of discovery into a Lilliputian realm!

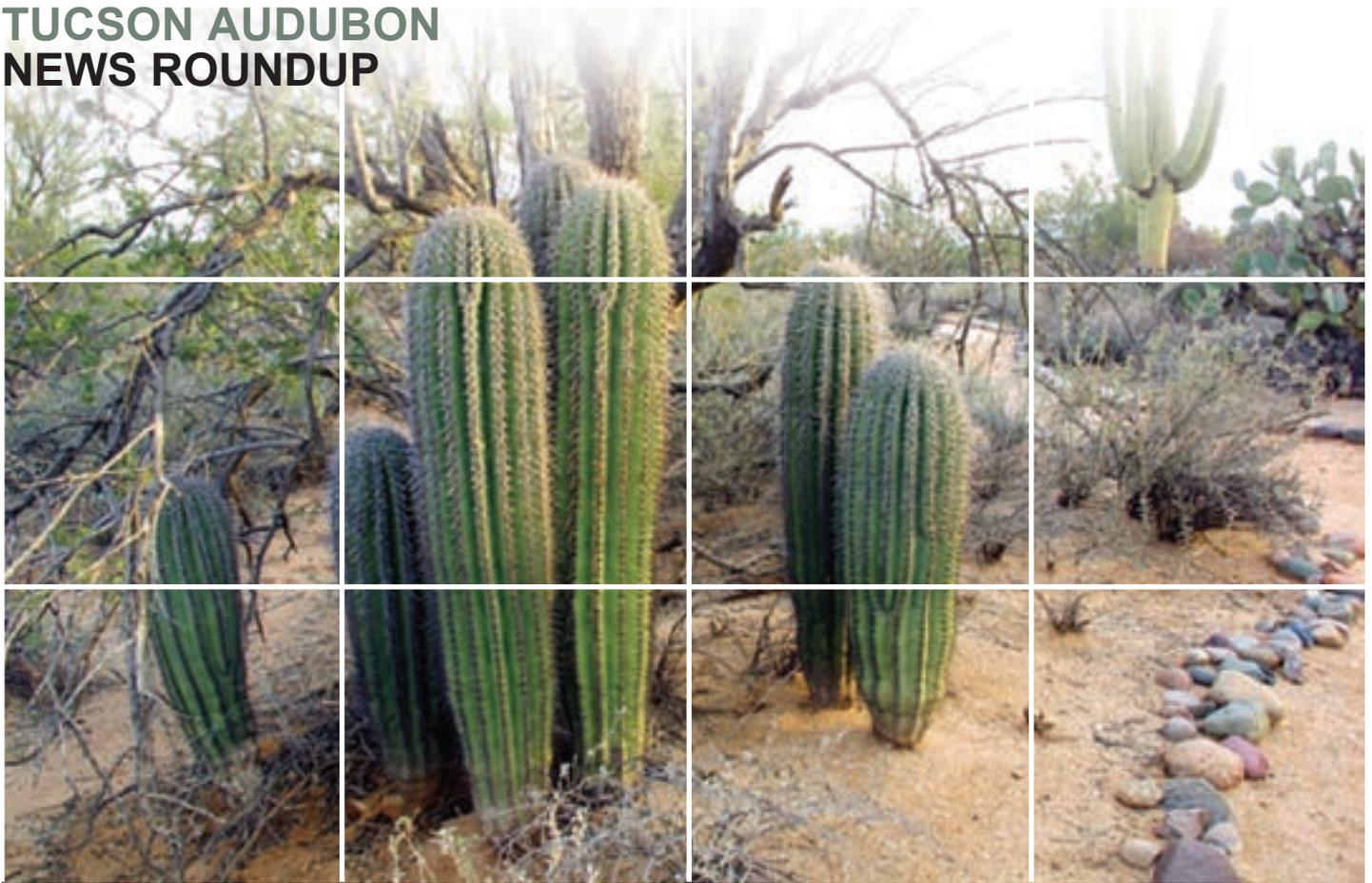
Naturalist, Wildlife Biologist, Wilderness Survival expert, and author Vincent Pinto runs RAVENSWAY WILD JOURNEYS along with his wife, Claudia, in the Sky Islands region of Arizona. Invertebrate safaris are among their many offerings. 

DOUG MOORE



The program explores habitats and life in the west and east cordilleras of the Andes flanking the capitol of Quito, from tropical cloud forest to Páramo Alpine tundra. The audience will also see local people working to conserve their lands and live sustainably with nature to provide a heritage for their children.

TUCSON AUDUBON NEWS ROUNDUP



BOB WENRICK

Sponsor a Window onto the World of the Ironwood Forest

Cynthia Pruett, Education Chair

William and Orpha Mason built their home on 20 acres of Ironwood forest in the 1950s on what is now the corner of Thornydale and West Hardy Road. Mrs. Mason entrusted Tucson Audubon to care for her property in 1998, together with her vision of an environmental education center in the desert. While Mrs. Mason died in 1999, just short of her 106th birthday, her legacy lives on through the evolving education activities run at the Mason Center.

For the past eleven years, Tucson Audubon has been working with Pima County through a Conditional Use Permit to develop the site within the wishes of Mrs. Mason. The garage was converted into a classroom, augmenting space available in the main house. In the past year we have constructed a new straw-bale building to house a composting restroom and more shaded space for outdoor teaching: it is solar powered and uses no water. The final component, a

driveway, pathways, and parking area, will be completed in January 2011.

We have been renovating the rooms in the main house around the classroom to provide better office accommodation for education and other staff and we have highlighted some real needs. One particular need is for replacement windows. In the spirit of sustainability, we need to dramatically decrease energy use in the house, and reduce the traffic noise within the house from Thornydale.

The house at the Mason Center was built long before the advent of double pane windows. The single pane, aluminum frames are very energy inefficient, in need of repair, and we would like to replace them.

The Mason Center already embodies environmentally sound innovations: the first commercial composting toilets in Pima County, solar panels to provide some of electrical needs, and rainwater harvesting.

We need your help to continue along this path. We know how much it will cost to replace the windows and we would like to have donors for the windows. Why not come by, take a look, and claim a window before they are taken?

Here's how it works

Donate a window and it will be recognized as yours with a plaque and, as soon as they are all spoken for and installed (before the heat of summer we expect), we will have a recognition event for window donors at the Mason Center.

About the windows

We are working with Tucson Window and Door to provide Energy Star rated and Green Building Initiative approved windows. Among the benefits of the windows are energy savings with a structural rating of R 30, extremely low thermal transmittance, and reduced sound transmission.

What's the cost?

- For the back west-facing office:*
 - 4 large windows, each at \$1150
 - 2 small windows, each at \$500
- For the back south office:*
 - 1 window at \$900
- For the front south office:*
 - 2 windows, each at \$900
- For the entry room:*
 - 2 windows, each at \$900
 - 1 window at \$1600
- Kitchen:* 1 window at \$700
- Bath:* 1 window at \$500

Hence only thirteen opportunities to join the Window Donors Club will ever exist! Please make a contribution for a capital improvement at the Mason Center. **GO GREEN, SUPPORT TUCSON AUDUBON, AND GET ON BOARD TODAY!**

Join Us at our Third Annual Gala

Return to Wild America

Celebrating Places for Wildlife

with Special Guest Scott Weidensaul

Fifty years after Roger Tory Peterson and noted British naturalist James Fisher set out on a 30,000 mile trek around North America, Scott Weidensaul retraced their steps to tell the story of wild America today. How has our continent's natural landscape changed over the past 50 years? How have its wildlife and wild lands fared through decades that saw both the rise of the modern environmental movement and extraordinary human pressure? And what does the future hold? Our guest speaker found changes both tragic and unexpectedly hopeful, and much of what Peterson and Fisher celebrated remains vibrant and unsoftened—the beating heart of a still-wild continent.

Author and naturalist **Scott Weidensaul** has written more than two dozen books on natural history, including *Return to Wild America: A Yearlong Search for the Continent's Natural Soul*; Pulitzer Prize finalist *Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds*; and *The Ghost with Trembling Wings*, about the search for species that may or may not be extinct. His most recent book is *Of a Feather: A Brief History of American Birding*. In addition to writing about wildlife, Weidensaul is an active field researcher whose work focuses on bird migration.

Please join us as we celebrate our third annual gala, on **TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2011**, at the fabulous Loews Ventana Canyon. We'll enjoy an outstanding meal in the Kiva Ballroom: your choice of Baked Salmon or Stuffed Acorn Squash. **Chuck George**, KOLD Channel 13 Chief Meteorologist, will be our emcee for the evening.

A no-host cocktail hour with live music by **Entre Peruanos** and an exciting silent auction will precede

dinner. Just a few of the great items and priceless experiences to be featured in the silent auction include getaways to Casa de San Pedro, Cave Creek Ranch, Puerto Peñasco, and colonial Alamos, plus international adventures like a Zulu Nyalá South African safari for two, and a Costa Rica natural history tour with Borderland Tours. Treat yourself or a loved one to a luxurious Red Door spa package, a hot air balloon ride, or a dinner and a show at Tucson's favorite hotspots. Bid on a comprehensive landscape evaluation by REALM, Cox Communications Digital Bucks, plus one-of-a-kind art, wine and gift baskets, and much more. Don't forget your checkbook!

Tickets are \$150 each and \$1500 tables for up to 10 people are available only to Friends of Tucson Audubon. Corporate sponsorship packages are offered from \$2000.

To reserve individual seats or a table for 10, please register online at tucsonaudubon.org/gala or call Jean Barchman or Erin Olmstead at 629-0510 (ext. 7002 or 7009) today!



Kudos and Cookies

Jean Barchman,
Membership Coordinator

The Staff and Board honored the shop/office volunteers Tuesday, December 7 with Mexican cuisine, coffee and punch in the Historic Y Conference Room. Volunteer help is essential to the success of Tucson Audubon nature shops, in assisting the office as a mailing crew, as field trip leaders, and as Board and Committee members. Eighteen volunteers received door prizes. We thank the local businesses who provided gift certificates to be used as door prizes: Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Chili's Restaurant, Chuy's Mesquite Broiler, International Wildlife Museum, Mane Street Salon, Pollo Loco, and Sunflower Grocery Store. There was a cookie exchange afterwards. Thank you again for your help!



Volunteers Marcee Sherrill (left) and Sharon Bale exchange cookies.



NARCA MOORE-CRAIG

Special Alamos Trip for Tucson Audubon Members Only

Explore Sonora with Solipaso this Spring!

April 6–12, 2011

Tucson Audubon and Birds & Business Alliance member Solipaso are happy to announce a spring 2011 trip to Alamos, Sonora, Mexico. This all-inclusive tour offers a fantastic introduction to the tropical birds and habitats that are found a relatively short distance from southern Arizona. Full details are on p 23.



MATT BROOKS

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Judith Anderson, Janet Brown, Steven R. Burke, Michael Cardenas, Mike Caudill, Peggy Cederstrom, Jim Chumby, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cole, Charles Corson, Augusta Davis, Philip Davis, Susanne Drury, Jennie Duberstein, Priscilla Duddleston, Linda and Jon Ender, Rosemary and Brian Evansbanks, Amy Gaiennie, Ethan Goodman, Carolyn Harley, Shirley Helmerston, Chuck and Nancy Hummel, Marianne and Paul Kaestle, Peg Kazda, Stephanie and Jim Keenan, Gry Lockert-Andersen, Mary Mareck, A. Robin McGee, John Milbauer, Rita Montague, Mr. and Mrs. William Murphy, Laurie Neidich, Yvonne and R. Bruce Ormiston, Devona Painter, Thomas Partel, Ashley Pedersen, Judy and Art Quinn, Roger Reason, Susan and William Sands, Don Segraves, Catherine Skow, Tom Slugg, Thomas St. Pierre, Pacifica Summers, Nancy Trimmer, Richard Vandemark, Carol and Ronald Vantine, Joanne Vining, Pat Walsh, Caleb Weaver, Robert Wornall, Dar Wright

Jean Barchman,
Membership Coordinator

Volunteer News Roundup

Becky Aparicio, Volunteer Coordinator

NEW VOLUNTEERS

Amy Gaiennie, Quinn Washburn, Sally Wills, Mavis Rosell

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

"Your money or your time" is the non-profit mantra and for those of you who give both, you deserve many gold stars on the scorecard of life. This month we are featuring our Volunteer of the Year, Craig Marken, who will receive many stars for his thoughtful and collaborative support. The Tucson region has many deserving non-profits and volunteers, so it is with great humility that I say "thanks" to those members who support us with their creative time. Volunteers invest their time to help us protect our community in so many ways. Tucson Audubon is on the cutting edge of program development and community conservation, so we can offer our volunteers myriad opportunities to use and expand their skills. The list of volunteer needs is updated continuously; so with our new quarterly format I'll only summarize those "on the books" as of last December. Please check us online www.tucsonaudubon.org for more details. I'll also keep you up to date with emails. Please contact [Becky](mailto:Becky.baparicio@tucsonaudubon.org), baparicio@tucsonaudubon.org or 629-0510 x 7011

VOLUNTEER NEEDS

Fridays at Mason Center

Early morning bird walk leaders beginning January 2011. Contact Sara, spike@tucsonaudubon.org.

Martin Luther King Day Bufflegrass Removal

January 17 at Julian Wash. Contact Kendall Kroesen at kkroesen@tucsonaudubon.org and see p 4 for details.

Tucson Audubon's Annual Gala

January 18. Not too late to volunteer for this lovely event. To volunteer contact Becky.

Wings over Wilcox

January 14, 15, 16. Field Trips, Tours and Trade Fair—an endless way to sharpen your skills and appreciation of the southeastern Arizona area. Sales and membership volunteers needed. To volunteer contact Becky. Visit wingsoverwilcox.com for details

A TogetherGreen "Beat Back Bufflegrass" Volunteer Day

February 5, Saturday. Tucson Audubon will be joining many other groups removing bufflegrass at a site to be determined, in coordination with the Southern Arizona Bufflegrass Coordination Committee (see www.bufflegrass.org).

Volunteer Development and Orientation

February 16, Wednesday, 9:30 AM. At the downtown Tucson Audubon offices, with Paul Green on the future exciting work of Tucson Audubon.

Festival of Books at U of A

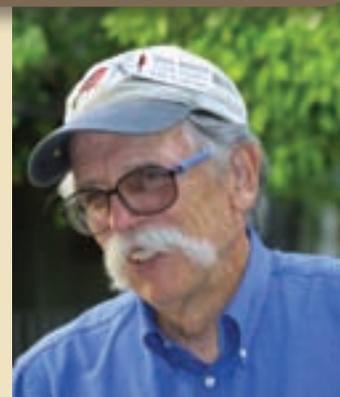
March 12, 13. Sales and membership volunteers for this exciting community event. Literally thousands of people attend and we're expanding our booth space. Contact Becky.

Craig Marken: Volunteer of the Year 2010, a Man for All Seasons

Craig volunteers in Restoration work, IBA Surveys, Institute of Desert Ecology, special tabling events, is a former Tucson Audubon Board member, and continues to serve as a member of the Finance Committee and the New Office Search Committee. He and his wife Wanda joined Tucson Audubon in 2002 and, since his retirement, Craig spends time bicycling, hiking, reading history of Baja Arizona, history of religion, traveling, and restoration of his and Wanda's own backyard—when he is not assisting us here at Tucson Audubon.

As Kendall Kroesen says: "Craig is always upbeat and fully engaged. I help occasionally with the IBA surveys at Esperanza Ranch, where he is the team leader. We meet sometimes as early as 4:30 AM at the Nature Shop and he always seems like he's been awake for hours, as if it is no hardship at all. He's one of the most vigorous people I know. I'm never surprised to see him gallop in after having ridden his bike from home, making several stops around town, including Tucson Audubon."

Now an advanced birder, Craig began his fledgling interest in birds in 1972 when he first identified his favorite bird, the Common Raven, while riding his bicycle in the Bear River Bird Refuge of Utah. His favorite birding locale in Tucson is Sweetwater Wetlands for its variety



of avian friends. His favored birding pal is Wanda and he shares this, I think, romantic memory: "The first time I took Wanda birding, it was during the fall migration in southwest Norway. Within 40 km south of Stavanger I showed Wanda 75 species in one afternoon. If the count had been the usual 40 to 45 species, the rest of my life might have been very different. She was impressed!"

Ever the great storyteller, Craig also shares this delightful memory: "While disembarking from a Zodiac boat on a black-sand beach on Deception Island in Antarctica I noticed a non-birder unload a strange black case. While I was enjoying the sights and sounds of 300,000 Chinstrap Penguins I started to hear the wailing and discordant sound of a tenor saxophone piercing the experience. Evidently this non-birder wanted to be the first to serenade penguins in Antarctica with a saxophone. I don't know if he was the first but I sure hope that he was the last."

Happy Birthday!

Best wishes to our **January** birthday members: Paddy Walsh, Wanda Wynne, Lewis Roscoe, Becky Aparicio, Joan Blumberg, Mary Bogus, Jeri Ogden, Joeline Green, Scott Olmstead, Joel Gilb, Mark Nall, Jan Bell, Ferran Eales, Craig Marken, Sarah Prasek, David Robinson, Carol Gawrychowski, Sue Robinson, Diane P. Monnier

Best wishes to our **February** birthday members: Donald Edwards, Paul Green, Betty McAnany, Gary Gustafson, Joanne Hogan, Margaret Pearson, Jefferson Carter, Heather Hatch, Dar Wright, Judy Calvert, Dottie Eshbaugh

Best wishes to our **March** birthday members: Pauline Fuus, Devona Painter, Michael Habib, Samuel Blakesley, Donna Marchinetti, Sara Pike, Bernard Cohen, John Milbauer, Michael Hall, Shirley Helmerson, Helen Clark, Charles Warner, Nancy Wieduwilt, Rita Smalling



Agua Caliente Shop volunteers Fran Cox, Laura Cotter and Shirley Davis hard at work

BECKY APARICIO

IBA Charges into the New Season

Scott Wilbor, IBA Program Conservation Biologist, and Jennie MacFarland, IBA Program Assistant-Biologist



Bingham Cienega Natural Preserve (left), San Rafael grasslands (middle), and lower San Pedro River uplands (right), all sites of Audubon's Arizona Important Bird Areas Program bird community investigations from winter through spring 2011.

L TO R: JOHN HOFFMAN, SCOTT WILBOR, MATT GRIFFITHS

As the first part of 2011 begins, the Arizona Important Bird Areas Program will be bustling with activity. An early area of focus is **Bingham Cienega Natural Preserve** on the lower San Pedro River. This beautiful area, managed by The Nature Conservancy and owned by Pima County, contains a unique convergence of mesquite bosque, ash/walnut/buttonbush grove, wetlands, and sacaton/marshlands. The goal for the **January 15th** IBA surveys are to begin to build a checklist for this property and document relative abundance and habitat value for various species.

On **February 12th**, the IBA team will return to the **San Rafael Grasslands** for another one-day driving survey of grassland birds such as Sprague's Pipit, Chestnut-collared Longspur, McCown's Longspur, and Grasshopper Sparrow. Grassland bird expert Homer Hansen will be offering a pre-survey training class on **February 9th** 6:30–8 PM for those who volunteer to help with the surveys. We are in the process of documenting a new IBA in this area and assembling an IBA nomination for review by May 2011.

Beginning this spring there will be several multi-team backcountry surveys of the **lower San Pedro River** valley focusing on BHP Billiton lands at San Manuel and new investigations of upland bird community of the saguaro/palo verde habitat (target species: Gilded Flicker and Purple Martin), nocturnal birds (Elf Owl and the entire southern Arizona desert owl complex), and Gray Hawk nest territory locations in the riparian corridor. These surveys will occur in **late February through April**; exact dates will be posted on www.aziba.org soon! These lower San Pedro

River investigations will further help our partners' information needs in our larger effort to promote a coordinated conservation management area for the entire Lower San Pedro River IBA.

If you are interested in participating in these exciting projects and have IBA survey training, please contact Scott Wilbor, Important Bird Areas Program Conservation Biologist at swilbor@tucsonaudubon.org or 209-1804. These surveys are going to be a great time and your birding skills can be put to good use helping the birds you love!

Is your New Year's Resolution 'For the Birds'? Looking ahead to Birdathon 2011

Erin Olmstead, Special Projects

Many of us have trouble coming up with an easy-to-stick-to New Year's Resolution. Here are a few suggestions for those looking for inspiration this year: 1 Make more time for birding! 2 Explore some new birding sites! 3 Get a friend into birds! 4 Become more involved with Tucson Audubon! Maybe you think New Year's Resolutions are for the birds? Either way, the New Year is the perfect time to rededicate yourself to enjoying birding and to make a commitment to protecting local bird habitat. With Birdathon coming up this spring, you'll have plenty of opportunities to get involved and get out birding with Tucson Audubon by

joining this fun annual fundraising effort. Every spring for nearly thirty years, friends of Tucson Audubon have been sharing the excitement of birding with their communities while raising important funds for the birds, and we hope you'll get in on the action this year, whether as a first-timer or as a veteran Birdathoner!

Mark your calendars: this year's Birdathon season will run from **Friday, April 8 through Sunday, May 8th**. As participants, you'll have up to 24 consecutive hours to observe as many birds as you can, while collecting pledges and donations based on the number of species you record. You can join an expert-led team or a

Tucson Audubon Birdathon outing, or get your friends together and form your own team for a Big Day or Big Sit attempt. Then we'll celebrate our success at the a special Birdy Brunch in late May. Stay tuned to tucsonaudubon.org/birdathon for more information, online registration, team updates, and a fundraising progress thermometer! 



Members of 2010 Birdathon team "Girly Birds" take Madera Canyon by storm.

ELEGANT TROGON / DOMINIC SHERONY
BECKY APARICIO

North Slope of the Catalina Mountains

Oracle to Peppersauce and Nugget Canyons

DOUG JENNESS

There's a wonderful world of grassy slopes, oak/juniper woodland, and riparian canyons with towering sycamores and walnuts on the north side of the Santa Catalina Mountains. The Mt. Lemmon Road from Oracle, paved at the beginning, becomes a well-maintained dirt road that gradually turns into a rocky track requiring high-clearance vehicles. Before getting to the difficult terrain, however, there are many locations accessible by ordinary cars where a wide variety of birds, butterflies, wildflowers and other natural life can be enjoyed. Just outside of Oracle is Oracle State Park with trails winding through live oaks, mesquites, yucca, bear grass and other vegetation. Crissal Thrasher, Spotted Towhee and Western Scrub-Jay are year-round residents here. Scott's Oriole nests in the summer, and juncos and other sparrows are numerous in the winter. Unfortunately, this remarkable place was closed in 2009 due to state budget cuts, but hopefully it will be reopened.

Continuing along the road, you come to Campo Bonito Road (USFS 639) that heads up to several riparian washes with a scattering of sycamores and remnants of a long-abandoned camp. Expect to find Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Bushtits, and other interesting residents. Turning north on USFS 4466 will bring you to High Jinks Ranch, built on the site of "Buffalo Bill" Cody's gold mine operations in the early 20th century. The home built there, La Casa del High Jinks, is on the National Register of Historic Places in Arizona. The area is a rock collector's paradise

with deposits of red, purple, and green quartz as well as black diorite, used for jewelry.

About seven miles from Oracle State Park you come to Peppersauce Canyon. Gigantic sycamores form a canopy over the forest service campground just off the road, where a wide variety of birds can be found at any time of year. A forest service trail, also used a lot by ATVs, ascends up the canyon where it eventually leads to the extensive Catalina Mountains trail network. Some seasons there are pools of water along this stretch, which may attract sparrows, warblers and flycatchers as well as Coue's white-tailed deer and coatimundi. Interesting migrants such as Northern Goshawk, Olive-sided Flycatcher and several species of warblers may be found, as well as even rarer stopovers. A Broad-winged Hawk and a male Scarlet Tanager were reported from here in recent years. In winter, higher elevation birds may descend into this 4,500-5,000' habitat, including Steller's Jay, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden Eagle, Yellow-eyed Junco, Hermit Thrush and American Robin. Some northern species, such as Townsend's Solitaire, Red-naped Sapsucker and Dark-eyed Junco spend the winter. Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Scott's Oriole, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Hepatic Tanager, Elf Owl, and some years Zone-tailed Hawk are a few of the many summer nesters. Some year-round species are Acorn and Arizona Woodpeckers, Mexican Jay, Black-chinned Sparrow, Bushtits, Bridled



Top: Yellow-eyed Junco, Peppersauce Canyon campground. Bottom: Scott's Oriole

Titmice and, less commonly, Juniper Titmouse, Whiskered Screech-Owl and Wild Turkey.

Two miles farther up the Mt. Lemmon Road is Nugget Canyon, the site of Peppersauce Cave, well-known to spelunkers. A rough trail ascends up the canyon, with a similar but narrower riparian swath than Peppersauce. Less used, it is quieter and has more pools of water to attract wildlife. An enjoyable hike up the canyon brings you to USFS 4472, which loops back toward Mt. Lemmon Road a quarter mile above the entrance to Nugget Canyon.

Tucson Audubon's *Finding Birds in Southeast Arizona* has more details for getting to these areas. ■

Doug Jenness lives with his family in Catalina. He's treasurer of the Arizona Field Ornithologists, coordinator of the Dudleyville CBC and the annual Santa Cruz Flats Raptor Count, and Pinal County coordinator for the North American Migration Count.



Left: A riparian area in Peppersauce Canyon campground. Right: Peppersauce Canyon

Interesting stories about birds with interesting names

Lucy's Warbler

LARRY LIESE

As this issue's coverage extends through March, I thought a bird of early spring seemed appropriate. And here in southeast Arizona there are two bird species that herald spring's arrival. On early spring days they start to arrive, their joyous songs announcing that the first wave of summer migrants is almost here. I've picked Lucy's Warbler as the bird for this issue's column, though passing up Bell's Vireo (our other early arrival) was tough. Heading for their preferred breeding grounds of mesquite-bordered desert washes and mesquite bosques., Lucy's Warblers arrive as early as the second week of March, and arrive in numbers a week later. They also are among the first birds to leave after breeding, leaving before or shortly after the onset of extremely hot summer temperatures, even though there is plenty of insect prey available then. There is some thought that if it isn't avoidance of the hot weather as a cause, then this early breeding schedule might make them slightly less vulnerable to Brown-headed Cowbird nest parasitism.

Lucy's Warbler was named by Dr. J. G. Cooper for the daughter of Spencer Baird in 1861. (Lucy was thirteen at the time.) She became known for helping collect bibliographical material for her father, which formed the basis for a book later written by a Dr. W. H. Dall. Her father left quite a legacy to the birding world, a selection that includes having been secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, organizer of the zoological work of the Pacific Railroad Surveys, author of *Catalogue of North American Mammals*, *Catalogue of North American Birds*; plus co-author with Brewer and Ridgway of *Land Birds* and *Water Birds*. He described and named several genera and many species of birds. As a boy of seventeen Baird wrote to Audubon about a new bird

Lucy's Warblers arrive as early as the second week of March, and are among the first birds to leave after breeding.



GEORGE WEST

he had discovered, the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Audubon answered, offering to name it and asking for help in collecting species of small mammals for a project of his. And so started a friendship that lasted for the rest of Audubon's career. Baird visited Audubon in New York two years later and became a great friend of the family. Audubon wanted Baird to come with him on his Missouri expedition, but the boy could not get permission from his family. Concerning Baird's Sparrow, Audubon says, "I have named this species after my young friend, Spencer F. Baird, of Carlisle, Pennsylvania." Coues also named a sandpiper for him.

Lucy's Warbler was originally described as *Helminthophaga luciae*, later changed to *Helminthophila*. In 1909 the genus was changed to *Vermivora*, and quite recently again changed along with a number of other warblers to the new genus *Oreothlypis*. All through this, of course, the species name *luciae* remained, as per rule (the Law of Priority). Translations of these genera yield "fond of bugs," "to eat worms," and finally "a mountain kind of finch." The latter perhaps not fitting quite as well but resulting from being grouped with those other warblers all removed from *Vermivora* due to results of genetic studies.

Along with Bell's Vireo, what I like most about Lucy's Warbler is its wonderful song. I like comparing it to that of the Yellow Warbler, whose well-known "sweet-sweet-sweet-oh-so-sweet" is well known to birders. Much mellower than the

Yellow's, Lucy's song starts out gradually with not so crisp of a start, and trails off at the end as well. The central section does still retain the *sweet-sweet-sweet-oh-so-sweet* character, and listening for that helps to distinguish it from other warbler songs.

So as March arrives and you're out birding and getting sick (hah!) of our winter birds, keep your ears open for Lucy's song. It will lighten your heart and bring you a smile to know spring's bounty of birds is due to arrive shortly. Look throughout Tucson where mesquites border small washes. Good luck! ■

AVAILABLE IN OUR NATURE SHOPS



Field Identification of Eastern Woodlands in Southeastern Arizona

RICK TAYLOR

On the first of January every year I start a little game with myself. I try to rack up as many Arizona birds as I can find over the next 12 months. Every year as I approach the 300 species meridian a fundamental principle of this pursuit becomes clear. To see 300—or more—birds within a calendar year, an Arizona birder must visit eastern woodlands.

Those of us who live in southeastern Arizona are spatially 1000 miles removed from the nearest corner of that ragged quiltwork. But birds do get lost. Especially in migration. And a lost bird is probably searching for something that looks like home.

Birds: Eastern birds from practically every family show up in southeastern Arizona. Ours was the last conterminous state in the U.S. to produce a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, but sure enough, a female showed up in mid-town Tucson in December 2005. It persisted through April 2006. The following year a male was discovered using the Paton Home feeders in Patagonia during the fall. Remarkably, this or another male appeared at the Patons' again in 2008, again for the September-October period. Patterns of vagrancy, even for rarities, often repeat themselves.

A vagrancy pattern is no more apt to express itself than among the so-called "eastern warblers." Annual wanderers in this family include: Tennessee, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Black-and-white, Worm-eating, and Hooded Warblers, as well as American Redstart, Ovenbird, and both Northern and Louisiana Waterthrushes. Other species such as Prothonotary and Yellow-throated

Warbler are also annual, but seen less frequently. Warblers are among the most colorful living threads that stitch southeastern Arizona to the geographically remote woodlands of

the eastern United States.

Habitats:

Cottonwoods and willows, sycamores and hackberries, ash and walnut: all occur naturally in southeastern Arizona. These are the remnants of a vast broadleaf deciduous woodland that once encompassed the entire U.S. from coast to coast until the end of the Pleistocene Epoch 11,400 years before present. These days in our region these trees are usually confined to riparian corridors.

We are the custodians, however, of another substantial patch in that habitat quilt. Cities and towns are desert oases with cover and food that attract eastern birds, as well as our regularly-occurring southwestern and Sonoran avifauna. Encompassing approximately 195 square miles within its official city limits, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Tucson is the biggest Arizona community south of the Gila River. This statistic does not even include outlying towns such as Oro Valley, Marana, or Sahuarita.

To put the magnitude of the greater metropolitan area in perspective, the sheer size of Tucson and its satellites means it has more square miles containing trees than the entire gallery forest yet standing along the combined lengths of the Santa Cruz and San Pedro River valleys, at least within the U.S. It can be argued that much of Tucson lacks the stature, density, and diversity of trees that characterizes the Tubac area. But it's also pretty clear that with only 15 percent of its original riverine cottonwoods still intact, the majority of both the Santa Cruz and the San Pedro River valleys have suffered wholesale environmental degradation.

Locations: Hidden Pond at Sweetwater Wetlands is famous among Tucson birders as a magnet for vagrant eastern warblers. Every fall a supremely disoriented Tennessee Warbler is going to join the roving band of Orange-crowns and "Audubon's" Yellow-rumps ravaging the cottonwoods and willows surrounding the pool. Meanwhile a Northern Parula



Eastern woodlands birds in Arizona: Ruby-throated Hummingbird (above), Prothonotary Warbler (left), and Scarlet Tanager (below left).



or a Chestnut-sided or a Black-and-white Warbler—or quite possibly all three species—will be orbiting Sweetwater's perimeter trees.

A handful of cottonwoods wedged between the Otter Pond exhibit and the snack shop at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum hauls down an American Redstart and/or a Worm-eating Warbler every autumn. If you don't find them there, check the thickets that girdle the Desert Garden.

Most famous these days for its March flights of Common Black-Hawks, the Tubac Bridge area is a reliable site for passage of Northern Waterthrushes. One of Arizona's few Canada Warblers turned up here in 2009. My first state Black-throated Blue Warbler was in a one-half acre woodlot at Kino Springs. My first state Scarlet Tanager, an incandescent male, was devouring May elderberries at the Patons' home. It looked and acted just like a fallout bird at Sabine Woods on the upper Texas coast.

To see 300—or more—state birds in twelve months I know I have to visit the tattered fabric of southeastern Arizona's eastern broadleaf woodland. And I have to be alert. Otherwise I'll miss that powder blue and molten gold Prothonotary Warbler ping-ponging among the pines at the Roger Road Wastewater Treatment Plant, lost amidst a throng of migrating Wilson's Warblers. Otherwise I may never see that Yellow-throated Warbler combing the sycamore limbs of downtown Portal, concealed behind a newly-arrived Summer Tanager. Eastern woodland birding in southeastern Arizona is an endeavor that often ends in frustration.

It's also one of the big reasons I look forward to the onset of every year! ■

*Rick Taylor is Managing Director of Borderland Tours www.borderland-tours.com. His new photographic field guide, *Birds of Southeastern Arizona* is available at Tucson Audubon's Nature Shops.*



ALL PHOTOS RICK TAYLOR

The Wilderness That I

MATT SKROCH

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.

~1964 Wilderness Act

On a sunny September day in 1964, Western civilization took a giant leap forward as President Lyndon Johnson signed into law a mandate to protect, in-perpetuity, the nation's remaining wilderness. The concept of "wilderness" was not new, having roots in the Romantic period of the late 18th and 19th Centuries. But never before had ideas for setting aside spectacular natural areas—without any development of humankind—been so crystallized. The law, arguably the most poetic of all statutes, has since been copied and emulated by dozens of countries throughout the world.

The 1964 Wilderness Act changed everything by ensuring that few places remained the same. The law prompted the nation to retain that raw material out of which, as Aldo Leopold said, we have carved the artifact called civilization.

An area protected by Congress as "wilderness" has real and substantial meaning for how that area is managed.

First and foremost, no roads or vehicles are allowed in wilderness areas, unless temporarily necessary to protect public safety (e.g. catastrophic fires). With more than 4000 miles of roads on the Coronado National Forest alone, all but the steepest mountains would today be criss-crossed with the tracks of our country's obsession without the Wilderness Act. Aside from strong protections regarding impacts and developments, wilderness areas are open and free to all who visit them, on foot or horseback. Congress specifically mandated that wilderness areas "shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people . . . devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use."

While little known, Arizona had a strong hand in bringing about the Wilderness Act. In fact, Tucson can take credit too. It was Stewart Udall, an Arizona native and Tucsonan who, in 1961, was tapped for President Kennedy's Secretary of Interior post. Stewart ushered the drafts of the Wilderness Act through the Administration, ensuring that after many years of preparation, the Act would succeed during its legislative trials leading to its passage in 1964.

Stewart's brother, Morris Udall, took up where he left off. Mo' headed the key committee in Congress that oversees public lands during the late '70's and '80's, facilitating millions of acres of wilderness protections across the country.

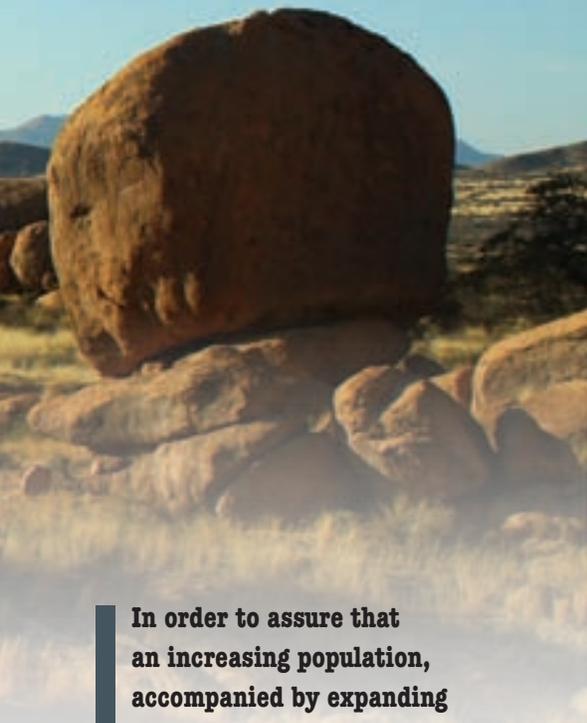
Without Mo's commitment to Arizona and wilderness, our state would have only a fraction of the 90 wilderness areas we have today.

As one meanders up Pima Canyon in Pusch Ridge (1978), the Douglas Spring Trail in the Rincon Mountains (1976), or up to Mt. Wrightson in the Santa Ritas (1984), it's easy to appreciate the foresight that Mo' Udall had for protecting our most cherished landscapes.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the 1990 Arizona Desert Wilderness Act, which formed the capstone of Morris Udall's career before his illness-related retirement in 1991. Places like Cabeza Prieta, Dos Cabeza, and Kofa owe their existence to that law, which in all protected more than 1.1 million acres of Arizona as wilderness, mostly in the lower Sonoran Desert of southwestern Arizona. The law also, unfortunately, represents the most recent legislative success for Arizona wilderness.

At that time, in 1990, a tad more than 3 million people lived in Arizona. Today, more than 6 million call it home. You only need live in Arizona a short while to learn that major landscape change is measured in months or years instead of decades or centuries. More threatened and endangered species live in southeastern Arizona than anywhere else in the continental U.S. Our growth has clearly conveyed consequences, often measured in acres under the blade, natural areas lost, or favorite places degraded.

Binds Us All



In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness.

~1964 Wilderness Act

ARIZONA'S WILDERNESS AREAS WITHIN A COUPLE HOURS DRIVE OF TUCSON

Wilderness Name	Agency	Total acreage	Year designated
Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness	Safford BLM	19,700	1984
Baboquivari Peak Wilderness	Tucson BLM	2,040	1990
Cabeza Prieta Wilderness	USFWS	803,418	1990
Chiricahua National Monument Wilderness	NPS	10,290	1976
Chiricahua Wilderness	Coronado NF	87,700	1964
Coyote Mountains Wilderness	Tucson BLM	5,100	1990
Dos Cabezas Mountains Wilderness	Safford BLM	11,700	1990
Fishhooks Wilderness	Safford BLM	10,500	1990
Four Peaks Wilderness	Tonto NF	61,074	1984
Galiuro Wilderness	Coronado NF	76,317	1964
Miller Peak Wilderness	Coronado NF	20,228	1984
Mt. Wrightson Wilderness	Coronado NF	25,260	1984
Needle's Eye Wilderness	Tucson BLM	8,760	1990
North Maricopa Mountains Wilderness	Phoenix South BLM	63,200	1990
North Santa Teresa Wilderness	Safford BLM	5,800	1990
Organ Pipe Cactus Wilderness	NPS	312,600	1978
Pajarita Wilderness	Coronado NF	7,553	1984
Peloncillo Mountains Wilderness	Safford BLM	19,440	1990
Pusch Ridge Wilderness	Coronado NF	56,933	1978
Redfield Canyon Wilderness	Safford BLM	6,600	1990
Rincon Mountain Wilderness	Coronado NF	38,590	1984
Saguaro Wilderness	NPS	70,905	1976
Santa Teresa Wilderness	Coronado NF	26,780	1984
South Maricopa Mountains Wilderness	Phoenix South BLM	60,100	1990
Table Top Wilderness	Phoenix South BLM	34,400	1990

Progress came too, but keeping pace with our growth has proved challenging.

Now more than ever, wilderness areas are a quintessential component to our well-being and the ecological integrity of our desert and forest home. Wilderness recreation is at an all time high, and unfragmented wildlands are now few and far between, outside of already existing wilderness areas.

Nonetheless, hope and momentum exists to permanently protect wilderness across southern Arizona. If you've had the opportunity to hike to Atascosa Lookout in the Tumacacori Highlands, meander up

Slavin Gulch in the Dragoon Mountains, or gander at the spectacular rock formation known as Cochise Head in the northern Chiricahua Mountains, you've witnessed the foci of efforts dedicated to cultivating southern Arizona's wilderness legacy.

You can be a participant in the wonderful experience of wilderness advocacy. Through groups such as Arizona Wilderness Coalition, Sky Island Alliance, and Tucson Audubon Society, myriad opportunities exist to explore, learn from, and lend a voice for these and other special areas. Volunteerism is a

Top left to right: Council Rocks in the Dragoon Mountains, Cochise Head in the Chiricahua Mountains, Tabletop Wilderness

core component of our shared success, and it's a heck of a fun time too. Want to get involved? A hike, restoration trip, or advocacy meeting is usually just a click away. ■

Matt Skroch is the executive director of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. He can be reached at matt@azwild.org or through www.azwild.org.

Sense of Place

PAUL GREEN, MATT BROOKS, SCOTT WILBOR, KENDALL KROESEN, SARA PIKE, AND ERIN OLMSTEAD

The Last Wild Places

On the previous pages, Matt Skroch describes how The Wilderness Act prompted the nation to retain that raw material out of which, as Aldo Leopold said, “We have carved the artifact called civilization.”

In 1960, William Stegner wrote in his “Wilderness Letter” to the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission: “Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we drive the few remaining members of the wild species into zoos or to extinction; if we pollute the last clear air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will Americans be free in their own country from the noise, the exhausts, the stinks of human and automotive waste. And so that never again can we have the chance to see ourselves single, separate, vertical and individual in the world, part of the environment of trees and rocks and soil, brother to the other animals, part of the natural world and competent to belong in it. Without any remaining wilderness we are committed wholly, without chance for even momentary reflection and rest, to a headlong drive into our technological termite-life, the Brave New World of a completely man-controlled environment.”

“You don’t go (to the wilderness) to find something, you go there to disappear,” said John Daniel. And so it is for many of us who go to areas that give us a taste of the real wilderness to seek renewal for the rigors of daily life. On this spread Tucson Audubon staffers give us a flavor of places they visit to see some of the “raw material,” even if some of it is an artifact.

*Paul Green
Executive Director*



PAUL & ENGLI GREEN

Grasslands

Of the many habitat types in southeastern Arizona, one to which I feel a special connection is the desert grasslands. The wide open vistas, the strong winds and the birds that make these grasslands home make it a special place. I love that for the better part of the year the rolling hills look stark with yellowed grass stalks; but when the spring rains or the late summer monsoons bring moisture, the grasses come back to life and flowers begin to bloom en masse. Animal life responds in kind; Grasshopper, Cassin’s and Botteri’s Sparrows begin singing and nesting, and the endangered Sonoran pronghorn begin to gather in breeding groups. Winter brings a whole new set of avian residents: big flocks of longspurs and Horned Lark, plus skulkers such as Baird’s Sparrow and Sprague’s Pipit. Raptors such as Red-tailed and Ferruginous Hawks, Northern Harrier, and White-tailed Kite add grace to the beauty here. More than anything else, the desert grasslands bring to me a sense of home. They connect me to the areas around where I grew up in southern New Mexico. All my senses make connections here: the smell of the grasses, the quality of the light, the pressure of the wind, the taste of dust, and the song of the meadowlark. For me, there’s nothing more sublime than watching the early evening light change the grasses golden orange, while the eastern sky begins to darken into a burnished gray.

*Matt Brooks
Education and Outreach Specialist*



SARAH PRASEK

Mystery Canyons

A sense of place with no place? Few places in the country offer such deep and rugged canyons of “mystery” than the “Sky Islands” of Arizona. My sense of “place and birds” in southern Arizona comes from the array of canyon-studded mountain ranges, i.e., the Chiricahuas, Dragoons, Huachucas, Pinalenos, Santa Ritas, Galiuros, Pajaritos, Patagonias (and more). Every one of these ranges seems to offer the chance to find and explore a “new” canyon that feels like some rare bird, snake, lizard, mammal, or plant could be just around the corner. With sub-tropical biodiversity so close at hand spilling across the border from the main range of the Sierra Madre Occidental, truly extraordinary finds await the “birder-explorer” in our distinct Sky Islands. From the occasional Flame-colored Tanagers in the southern Huachucas, to the Mexican Spotted Owls deep in the Patagonias, to the astounding once found Gray-collared Becard along South Fork in the Chiricahuas, to the wary Brown-backed Solitaire, with its eerie water filling a coke bottle song, high in the Huachucas, new “finds” are out there! Could there be a Northern Goshawk waiting in the Chiricahuan pine grove in the Patagonias? Or—a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher nesting in that sycamore in the Pajaritos? Maybe you’ll find yourself camped in a pocket of Long-eared Owls—I once did in the Dragoons! Wake up and keep an ear tuned for the croaking of the secretive Elegant Trogon flitting among the oaks and pines or, still higher up the canyon, maybe an Eared Quetzal...you never know!

*Scott Wilbor
IBA Conservation Biologist*



SCOTT WILBOR

Huachuca Mountains

The canyons and mountaintops of the Huachuca Mountains are special places for me.

On my second trip to southeast Arizona in 1998 I camped with a friend at Ramsey Vista Campground, at the end of Carr Canyon Road. That night at the campground we were enveloped by darkness, brilliant stars and the breeze through ponderosa pine boughs—one of my favorite sounds. The next morning the short trail to Comfort Spring seemed magical, with life bird Virginia's Warbler, Greater Pewee on a nest, Red-faced Warblers cavorting, and the ethereal sounds of a Scott's Oriole.

I've been there a few times since then and have always felt like anything could show up. One time, on a Birdathon, no less than three Northern Pygmy-Owls tooted at us.

Lower Miller Canyon is most often visited to see hummingbirds at Mr. Beatty's place and to hike up the canyon to look for Mexican Spotted Owls. I also got my lifer Eared Quetzal there—cause enough for fond memories.

But my favorite memory is hiking up the canyon with Jamie Brown, who ran Tucson Audubon's Mason Center at the time. Great birds and great conversation were interrupted only by a bobcat that sat on the trail ahead of us for at least 10 minutes, seeming to dare us to come forward.

Another hike there one late summer had a friend and me walking through cloud forest, with ethereal views of bigtooth maples and other natural wonders. I think, for pure aesthetics, Miller Canyon has some of the most spectacular sights of all southeast Arizona canyons.

You can't beat the canyons and peaks of the Huachucas for beauty and birding.

*Kendall Kroesen,
Habitats Program Manager*



SCOTT WILBOR

Catalina State Park

The ruggedness of Pusch Ridge rising to the gentle slope of Mt. Lemmon is a pleasing line for my eye to follow.

The sight of the sun rising over the ridgeline, and gently lighting up first the tips of the tallest saguaros, then the tips of the rolling hills and, soon after, the tops of the palo verde and mesquite trees, and finally brightening the sand in the washes, you can sense the new beginning of each day. In one spot, you can turn to the north and see the rising mountain with saguaro- and ocotillo-covered lower slopes; turn to the south and see a wash ready for water; turn to the east and see a small stand of cottonwood trees; and turn to the west and see a mesquite bosque.

The sounds of Sonoran Desert bird life greet you at every turn on the trail. Especially just after sunrise, it is these birds that bring me into the moment.

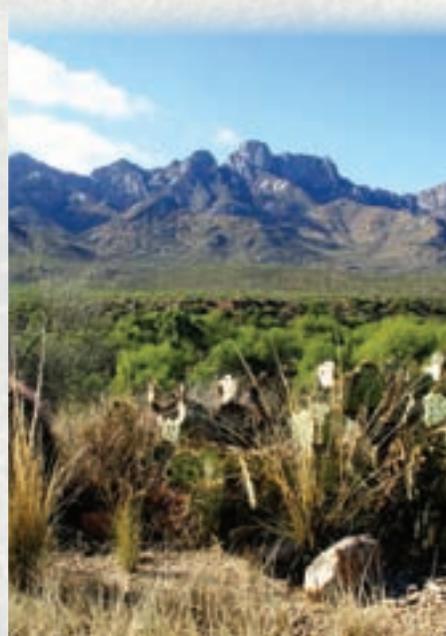
The *cha cha cha* of Cactus Wren, the repeated *chideery* of a Crissal Thrasher, the accelerated trill of sweet notes from a Rufous-winged Sparrow, or the *pit-a-see pit-a-see* of a Vermilion Flycatcher.

The smell of rocks wet with age and history waft from the washes; fresh, damp foliage opens out to the morning sun. It is here you can catch the scent of a clear breeze coming downslope through a canyon.

When I want to become centered and take in all the sights, sounds and smells of the Sonoran Desert, I head to Catalina State Park.

Sara Pike

Nature Shop and Operations Manager



SARA PIKE

Sweetwater Wetlands

Get out of the car and head out along the trail. Hear city sounds replaced by natural sounds: wind through leafy branches, warblers chipping, soras chuckling, blackbirds trilling, and ducks splashing! The magic ingredient here is WATER. Reliable year-round sources of water are scarce in the desert, making Sweetwater a Tucson oasis for birds and birders alike.

Because Sweetwater is so convenient to town, I bird here more often than anywhere else, and with each visit I am reminded of the critical importance of riparian habitat to our local birds. And odds are, I'll bump into someone I know. We have such a great and active local birding community here in Tucson, and hitting Sweetwater regularly is a rewarding way to get involved.

What makes Sweetwater such a birding hotspot is that it's different every time. With a bird list of more than 200 species recorded at the site, what will be tomorrow's highlight? Have seasonal visitors returned? Noting the arrival and departure of migrant species, and observing the intensifying plumage and behavior of breeders connects me to nature's calendar, links me in to the global network of bird populations, and connects me to a large community of birdwatchers. In the desert, our change of seasons is a much more subtle occurrence than the quarterly attitude adjustment I grew up with in New Jersey. So I look to the birds for clues. A recent Buffelhead sighting reminded me that "winter" had, in fact, arrived despite the warm weather. Similarly, the leggy stilts and avocets spotted during last spring's Birdathon warned that summer's heat was on its way.

One of the most exciting things about moving to a new place is discovering the local phenology, and getting to know Sweetwater Wetlands over the last few years has helped me develop a sense of place, and feel at home in Tucson. ■

*Erin Olmstead
Special Projects*



KENDALL KROESEN

Elections and the Environment: What did we learn?

The 2010 elections were a decidedly mixed bag for the environment both in Arizona and nationally. They were a mixed bag, not because voters were divided about their environmental priorities, and not, as many pundits say, because voters were willing to sacrifice environmental protection in the face of rising economic pressures. The most interesting thing about the 2010 elections was that by and large when confronted with a single issue question (ballot initiative), voters overwhelmingly voted for the environment while at the same time returning many anti-environmental representatives to office and indeed voting more of them into office.

Nationwide, just to name a few, voters defeated California's proposition 23 (a repeal of their groundbreaking state greenhouse gas emissions law) and approved new funds to protect wildlife and the

environment in Iowa, Maine, Oregon and Rhode Island.

In Arizona, 74 percent of voters rejected the legislature's raid on the Land Conservation Fund (proposition 301) and rejected the legislature's proposal to make politicians into wildlife managers (proposition 109) 56-44 percent.

Proposition 301 was the most lopsided ballot initiative on the Arizona ballot: more people (1,185,461) voted to protect the Land Conservation Fund than voted for any politician in Arizona (even the high-profile, \$30 million US Senate race).

Yet the voters re-elected almost all of the supporters of these initiatives and elected several freshmen legislators who supported the defeated measures.

How does this make any sense? Why is it that voters are overwhelmingly pro-conservation but do not choose

their elected representatives with their conservation ethics in mind? I believe that while voters in Arizona (and indeed nationwide) agree with conservationists on specific policies, conservation positions quickly fall through the cracks and get lost amidst the hot button issue or issues of the day.

As voters we need to remember that though we send our representatives to the State government, to Congress, or to the White House to improve our schools, stimulate our economy, and protect our nation from attack, we also send them to protect the basic building blocks of life; our air, our water, our land and our unparalleled quality of life.

So for us, some of our representatives are like a Trojan horse: we vote them in to represent our interests in some field or other, but they enter this legislative world with at best little interest in conservation



DESERT SPINY LIZARD / DORIS EVANS

outcomes and, at worst, are anti-environment.

As conservation advocates we need to work harder to speak to the public about the importance of voting for conservation and to elect representatives that represent our values. And now that these new representatives are about to take their seats, it is critical that we let them know on a regular basis that we, the conservation voters, are watching their every vote.

Steve Arquist, Arizona League of Conservation Voters

Conservation Corner!

Mistletoe (Again)

We have written over and over in the *Vermilion Flycatcher* about the ecological value of desert mistletoe.

But it bears repeating at this time due to an unfortunate article printed by the *Arizona Daily Star* on November 30. The article repeats the claim that mistletoe kills trees and should be removed whenever possible.

The article describes two species of mistletoe: *Phoradendron flavescens*—a native species that grows on trees in the mountains and that people kiss under, and a non-native form, *Viscum album*. However, the article confuses the latter with our native desert mistletoe, *Phoradendron*

californicum. The photos accompanying the article are of the native desert mistletoe.

This article repeats the myth that mistletoe is a dangerous plant that kills trees. Mistletoe is a hemiparasitic plant that takes some nutrition from its host tree, but that also has chlorophyll and makes its own energy. It may not help the tree in any way, and may be a contributing factor to the decline of old trees or ones experiencing other stressors.

But trees and mistletoe can coexist, and presumably have done so for millennia. It is *not* necessary to trim desert mistletoe out of all trees. In fact it is very harmful. Desert



KENDALL KROESEN

mistletoe is a valuable native plant, used by birds and other wildlife for its edible berries and for cover. The Phainopepla is very heavily dependent on mistletoe in the Tucson area, and sometimes builds

its nests right in a large clump of mistletoe.

Please think twice before removing mistletoe. 

Kendall Kroesen, Habitats Program Manager

Pima County Updates

MSCP Permit Application

Pima County's long awaited administrative draft Multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSCP) has been submitted to the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS/Service) for their consideration under Section 10(a) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Pima County's Board of Supervisors first vowed to uphold the ESA through habitat conservation planning in 1998. The application follows over 11 years of public discussion, local land use reforms, land acquisition and management, and scientific study. The Service's regional and national offices will review Pima County's proposal over the next several months and complete a Public Draft Environmental Impact Statement (PDEIS) of various alternatives. During that time, Pima County invites your comments on any aspect of the administrative draft MSCP or related issues. Written comments may be mailed to Neva Connolly, Senior Planner, 201 N. Stone Ave. Tucson, AZ 85701, or emailed to Neva.Connolly@pima.gov.

Upon eventual publication in the Federal Register there will be another opportunity for public comment. The county's goal is to receive an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for otherwise lawful activities that might harm, harass, or kill threatened and/or endangered species. The county is seeking coverage for its capital improvement projects (roads, sewage lines, etc.) and certain other development activities. You can read the administrative draft plan and much

more at <http://www.pima.gov/cmo/sdcp/MSCP/MSCP.html>. The Arizona Game and Fish Department and the USFWS funded Pima County and the University of Arizona to develop the ecological monitoring component, which is a required element of habitat conservation planning.

Mapguide Changes

The Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP) MapGuide Map web page has been moved from <http://dot.pima.gov/cmo/sdcpmaps/> to <http://dot.pima.gov/gis/maps/sdcp/> to assist with better web site organization and in preparation for moving maps such as this from the Department of Transportation (DOT) web site to a dedicated GIS web site at a later date. Users who go to the old introductory map page location at <http://dot.pima.gov/cmo/sdcpmaps/> see a page with a link to the new location. Users who have saved shortcuts, favorites or bookmarks that went directly to the map itself will not get a clean message as has been explained in the MapGuide map disclaimer pop-up for a few months now. That pop-up notice directs users to <http://dot.pima.gov/move> which has more explanation and links to the new location of moved maps, including the SDCP map.

Plant Salvage

Pima County Department of Transportation (DOT) has a new approach for plant salvage and vegetation removal on future roadway projects which includes a partnership with Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society (TCSS). DOT will offer all

plants in the roadway right-of-way to other potentially interested agencies, such as the Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department and City of Tucson Parks and Recreation. After they have salvaged whatever plants they may need, DOT will offer TCSS and other non-profit organizations the opportunity to salvage whatever plants are remaining. Once all of the desired plants have been salvaged, the utility companies and/or roadway contractor may clear the roadway of any remaining vegetation, rather than be required to salvage or transplant any of the remaining material. TCSS is reportedly "ready, willing and of course *able* to help make sure every native plant that isn't going to be part of a re-vegetation program is given an opportunity to be salvaged."

DOT will modify its Roadway Design Manual, plus the department's Landscape Guidelines to document this change in procedure. This new procedure does not affect the endangered Pima Pineapple Cactus.

Site Analysis

Pima County's Board of Supervisors has revised the Rezoning Site Analysis Requirements (http://www.pimaxpress.com/Documents/planning/Rezoning/site_analysis_rezoning_complete_packet_031610.pdf) which provides information necessary for evaluation of an applicant's request to intensify land uses on properties within unincorporated Pima County. The revisions update survey and inventory information for saguaro, Pima Pineapple Cactus, and Needle-spined Pineapple Cactus. Having better information at the time of rezoning can help promote a site development layout that is more sensitive to these cacti.

Applicants are now also required to provide a Preliminary Integrated Water Management Plan in order to disclose the proposed project's relationship to water resources including water supply, riparian-dependent ecosystems, and development of a water conservation plan.



Bobcat

WAYNE DUMBLETON

Mountain Lions and Bobcats in Tucson Mountain Park

A recent report summarizes the findings of a two-year study to monitor mountain lions and bobcats in the Tucson Mountains, including Tucson Mountain Park. Infrared-triggered cameras were placed at 65 locations within the mountains and in possible wildlife movement corridors surrounding the range. Seven camera sites recorded 36 photos of mountain lions, and 34 camera sites recorded 267 bobcat photos.

Also recorded on the cameras was an opossum *Didelphis virginiana v. californica* sighting which indicates a range expansion for the species, and a new winter record of the Mexican long-tongued bat in the Tucson Mountains. The bat typically migrates in the winter. For more information, view the complete report on the Natural Resources website: www.pima.gov/nrpr/parks/nrparks/TM_Cats_Final_Rpt_June2010.pdf

Rosemont Copper Mine Update

The proposed Rosemont Copper Mine in the northeast Santa Rita Mountains (an IBA) has raised numerous environmental concerns since its inception. The much anticipated Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on the mine's plan of operations from the US Forest Service (USFS) was originally scheduled for public release in 2009 and is now scheduled for release at an unspecified time in 2011.



Ironwood Forest National Monument

KENDALL KROESEN

McCain Blocks his own Resolution

On December 9, we had emailed members to ask that they contact Senator Harry Reid, Majority Leader in the U.S. Senate, regarding a draft Omnibus public lands bill that he planned to introduce and have Congress pass during the closing days of the most recent legislative session.

For Tucson Audubon, the inclusion of **S. 409 Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act of 2009** was a major stumbling block, in part because of the potential for development of 35,000 dwelling units on BHP lands along the San Pedro River which would dewater the 7B Bosque, a parcel proposed for mitigation of the Resolution Copper Mine, and devalue other mitigation lands of the Salt River Project and the Bureau of Reclamation, and lands owned and managed for conservation by the Nature Conservancy. For more information on the Resolution Copper Mine proposal and TAS' position, see our website at tucsonaudubon.org.

Senator Reid appears to have inserted S. 409 as a means of seeking support for his Omnibus bill from Senators Kyl, McCain, and others. In an unusual move just before Christmas, Sen. John McCain (R) blocked the package of 65 public lands bills that included his and Senator Kyl's own proposal, S. 409, which would allow a land exchange

at the U.S. Forest Service's Oak Flat Campground facilitating the Resolution Copper Mine outside of Superior, Arizona.

S. 409 is opposed by many environmental groups, American Indian tribes and Arizona's Democratic House members but passed the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in March. Reid's Omnibus package included proposals to designate more than 300,000 acres of new wilderness, establish new national parks and monuments and protect critical watersheds, forests and endangered species.

"These bills were bi-partisan, non-controversial, and critical for all regions of the country, and McCain's objection is surprising considering the package included his bill to facilitate the mining plan by Resolution Copper", said Andy Stahl, executive director of the Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics.

Robert Dillon, spokesman for Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), ranking member of Energy and Natural Resources, said several Republicans objected to the size and scope of Reid's proposal at such a late stage of Congress and that GOP lawmakers had made several attempts to pare the package down to 10 to 20 bills.

Reid's unanimous consent (UC) package included a proposal to turn the Devil's Staircase in Oregon into

federally protected wilderness and a House-passed Republican-sponsored bill to expand the Alpine Lakes Wilderness in Washington and extend the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River and Pratt River wild and scenic rivers.

It also contained energy committee Chairman Jeff Bingaman's (D-N.M.) "Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Wilderness Act" to protect 270,000 acres of wilderness along the New Mexican border with Mexico, a proposal that was passed unanimously by the committee and has garnered support from the U.S. Border Patrol.

Many of the bills in Reid's package were among the 110 bills that he had put in his "America's Great Outdoors Act," which was unveiled late last week before being pulled amid Republican opposition Monday.

The package's failure was a major blow to conservation groups that had lobbied hard for a larger suite of public lands proposals that would have protected more than 2 million acres as wilderness in more than a dozen states.

Many of those bills could face an uphill battle in the next Congress, when there will be a Republican-controlled House and a slimmer Democratic majority in the Senate.

Details courtesy of Phil Taylor, E&E (Greenwire) Reporter

Economic Effects of Visiting Birders Gets Government Support



PAUL & ENGLI GREEN

On December 9, the Regional Council of the Pima Association of Governments (PAG) approved a resolution to support the development of tourism-related activities for watching wildlife in southern Arizona. The most recent data indicate that tourism, transportation and employment associated with "watchable wildlife" currently contribute an estimated \$1.5 billion annually to the state's economy.

The resolution emphasizes the potential economic value of increased tourism associated with birding in the region. PAG's Environmental Planning Advisory Committee (EPAC) wrote the resolution after learning about this topic in a presentation from the Tucson Audubon Society.

"Arizona is one of the top destination states for birders because of its bird diversity, and southeastern Arizona has the opportunity to capitalize on this high level of interest among birders," said Stephen Dean, Chair of EPAC. "As birding headquarters for southeastern Arizona, Pima County could develop resources and amenities to increase the time birders spend at local birding hot spots."

Tucson Audubon is spearheading a **World Cup of Birding** and the new **Tucson Bird and Wildlife Festival** in summer 2011 and continues to work on field guides and birding trail maps to generate interest in local birding. "Our region is in great need of economic stimulus and local governments support this effort as a means of enhancing economic vigor," said Claire Zucker, manager of PAG's Watershed Planning program.



San Pedro River

PAUL & ENGLI GREEN

TUCSON AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

DARLENE SMYTH | FIELD TRIP COORDINATOR



ALAN CRESSLER

Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge

January

January 1 Sweetwater Family Outing

Moved to January 8 due to the holiday.

January 4—Tuesday 7 AM**Sweetwater Wetlands**

Ducks and wintering passerines will be a feature of this trip to Tucson's most popular birding site. We'll meet in the parking lot on Sweetwater Drive at 7 AM. Please contact leader Richard Fray with questions: richard@funbirdingtours.com or 323-4234.

January 8—Saturday 9–11 AM**Sweetwater Wetlands Family Outing Series** (first Saturday of every month)

Share your love of birding with your children or grandchildren at one of the "birdiest" places in Tucson. Borrow our backpacks filled with fun family birding activities, field guides and binoculars, or visit our hands-on nature stations. This monthly outing is self-guided; bring your children and take as long as you like! The Family Outings are developed in conjunction with Sunnyside School District's Student Urban Naturalists who seek to promote an understanding of the environment through engaging birding and nature activities. An adult must accompany children. Leader: Deborah Vath dvath@hotmail.com 490-4835

January 8—Saturday 7 AM**Buenos Aires Wildlife Refuge**

We will go to the refuge headquarters and start birding there—Aguirre Lake has water this year. This is mostly a road trip with just a little easy walking. Time permitting, I would like to visit Arivaca Lake. Meet in Green Valley at the Mc Donald's at 7 AM. Mileage: 150. Leader: Melody Kehl melodysbirding@cox.net 245-4085

January 10: Registration deadline for Nebraska trip. See p 23.

January 11—Tuesday 6 AM**Parker Canyon Lake**

6AM leave from Houghton and I-10. Bring lunch and water; dress warmly as the early morning will



GEORGE WEST

Ferruginous Hawk

be cool at this elevation. We will hike 3–4 miles on rough trails around the lake. This site is reliable for wintering ducks, mergansers, eagles, sparrows and more. 150 miles. Leaders: Mark and Farris Sharon farrishsharon@gmail.com

January 15—Saturday 8 AM**Avra Valley: Hawks for Beginners**

Spend a relaxed morning driving on paved and graded dirt roads looking for wintering raptors perched on power poles. Easy walking on dirt. Bring scope if you have one. Meet at Mission Library on NW corner of Ajo and Mission. Return by noon. Leader: John Higgins 578-1830 jghiggins@comcast.net

January 18—Tuesday**To Be Announced**

Your leader will decide upon the best destination and time based on current conditions. Contact him or look for added information on the Tucson Audubon Society Web site under Free Birding: www.tucsonaudubon.org/fieldtrips.html
Leader: Philip Kline pgkline@yahoo.com

January 23—Sunday 7 AM**Urban Tucson**

We're lucky to have such great birding right in our city. For this trip we'll visit a number of destinations, depending on what birds have been reported lately. Winter always seems to bring interesting birds into town. So far this winter Tucson has hosted Short-tailed Hawk, Rufous-backed Robin, Red-breasted and Williamson's Sapsuckers and a plethora of water birds. Please contact leader Richard Fray for meeting place and itinerary: richard@funbirdingtours.com or 323-4234.

January 25—Tuesday 7 AM**Whitewater Draw**

This trip will focus mainly on seeing some of the thousands of Sandhill Cranes that winter annually

**Fridays—8–9:30 AM**

Tucson Audubon's Mason Center Friday morning bird walks. Learn the very basics of birdwatching and how to identify the birds commonly seen in the Tucson Area. A brief presentation is followed by a slow stroll around the half-mile trail at the Mason Center—genuine Ironwood forest habitat. Led by Mary Ellen Flynn. No reservation required. Loaner binoculars available.

Thursdays—8 AM

Wake Up With the Birds at Agua Caliente Park. A stroll through the bosque and along the ponds. Loaner binocs available, meet in front of the ranch house. For more info call Pima County Parks and Rec., 615-7855.

➔ Visit tucsonaudubon.org/fieldtrips for the latest or expanded field trip information

or call us at 520-629-0510.

Note: All phone numbers use the 520 area code unless otherwise stated.

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

Tucson Audubon strongly encourages carpooling and for some trips it may be required. Check our website for frequently used 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 629-0510 ext. 3. Report rare birds at 629-0510 or rarebirdalert@tucsonaudubon.org

Don't forget to stop in our Nature Shop for your field and ID Guides, and other birding supplies.

in the Sulphur Springs Valley. We can also expect to see some wintering raptors and waterfowl. Dress for the weather and bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Snow or rain will cancel. Meet at Houghton Road just north of Interstate 10 in time for a 7 AM departure. 180 miles roundtrip. Leader: Jim Hays jhays@iname.com 203-3489 (email preferred).

**January 29—Saturday 7 AM
Pena Blanca Lake &
Santa Gertrudis Lane**

We will visit two excellent winter birding spots with a walk at Pena Blanca Lake and then a mid-morning stroll through Santa Gertrudis Lane. Meet at the Green Valley McDonald's at 7 AM. Return by noon or so. 140 miles. Leader: Clifford Cathers azcliffy@Q.com

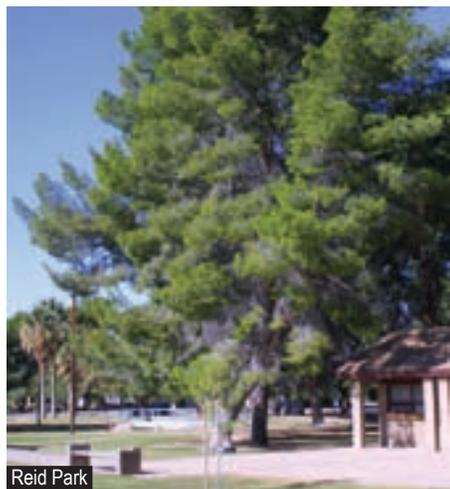
February

**February 1—Tuesday 10:30 AM
Reid Park**

We will ramble around the park for two hours looking for wintering waterfowl, warblers, woodpeckers and raptors. Easy pace on flat ground. All ages and birding abilities are invited. Meet in front of Edith Ball Adaptive Recreation Center, which looks like a big white tent near the zoo entrance. Leader: John Higgins 578-1830 jghiggins@comcast.net

**February 5—Saturday 9–11 AM
Sweetwater Wetlands Family Outing Series** (first Saturday of every month)

Share your love of birding with your children or grandchildren at one of the "birdiest" places in Tucson. Borrow our backpacks filled with fun family birding activities, field guides and binoculars, or visit our hands-on nature stations. This monthly outing is self-guided; bring your children and take as long as you like! The Family Outings are developed in conjunction with Sunnyside School District's Student Urban Naturalists, who seek to promote an understanding of the environment



Reid Park

KENDALL KROESEN

through engaging birding and nature activities. An adult must accompany children. Leader: Deborah Vath dvath@hotmail.com 490-4835

**February 5—Saturday 7:30 AM
Rillito Weed Patch and
Ft. Lowell Park**

We'll spend the morning searching these local hotspots for wintering goodies. Be ready for sparrows! Casual walking and good times will be had by all. Done by noon. Meet at 7:30 at Ft. Lowell Park on N. Craycroft Road. Leaders: Sara Pike and John Yerger spike@tucsonaudubon.org 629-0510 x 7008

**February 8—Tuesday 8:30 AM
Going North to: Catalina State Park:
Canyon Loop**

Good place for wintering and resident birds. Could be water in the washes so be prepared to get feet wet. Easy hike of 2 ½ miles. State Park pass/entry fee required. Limited to 10 participants so please contact the leader for carpooling info and directions. Leader: M.E. Flynn 797-1743 me.flynn@comcast.net.

**February 12—Saturday
Sulphur Springs Valley**

We'll begin birding at Whitewater Draw then head north towards Willcox. We should see many Sandhill Cranes, multiple raptors, several types of thrasher, with a focus on sparrow ID. Willcox Twin Lakes if time and interest allows. Mostly birding near car; short flat walk at the Draw. Back to Tucson by about 4 PM. 206 miles roundtrip. Contact leader for trip logistics. Leader: John Yerger 495-0229 jyerger24@yahoo.com

**February 15, 2011 Tuesday 8 am
LasCienegas/San Rafael
Grasslands**

Explore the grasslands as we hunt for grassland and wetland birds and the pronghorn antelope. Some 2-wheel-drive dirt road driving, short hikes. Bring lunch. Meet in Tucson for carpooling at Houghton Rd. just north of I-10 at 7:15 AM (leader not present). Go east/south on I-10 6 miles to exit 281. Take Hwy 83 south toward Sonoita ~25 miles to Empire Ranch turnoff (dirt). Meet at first pullout about 50 ft from turnoff. Leader: Frank Kee birding@keesmail.com 775-453-0241

**February 20—Sunday 7:30 AM
Patagonia-Sonoita Creek
Preserve and the Patons'**

Come for a mid-winter stroll through the Nature Conservancy's preserve at Patagonia. Meet in the parking lot at 7:30 AM. Be prepared for cold temperatures and a two-mile walk over even ground. We'll end the morning with a sit at the Patons'. (120 miles) Leader: Clifford Cathers azcliffy@Q.com



**February 22—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. Sign up with leader beginning February 15. About 200 miles roundtrip. Leader: Philip Kline pgkline_uk@yahoo.com 419-5086

**February 26—Saturday 4:30 AM
LeConte's Thrasher**

A long trip for some great birds. With any luck we should have Sage Sparrow, 4 species of thrasher with the LeConte's as the dessert to entice us. Terrain is uneven and you will want good walking shoes. On our way back, we will take a side trip into Santa Cruz Flats and see what we may see. Meet at I-10 and Ina at 4:30 AM. 400 miles. Leader: Melody Kehl melodysbirding@cox.net 245-4085



LECONTE'S THRASHER / JIM & DEVA BURNS, WWW.JIMBURNSPHOTOS.COM

March

Visit tucsonaudubon.org/fieldtrips for additional trips in March.

**March 1—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 its surroundings 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 (909-1809) or ddunford@dakotacom.net.

**March 5—Saturday 9–11 AM
Sweetwater Wetlands Family Outing Series** (First Saturday of every month)

Share your love of birding with your children or grandchildren at one of the "birdiest" places in Tucson. Borrow our backpacks filled with fun family birding activities, field guides and binoculars, or visit our hands-on nature stations. This monthly outing is self-guided; bring your children and take as long as you like! The Family Outings are developed in conjunction with Sunnyside School

District's Student Urban Naturalists who seek to promote an understanding of the environment through engaging birding and nature activities. An adult must accompany children. Leader: Deborah Vath dvath@hotmail.com 490-4835

**March 5—Saturday 7 am
Santa Cruz Flats—Focus on Sparrow Identification**

A wide variety of sparrows can be found in this area of Pinal County northwest of Tucson offering excellent opportunities for studying identification challenges. Also many raptors and other wintering birds can be seen. Limit of 12 participants. Contact the leader to sign up starting February 15. About 120 miles. Leader: Doug Jenness d_jenness@hotmail.com

March 8—Tuesday 6:30 AM

**Going North to:
Gilbert Water Ranch**



Spend the morning birding the riparian preserve at Gilbert Water Ranch near Phoenix. Easy level walking of about 2 miles. Limited to 10 participants so please contact the leader for carpooling info and directions. 190 miles roundtrip. Leader: M.E. Flynn 797-1743 or me.flynn@comcast.net 909-1529

March 12—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 year-round avian residents of the Sonoran Desert, and perhaps, some early spring migrants. The trail is rocky and of very uneven tread. There may be wet stream-crossings, depending on recent weather. Meet at the Pima Canyon Trailhead at 7 AM. Contact the leader to sign up. Leader: Ethan Beasley 300-0049 ethanbeasley@yahoo.com

March 19—Saturday 7 AM

**Tubac de Anza Black Hawk
Liftoff**



Though timing is an issue from year to year, this weekend has historically been very good for Common Black-Hawks migrating northward along the Santa Cruz River. Join me for a vigil on the Tubac Bridge and then a hike along the trail system as we search for early spring migrants. Meet at the Green Valley McDonald's on Continental Road at 7 AM. Return by noon or so. 100 miles. Leader: Clifford Cathers azcliffy@Q.com



COMMON BLACK-HAWK: ROBERT SHANTZ



JIM & DEVA BURNS, WWW.JIMBURNSPHOTOS.COM

Sharp-tailed Grouse

**March 27 to April 1, 2011
Nebraska: Prairie Grouse and Cranes**

NOTE: January 10, 2011 registration date

The Platte River hosts half a million Sandhill Cranes and millions of waterfowl every spring. We'll also bird forests along the Missouri River for eastern specialties from American Woodcock to Rusty Blackbird, and watch the dances of Sharp-tailed Grouse and Greater Prairie-Chickens. Minimum of 4, maximum of 5 participants; begins and ends in Omaha. Non-refundable registration fee of \$280 covers all of leader's expenses. Leader: Rick Wright, birdaz@gmail.com. For details, contact Darlene Smyth dsmyth3@comcast.net

May 3—May 10, 2011

Migration in Southwest Ohio II

Tucson Audubon, in conjunction with Economy Birding Services, Inc., is pleased to again offer an extended field trip to southwest Ohio during the peak of the 2011 eastern migration. This little-birded section of our country offers a wealth of birds, lush deciduous forests, comfortable and inexpensive accommodations and good food. Clifford Cathers will reveal the local hot birding spots in search of 125 or more species, including up to 35 potential warbler varieties. You can read about last year's trip online at www.economybirding.com/trips02.html. Interested? Contact Clifford at AZCliffy@Q.com or 762-3201 or Darlene Smyth, Tucson Audubon Field Trip Coordinator at DSmyth3@Comcast.net or 297-2315 for a detailed trip description, bird checklist and registration form. Registration for this trip is \$150.00, your total share of the leader's expenses. Register soon. Only 5 spots left!

ADDITIONAL BIRD WALKS IN TUCSON AND SOUTHEAST ARIZONA

For information on weekly regional bird walks from Agua Caliente Park to Ramsey Canyon Preserve, please see our website, www.tucsonaudubon.org/what-we-do/birding/128.html.

DARIO SANCHES



Squirrel Cuckoo

Special Alamos Trip for Tucson Audubon Members Only

April 6–12, 2011

Explore Sonora with Solipaso This Spring!

Hearing exotic bird names like Squirrel Cuckoo, Happy Wren, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, Black-throated Magpie-Jay, Elegant Quail and Russet-crowned Motmot may give one the impression that you would have to travel thousands of miles to see such birds. You may be surprised to know that it's possible to see these exciting birds and a whole bunch more a lot closer to home! Tucson Audubon and Birds & Business Alliance member Solipaso are happy to announce a spring 2011 trip to Alamos, Sonora, Mexico. This all-inclusive tour offers a fantastic introduction to the tropical birds and habitats that are found a relatively short distance from southern Arizona.

A custom itinerary winds through the scenic Rio Sonora river valley, spending several nights at El Pedregal Nature Lodge in Alamos, and a final night on the Sea of Cortez. Your guide, David MacKay of Alamos, has been leading tours throughout Mexico for years and has lived in Alamos since 1994. Jennifer MacKay will take good care of everyone during your stay at El Pedregal, one of the finest nature lodges in Mexico, where she'll serve up delicious meals, personalized attention, and lots of warm hospitality.

This is a birding trip that offers a whole lot more than just seeing great birds! You'll explore the town of Alamos, a National Historic Monument for its colonial architecture, including a Home and Garden Tour and a visit to the great Alamos museum, plus historical, cultural and botanical interpretation, and a chance to bird with some up-and-coming local birders.

The price of this trip is \$1850 per person and includes all meals, lodging, transportation from Tucson in a 15-passenger van, guiding, and entrance fees. The trip is limited to 10 participants with one guide. For more details, please contact info@solipaso.com.

DORIS EVANS

BIRDING TRAVEL FROM OUR BUSINESS PARTNERS

ADVENTURE BIRDING COMPANY

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

South Texas: Specialties and Migrants in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. April 1–9, 2011, \$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!

Big Bend National Park: West Texas Birds and Scenery. April 27–May 1, 2011, \$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!

SOLIPASO TOURS

www.solipaso.com

Durango Highway and San Blas: February 4–13, 2011. \$2570 Leader: David MacKay. Starting in the historic city center of Mazatlan, we bird the tropical deciduous forest before heading up to find the target species of the Durango Highway. We stay in Copala and bird Barranca de Liebre and the Panuco Road. Then onto the jungle lowlands of San Blas and our home at the family-run and wonderful Hotel Garza Canela. We bird the key areas including Singayta Road, the coffee plantations of La Bajada and Tecuitata, Cerro de San Juan, and go on two boat trips up the San Cristobal River and the mangrove labyrinths of the estuary. There are a possible 35 endemics on this trip including Tufted and San Blas Jay, Eared Quetzal and Bumblebees Hummingbird as well as specialties like Rufous-necked Woodrail and Military Macaw. Join us for one of our most popular trips!

Chiapas: Pacific Coast and Central Valley: March 4–10, 2011. \$1800. Highlands, Lagos de Montebello, Lacandon Jungle and Palenque: March 10–20, 2011. \$2900. Leader: David MacKay. Two trips can be taken separately or together to fully explore the whole state. The first trip concentrates on the localized Mexican endemics of the Pacific coast and central valley, as well as species limited to extreme southern Mexico, such as Rosita’s Bunting, Giant Wren and Green-fronted Hummingbird. The second trip visits Sumidero Canyon for Red-breasted Chat, Blue and White Mockingbird, Highland Guan and Pheasant Cuckoo, the highlands for Pink-headed Warbler, Yellow-backed Oriole, Resplendent Quetzal, Blue-throated Motmot, Violet Sabrewing and Hooded Grosbeak, and the Lacandon jungle for Scarlet Macaw, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, White-bellied Emerald, King Vulture, Sungrebe and Blue Seedeater. Our birding locations will include visits to the fantastic Mayan ruins of Palenque and a predawn river trip to the lost city of Yaxchilan on the Usumacinta River.

ROCKJUMPER—WORLDWIDE BIRDING ADVENTURES

info@rockjumperbirding.com
www.rockjumperbirding.com
Visit our new website and view our exciting range of affordable *Essential* tours!

Essential Kenya Birding 9–20 May 2011 (12 days). Price: \$3425. Beginning with an exploration of Amboseli National Park and then visiting Mount Kenya’s slopes, Samburu-Shaba and Lake Nakuru, our Essential Kenya Birding tour visits all the key sites of this fabulous country. We expect to see around 400 bird species plus an incredible diversity of wildlife and superb scenery. Top Birds: Grey-crested Helmetshrike, Golden-breasted, Abbott’s & Slender-billed Starlings, Red-fronted Parrot, Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeon, Abyssinian Crimsonwing, Oriole Finch, Somali Courser, William’s Lark, Red-naped Bushshrike, Somali Bee-eater, White-headed Mousebird, Secretarybird, Vulturine Guineafowl, Kori & Hartlaub’s Bustards, Pangani Longclaw and Bar-tailed Trogon and vast numbers of Greater and Lesser Flamingos.

Essential Tanzania Birding 20–31 May 2011 (12 days). Price: \$3450. Tanzania is one of the quintessential African destinations and provides for a truly spectacular birding and big-game experience. There exists nowhere else on the planet such an incredible volume and diversity of large animals; and, in addition to this, Tanzania supports over one thousand bird species, many of which are large, bright, colorful and easy to observe. Top Birds: Ashy Starling, Grey-crested Helmetshrike, Yellow-collared & Fischer’s Lovebirds, Brown-breasted Barbet, Grey-breasted Spurfowl, Scaly Francolin, Rufous-tailed and Taveta Weavers, Athi Short-toed Lark, Rosy-patched Bushshrike, Grey-headed Silverbill,

Cinnamon Bracken Warbler, Tacazze Sunbird, Schalow’s Wheatear, Abyssinian Scimitarbill and vast numbers of Greater and Lesser Flamingos.

TROPICAL BIRDING

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

Ecuador: The Andes Introtour March 14–21, July 10–17, and Nov 25–Dec 2, 2011. \$1520 from Quito. Want a short but sweet trip to one of the birdiest places in the universe? Check this one out—it’s one of our most popular and affordable tours. Based in just one lodge, the hummer paradise of Tandayapa Bird Lodge with up to 20 species a day at the feeders, you won’t be packing your bag up every day. It’s designed for newcomers to the tropics, but anyone wanting a short trip won’t be disappointed. We visit everything from lowland rainforest to 11,000 ft high elfin forest, often seeing more than 300 bird species.

Galapagos Endemics Cruise. November 17–26, 2011. We have specially chartered a comfortable 16-passenger yacht to visit all the key islands for birds and the other unique wildlife, and we have a chance to see every endemic species of the archipelago. This is a great tour for both birders and naturalists alike, and offers outstanding opportunities for photography. You can easily combine this trip with some birding on mainland Ecuador, including the Introtour above – ask us for more details.

VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS, INC.

www.ventbird.com
512-328-5221 • info@ventbird.com

Colorado Grouse. April 7–16, 2011; \$2,695 each in double occupancy from Gunnison. VENT pioneered the original “chicken” tours more than 20 years ago. Join Brian Gibbons and Michael O’Brien in pursuit of 7 species of grouse, prairie-chicken, and ptarmigan. Colorado in April is a gorgeous time filled with spectacular scenery and displaying grouse. Our targets include Greater and Lesser Prairie-Chickens, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater and Gunnison Sage-Grouse, Dusky Grouse, and White-tailed Ptarmigan. Visit lekking grounds and learn the natural history of one of North America’s most interesting bird families. Other attractions include good mammal viewing and plenty of amazing scenery.

North Carolina. May 28–June 4, 2011; \$2,795 each in double occupancy from Wilmington. Our North Carolina tour focuses on specialty birds 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. ■



Green Jay

STEVE HILLEBRAND, USFWS

TUCSON AUDUBON'S BIRDS & BUSINESS ALLIANCE

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BIRDS & BUSINESS ALLIANCE MEMBERS

SHAFFER DRY CLEANING & LAUNDRY has been in business in Tucson since 1969. Because we are eco-friendly, we have been 'perc' free since 1998, helping set the trend for the dry cleaning industry. We maintain our high quality standards while protecting our customers, employees, and the environment we share.

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.

HABITAT RESTORATION VOLUNTEER

OPPORTUNITY. Habitats Program Manager Kendall Kroesen invites volunteers to help with habitat restoration once a week during the remainder of the cool season. He will be working with the restoration crew most every Tuesday and welcomes volunteers to join him. It's an opportunity for people who like to volunteer, but who are busy on Saturdays, to get in some volunteer work during the week. There are several jobs that need doing, including removing anti-rabbit cages from maturing plants, collecting seeds of native plants, and controlling invasive plants. Contact Kendall at 971-2385 or kkroesen@tucsonaudubon.org.

HIGH-SPEC LAPTOP COMPUTERS NEEDED!

Tucson Audubon's staff are in urgent need of high-specification recent-model laptop computers for their work. If you can help please call Jean Barchman on 520.629.0510 ext 7002.

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.

TUCSON AUDUBON'S MASON CENTER

NEEDS new windows and roof insulation to turn the center into a comfortable work space for staff (see see p 7 for details). If you can help please call Paul Green on 520.235.1796.

Just Released!



Birds of Southeastern Arizona
by Rick Taylor
\$19.95

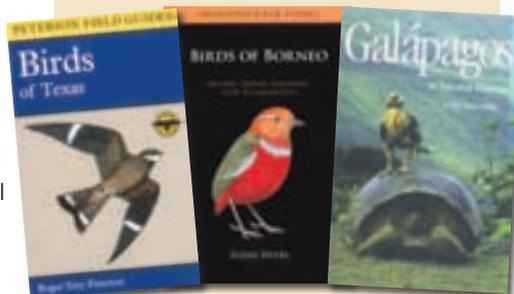
Available in the Nature Shops,
Tucson Audubon Society

- Pocket-sized photographic guide
- 640 color photos of the birds
- Featuring Mexican rarities

VOLUNTEER NEEDED: Want to help out with an interesting project? We're looking for someone to scan and digitize all pre-2002 issues of the *Vermilion Flycatcher* newsletter. The goal is to get every issue from the last 60 years into digital format and eventually have them available as PDFs on our website. Please contact Becky Aparicio 520.629.0510 ext 7011 if you are interested in helping with this project. ■

AVAILABLE IN OUR NATURE SHOPS

We have one of the best selections of books and field guides in Tucson for your international travel needs. Support your local store bird habitat conservation!



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.** Visit www.tucsonaudubon.org for more information about our Birds & Business Alliance members, including links to their websites.

GOLD

Swaim Associates Ltd Architects AIA
• 520-326-3700 • www.swaimaia.com

STERLING

Adventure Birding Company
• 520-495-0229 • www.adventurebirding.com
Rancho Esmeralda • 520-241-7072
• www.ranchoesmeraldanogales.com
Rockjumper BirdingTours • www.rockjumper.co.za
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
• 520-299-2020 • www.loewshotels.com
The Oasis at Way Out West
• 520-825-4590 • www.wowarizona.com
Pima Federal Credit Union • 520-887-5010
Snell & Wilmer • www.swlaw.com
Tucson Electric Power • www.tep.com

COPPER

Brooklyn Pizza Company • 520-622-6868
Casa Adobe B&B in Rodeo, NM • 877-577-2275
Casa de San Pedro B&B • www.bedandbirds.com
Cat Mountain Lodge • 520-578-6068
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 • 520-790-5433
Financial Architects • www.financial-architects.com
Fiore Tile Works • 520-971-0677
Heartstone Mountain Ranch • 877-562-2955
Hughes Federal Credit Union • 520-794-8341
Kimberlyn Drew, Realtor • 520-237-1408
The Living Fence • 520-795-5300
Mindo Bird Tours • www.mindobirdtours.com
R.W. Morse Company • www.rmorse.com
Naturalist Journeys • 866-900-1146
Radisson Suites Tucson • 520-721-7100
Ravens-Way Wild Journeys • 520-425-6425
Riverpark Inn • 800-551-1466
Salt River Project
*Shaffer Dry Cleaning & Laundry
• shafferdrycleaning.com
Southern Arizona Paving & Construction
Spirit Tree Inn B&B • 520-394-0121
Sundance Press • 800-528-4827
TyrannoTours • 520-577-6546
The Lodge at Ventana Canyon • 800-828-5701
Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson • 520-795-9955 ■



NEW

Support Tucson Audubon... Become a Friend Today!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Senior Supporter* | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Student* | <input type="checkbox"/> Steward \$1000 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Circle \$2500 |

*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.

Nature Shops on the Road

Come visit these two great festivals and stop by the Tucson Audubon Nature Shop!

January 14, 15, 16, 2011 Wings Over Willcox Birding Festival

Tucson Audubon Society will be hosting a nature shop and outreach booth at the festival this year. In between your field trips to see Sandhill Cranes, sparrows and raptors, stop by and say hello! Visit www.wingsoverwillcox.com for festival details, and see p 9 for volunteer opportunities at the Tucson Audubon booth during this event.

March 12–13, 2011 Tucson Festival of Books

Our first year at the festival was so successful, we're making it an annual event for Tucson Audubon. This year our presence will be bigger, with one booth hosting our nature shop and a second hosting authors and book signings throughout each day. Be sure to stop by. We'll have special items on sale and, if you renew your membership here, you will receive a special gift! Visit tucsonfestivalofbooks.org for festival details.



Tucson Audubon Nature Shop booth at Wings Over Willcox 2010.

MATT BROOKS

BIRDS & BEER

Join us for this informal get-together on the 3rd Thursday of each month, from 5 to 8 PM at Sky Bar on 4th Avenue. Sky Bar is a solar-powered café by day, astronomy bar by night, and the perfect venue to share your favorite bird photos on the big screen. Bring a disc or USB drive with your best

shots to share along with great stories, gear tips and beer picks. Plus—enjoy happy hour prices and a free slice from **Birds & Business Alliance** member, Brooklyn Pizza Company! Birds & Beer is a growing tradition attracting lots of new faces and we hope to see yours there on January 20, February 17, and March 17. Cheers!



DAVID QUANRUD

Sandhill Cranes

Field Guide to the Birds of Colombia

By Miles McMullan, Thomas M. Donegan, & Alonso Quevedo

Colombia is the most bird-rich country on the planet, with around 1,880 species recorded, and the previous field guide to the country was published in 1986. Needless to say, the collective knowledge of Colombia's avifauna has increased significantly in the last 25 years! The security situation there has improved notably of late, and tour companies and savvy independent birders have begun to visit in force once again. The renewed interest from abroad and the ongoing development of the local ornithological community have produced a full-blown birding renaissance, and this new field guide by McMullan, Donegan, and Quevedo should be just what Colombia needs to keep birding on an upward trajectory there.

The book's slim format makes it superbly useful as a true field guide; the illustrations, distribution maps, and a modicum of descriptive text for each species are placed together for each species. There are 225 color pages, packed with illustration after illustration; each page features between three and 12 species! However, cramming nearly 1,900 species into such a compact package has a downside too: the illustrations are rather small and some of the print is nearly microscopic.

Taken as a whole, McMullan's watercolor illustrations are solid and will mostly be quite helpful in the field. That said, critics will also note they're not perfect. Plumage details are generally portrayed accurately, but there are some inconsistencies in the structure of the birds, especially with bill shape and body proportions. These minor deficiencies, combined with the lack of accompanying text for each species, mean that for advanced neotropical birders this book is not likely to be your go-to reference for the trickiest ID's such as the elaeenias and some foliage-gleaners.

Although small, the range maps appear to be well done, and in fact I found some recently



published distributional information portrayed, which is commendable. There is also a beautiful series of maps in the beginning of the book showing physical features, vegetation types, rainfall gradients and other aspects of Colombia's sweeping geography. It may have been the maps that really put me over the edge, but it only took a few hours curled up with this book and I was feeling like I wanted to get down there and start exploring Colombia as soon as possible! The authors and ProAves, the local bird conservation non-profit that published the book, are to be congratulated for an excellent production.

*Scott Olmstead, Tropical Birding Tour
Leader for Latin America*

Do Hummingbirds Hum?

By George C. West

"An interesting compendium of knowledge about these marvelous little birds. This volume contains a wealth of information concerning hummingbird biology from the seemingly trivial facts to somewhat complex considerations. Highly recommended."—Choice

Hummingbirds may be the smallest birds in the world, but they have the biggest appetites. Their wings flutter on average fifty to eighty times each second as they visit hundreds of flowers over the course of a day to sip the sweet nectar that sustains them. Their hearts beat nearly twelve hundred times a minute and their rapid breathing allows these amazing birds to sustain their unique manner of flight. They can hover in the air for prolonged periods, fly backwards using forceful wings that swivel at the shoulder, and dive at nearly two hundred miles per hour. Native only to the Americas, some hummingbirds have been known to migrate from Mexico to Alaska in the course of a season. Watching a hummingbird at a backyard feeder, we only see its glittering iridescent plumage and its long, narrow beak; its rapidly moving wings are a blur to our eyes.

These tiny, colorful birds have long fascinated birders, amateur naturalists, and gardeners. But, do they really hum?

In *Do Hummingbirds Hum?* George C. West, who has studied and banded over 14,000 hummingbirds in Arizona, and Carol A. Butler provide an overview of hummingbird biology for the general reader, and more detailed discussions of their morphology and behavior for those who want to fly beyond the basics. Enriched with beautiful and rare photography, including a section in vivid color, this engaging question and answer guide offers readers a wide range of information



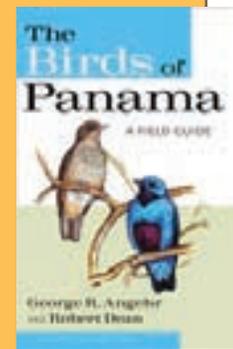
about these glorious pollinators as well as tips for attracting, photographing, and observing hummingbirds in the wild or in captivity. ■

Description by Common Ground Distributors

COMING SOON!

Cornell's Birds of Panama Field Guide—\$35.00

Princeton continues its line of top-notch field guides with a new addition for this long-time birding destination. This book should be available by March or earlier. Call the Nature Shop for the latest on its publication date.



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,
Phone: 629-0510 ext 7015

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

AGUA CALIENTE PARK SHOP

January–March: 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).

When you need a book, think of Tucson Audubon Nature Shops first! Support your local book store. 520-629-0510



300 E University Blvd, #120
Tucson, AZ 85705

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
TUCSON, AZ
PERMIT #1345

Change Service Requested

Vermilion Flycatcher

Volume 56, Number 1 January–March 2011

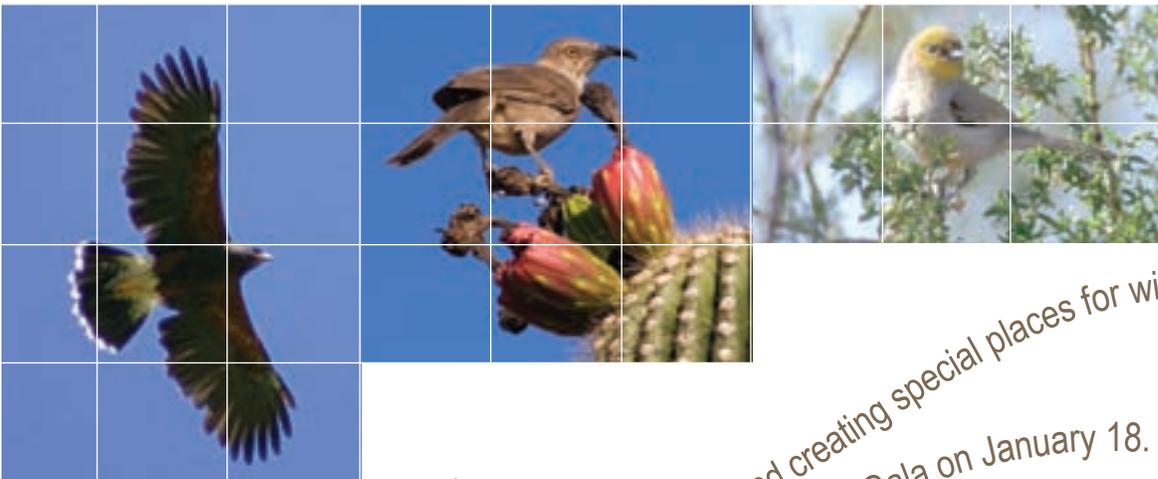
© 2011 Tucson Audubon Society

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.



Go outside. Close your eyes. Listen.

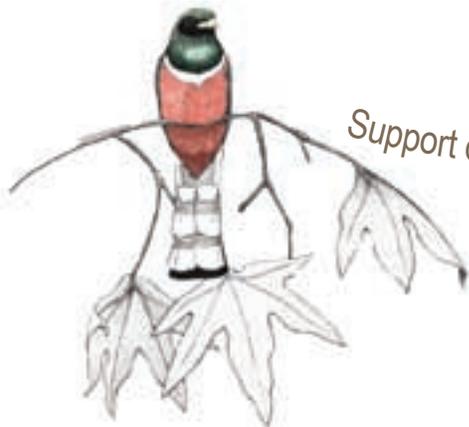
TUCSON AUDUBON'S WINTER APPEAL



Join us in celebrating and creating special places for wildlife in Arizona.

Let's work together to keep the Arizona in Arizona.

Support our Winter Appeal,



TUCSON AUDUBON'S THIRD ANNUAL GALA Return to Wild America Celebrating Places for Wildlife

with Special Guest Scott Weidensaul

To donate or register for the gala, go to tucsonaudubon.org or call Jean Barchman at 520.629.0510 x7002

EVENTS CALENDAR page 4 • LIVING WITH NATURE page 6 • Visit tucsonaudubon.org for event updates