

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

Vermilion

FLYCATCHER

January–March 2013 | Volume 58, Number 1



Meetup

Tucson Meet
Your Birds

Tucson Audubon
Meet Your Mascot

Adventures Along the
Tanque Verde Wash

What's in a Name?
Northern Mockingbird



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

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All phone numbers are area code 520 unless otherwise stated.
www.tucsonaudubon.org

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FRONT COVER: Gila Woodpecker by Elaine R. Wilson. Her bird, wildlife and natural landscape photography can be viewed at www.naturespicsonline.com.

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



To Arrive Where We Started and Know the Place for the First Time

Rob Fergus

For geographers, place is more than mere location—it includes all the features, elements, and relationships that make each location unique. Birds are a vital component of each place. In fact, you can't really know a place without knowing its birds.

I first heard that bit of wisdom from nature writer Terry Tempest Williams when I was a restless undergraduate student in Utah. I had been a birder for more than ten years, but I hadn't been birding for a long time. I suddenly came alive and knew how to break out of my mid-semester malaise—I ditched school the next day and drove out across a snow-covered desert in search of a Northern

Shrike! For the next year and a half I explored all the local haunts in search of birds, and by the time I left school, I felt

a great connection to Utah's vibrant communities and landscapes teeming with life. To the extent that I knew the birds, landscapes, and their connection to people, I knew the place.

I've since traveled to all 50 U.S. states and many foreign countries and enjoyed getting to know thousands of birds and innumerable local places. I treasure them all, starting with the birds in my backyard. No matter how well you know your bird neighbors, there is always more to learn and enjoy.

The birds can be your teachers. As you sit in your yard closely watch the birds there—what are they doing and what are they teaching you about this place? As you explore local parks, preserves, or even shopping areas, what birds are present and what are they doing? The more you get to know Tucson's birds, the better connected you will be to Tucson as a place—a vibrant community and landscape teeming with life. Enjoy!

Dr. Rob Fergus is an avid birder, urban ecologist, and bird conservationist who also blogs at urbanbirdscapes.com and birdchaser.blogspot.com.



COMMENTARY

PAUL GREEN | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Lores of Nature

Bird Lore was first published in January 1899 as an illustrated bimonthly magazine devoted to the study and protection of birds. It was the official organ of the growing National Association of Audubon Societies. *Bird Lore* was set up not as a commercial enterprise, but as a cooperative undertaking in the interests of the readers and partners.

Early editions published lists of contacts and the editor Frank Chapman noted, "The splendid influence of the thousands of men and women working in these groups from the Atlantic to the Pacific is incalculable to our cause." The Arizona Audubon Society was established in 1908, based in Tucson with Thomas K. Marshall Tucson as President and Mrs Harriet B. Thomber as Secretary. But that's another story.

As Audubon members, we can appreciate the dual meaning of the word "lore" in common English usage today. From the Latin *lorum* (meaning strap or thong) it applies to the surface between the eye and the base of the upper bill of a bird.

From the Old English *lar* origins it refers to learning, especially that gained by word of mouth, hence its use to refer to a body of knowledge, as contained in *Bird Lore* and collected by a network of bird enthusiasts across the country.

In 2013 we'll get the chance to celebrate both kinds of lore since folklorist Maribel Alvarez of Tucson Meet Yourself has invited all of us in Tucson to expand our definition of neighbors to include our bird neighbors.

Tucson Meet Yourself is an annual festival of diversity that incorporates people, cultures, activities, and foods. Since 1974 it has been a celebration of who we are as Tucsonans. At its heart it is an educational experience, and we all learn from being a part. We come away with an enhanced sense of place. This year it takes place October 12–13.

Maribel has graciously welcomed Tucson Audubon into the celebration so that we can invite Tucson to "meet its birds." Tucson Meet Your Birds is our way of helping our human residents, "immigrants, refugees, Native Americans, long-timers and newcomers ... Tucsonans all" as Maribel puts it, meet the birds that form an integral part of our local culture.

We will introduce Tucsonans to their birds in person at Tucson Meet Yourself in October 2013, and of course at the Tucson Bird & Wildlife Festival August 14–18, 2013. (Make sure those dates are in your calendar and tell your friends in other states about the event.)

We kick off with some birds that we can expect to see in our region in the early months of the year, birds that give



CURVE-BILLED THRASHER, DORIS EVANS

us a shared sense of place if we take the time to notice them. Staff have chosen Cooper's Hawk, Gila Woodpecker, Anna's Hummingbird, Lesser Goldfinch, Phainopepla, and White-crowned Sparrow for this issue of the *Vermilion Flycatcher*.

Frequently noticed and a source of many questions, these six species are among those that newcomers to watching birds will find easy to get to grips with. As we frequently explain, Tucson has so many kinds of birds because of our geography. Our region comprises a range of habitats and elevations and is surrounded by varied sources of birds, including the Rockies to the north and the Sierra Madre Occidental to the south. Kendall Kroesen writes more about this on page 13.

Another reason we can see so many species from our backyard is that many pass through this place we call home. We'll address our migrants in a later issue. As David Wilcove of Princeton, (our Gala guest speaker on January 30) is at pains to explain, we have to protect both ends of the journey—breeding and wintering grounds as well as the stopover sites—if we are to assure the continued survival of our birds.

You may be working with us to develop urban habitats that play host to our featured species as well as to migrant species. Or you perhaps work with us as a volunteer doing surveys on Important Bird Areas that serve as breeding and migratory stopover sites. We did some calculations recently and discovered that in the first 11 months of 2012 more than 550 volunteers donated nearly 6000 hours of their time to Tucson Audubon, a cash equivalent that approaches \$250,000. This gift of your time, together with your financial gift to our year-end appeal, makes possible our work for birds, their habitats, and our quality of life. For this we thank you. ■



CACTUS WREN, JOHN KENNEDY

TUCSON AUDUBON EVENTS AND CLASSES

Set Your Sights on the Outdoors in 2013

Fun for All Ages and All Levels

Specialty Workshops 2013

Intended as stand-alone classes, these workshops are a great opportunity to focus on a specific group of birds and brush up on your identification skills. Instruction will focus on distinguishing amongst similar species, identification techniques, and vocalizations. **These workshops are for advanced beginner to intermediate birders.**

All specialty workshops take place over the course of two days. In the workshop summaries below, the first date listed is the day of the classroom session and the second date listed is the field trip outing. The cost for all specialty workshops is \$110 for members and \$145 for non-members. All classroom sessions take place from 5:30 PM–8:30 PM in the conference room of the Historic Y building on University and 5th Ave. Workshops are limited to 10 participants.

Spring Programming Raptors, Raptors Everywhere!

Two exciting opportunities are available for you to hone your

raptor skills this spring! First, take Homer Hansen's Raptor Specialty Workshop in February and brush up on identification of southwestern species. If one class and field trip isn't enough, a weekend of raptor immersion with Bill Clark, world renowned expert on birds of prey, might be what you need to get your birding fix!

Raptors Specialty Workshop with Homer Hansen: February 13 & 16.

Raptor Immersion Weekend with Bill Clark: March 15–17

Friday, March 15: Lecture 6 PM–8 PM
Saturday, March 16: Field trip 6 AM–12 NOON; Lecture 2 PM–6 PM
Sunday, March 17: Field trip 6 AM–4 PM

Cost: \$165

Location: TAS offices on University Blvd. and 5th Ave. Field trip destinations TBD.

Register online today!

Additional Specialty Workshops:

Visit tucsonaudubon.org/workshops for more detailed descriptions. Both taught by Homer Hansen.

Sparrows: February 7 & 9, 2013
Birding by Ear: April 18 & 20, 2013

Education Courses for Winter and Spring 2013

For Beginner Birders Backyard Birding and Beyond

Open yourself up to the natural world by gaining skills and knowledge about birding that you can take with you into your backyard or to any corner of the globe! Topics to be covered include: principles of identification, binoculars and field guides, birding vocabulary and etiquette, local bird I.D. and lore, seasonal occurrence, family characteristics, and gardening to attract birds. You will learn firsthand why southeastern Arizona is such a great place for birds and why bird watching is so rewarding. Taught by Lynn Hassler, longtime birder, educator, and noted author. Course limited to 15 participants.

Classroom sessions: Saturdays, January 12, 19 (no class Jan. 26), February 9, 16; 10 AM–12 NOON
Field trips: Saturdays, February 2, 23; 9:00 AM; Location to be announced
Cost: \$150 for members, \$185 for non-members
Location: TAS offices on University Blvd. and 5th Ave.
Register online today!

Birding by Habitat

Southeastern Arizona offers such excellent birding opportunities in part because of its variety of habitats. Elevation contrasts result in different temperature and moisture levels, which in turn make for different assemblages of plants and animals. Riparian areas support their own cast of avian characters. Come experience the fun of birding in different natural environments with instructor Lynn Hassler. One classroom session is followed by three field trips to different habitats: desert, riparian and Sky Island. Course limited to 12 participants.

Classroom sessions: Saturday, April 13; 10 AM–12 NOON
Field trips: Saturdays, April 20, 27, May 4; TBA; Carpooling encouraged

Register online today! Visit tucsonaudubon.org/education.

Contact for all education activities: Bété Pfister at bpfister@tucsonaudubon.org, 520-629-0510 x 7012

All non-member prices include a year's membership with Friends of Tucson Audubon.

Cost: \$125 for members, \$160 for non-members

Location: TAS offices on University Blvd. and 5th Ave.

Register online today!

For Advanced Beginner to Intermediate Birders Moving to Mastery

Take your birding to the next level with our popular Moving to Mastery class. If you feel like you are ready to move your birding skills beyond the basics, this is the class for you. Taught by Wings Over Willcox chairman, Homer Hansen, this class will build upon knowledge that you've acquired through experience in the field, in a beginning birding class, or from private study. Homer's techniques focus on structure and behavior to bring you to a better understanding of bird identification. Over the course of five weeks, you'll learn how to identify some of the more difficult bird groups, how to use technical references, and how to understand bird topography. Course limited to 16 participants.

Classroom sessions: Thursdays, March 14–April 11; 5:30 PM–8:00 PM
Field trips: Saturdays, March 14–April 6; 7:00 AM–5 PM
Cost: \$250 for TAS members; \$285 for non-members
Location: TAS offices on University Blvd. and 5th Ave.

Discover a whole world of resources to support your learning experience at Tucson Audubon's Nature Shops!



HARRIS'S HAWK, GATOR GRAY

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR SUITE OF EDUCATION CLASSES AND TO REGISTER ONLINE, PLEASE VISIT WWW.TUCSONAUDUBON.ORG/EDUCATION

Time to Get Your Feet Wet



For Families and Kids Riparian Family Institute

Hosted in cooperation with Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation and The Nature Conservancy, Tucson Audubon is offering a weekend outdoor program for the entire family! The program focuses on kid-friendly exploration of the rich plant and animal life found along the beautiful San Pedro River. Activities include river walking, birding

(including looking for owls at dusk), black lighting for insects, live mammal trapping, and a campfire! Families will also get to participate in an ongoing conservation project on the Preserve and will be treated to a barbeque with ranchers from the Double Check Ranch. While your children are being led on an exploration at dusk, parents will be treated to a kid-free (!) presentation on holistic ranching practices that are revolutionizing

the production of grass-fed beef in a manner that is sustainable and preserves biodiversity of native plants and animals.

Date: April 20–21, 2013

Cost: \$65 per person. All children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Location: Nature Conservancy's Lower San Pedro Preserve near Dudleyville, AZ

Register online today!

Get to Know Your Grasslands Institute of Grassland Ecology

October 3–6, 2013 | Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch, Elgin, Arizona

The Sonoran Desert has diverse habitats and over the next three years, our adult institute program is going on tour! The institutes will focus in turn on grassland, sky island, and then riparian habitats, before returning to the Catalina Mountains. We'll be partnering with friends to deliver these exciting new programs.

In 2013, Tucson Audubon and the Audubon Research Ranch in Elgin, Arizona, are partnering to offer the

Institute of Grassland Ecology. It will be held at the Research Ranch and topics will cover: the important ecological role the grasslands of southeast Arizona play within our region, how its unique plant and animal communities differ from those around it, and conservation threats and management strategies that are

used to safeguard this ecosystem. Expert faculty will impart their knowledge, the event will be fully catered and participants will stay onsite for the duration. Adults ages 18 and over are welcome.

Stay tuned for information on how to register. Contact Bété Pfister to secure your spot.



- January 5.** Living with Nature lecture (Green Valley): *Swooping, Soaring, Sandhill Cranes* with Mike Smith (see p 6)
- January 12.** Atturbury Wash workday (see p 9)
- January 12–February 23.** Backyard Birding and Beyond course (p 4)
- January 14.** Living with Nature lecture (Tucson): *Vanished Birds and Shooting Stars* with Chris Cokinos (see p 6)
- January 17.** Birds & Beer (see p 25)
- January 17–20.** Wings Over Willcox (see p 9)
- January 17.** Willcox Playa/Cochise Lakes Global IBA recognition ceremony (see p 7)
- January 21.** Buffelgrass removal workday (see p 9)
- January 24 & 25.** IBA training workshop (see p 7)
- January 26.** Beat Back Buffelgrass! (see p 9)
- January 30.** Tucson Audubon's 5th Annual Gala (see p28)
- February 2.** Living with Nature lecture (Green Valley): *Connecting Mountain Islands and Desert Seas* with Vince Pinto (see p 6)
- February 7 & 9.** Sparrows Specialty Workshop (see p 4)
- February 9.** Sandhill Crane tour to Whitewater Draw
- February 9.** San Rafael Grasslands IBA survey (see p 7)
- February 11.** Living with Nature lecture (Tucson): *Yellow-billed Cuckoo Habitat and its Implications for Riparian Habitat Conservation* with Matt Johnson (see p 6)
- February 13 & 16.** Raptors Specialty workshop (see p 4)
- February 15.** New Volunteer Open House
- February 16.** Atturbury Wash workday (see p 9)
- February 21.** Birds & Beer (see p 25)
- February 21 & 22.** IBA Above and Beyond workshop (see p 7)
- March 2.** Living with Nature lecture (Green Valley): *An Armchair Tour of Arizona's IBAs* with Jennie MacFarland (see p 6)
- March 9–10.** Tucson Festival of Books (see p 8)
- March 11.** Living with Nature lecture (Tucson): *An Armchair Tour of Arizona's Important Bird Areas* with Jennie MacFarland (see p 6)
- March 14–April 11.** Moving to Mastery course (see p 4)
- March 15–17.** Raptor Immersion Weekend with William Clark (see p 4)
- March 16.** Atturbury Wash work day
- March 21.** Birds & Beer (see p 25)
- April 8.** Living with Nature lecture (Tucson): *A Delta Once More?* with Karl Fliessa (see p 6)
- April 13.** Atturbury Wash work day
- April 13 & 20.** Birding by Habitat course (see p 4)
- April 18 & 20.** Birding by Ear Specialty Workshop (see p 4)
- April 19–28.** Birdathon Big Week (see p 22)
- April 20–21.** Riparian Family Institute (see above)

Tucson Audubon's Living with Nature Lecture Series

TUCSON Living with Nature Lecture Series and Member Meetings

NOTE NEW VENUE! Pima Community College Downtown Campus, Amethyst Room. Located on campus at 1255 N. Stone Ave. See tucsonaudubon.org/lwn for map.

The program begins at **7 PM, SECOND MONDAY** of each month **October through May**. Please check our website for details on topics and speakers.

GREEN VALLEY Living with Nature Lecture Series Joyner-Green Valley Library, 601 N. La Canada Dr. 594-5295. The Green Valley talks will now be at **10 AM** on the **FIRST SATURDAY** of the month, **November through April**.

For more information, contact Bété Pfister, 520-209-1812 or bpfister@tucsonaudubon.org, or visit tucsonaudubon.org.

January 5 • Green Valley



SANDHILL CRANE / GLENSEPLAK

SWOOPING, SOARING SANDHILL CRANES With Mike Smith

Did you know that cranes are among the oldest living birds on the planet? Fossil records place cranes in Nebraska more than nine million years ago, long before there was a Platte River! Mike Smith will take you on a virtual tour of the cranes' stopover at Rowe Sanctuary, on the Platte River and share the immense knowledge he has developed over years of observing these amazing birds! You will see video of crane "dancing" and remarkable footage of thousands of birds coming toward and circling viewing blinds.

January 14 • Tucson



CAROLINA PARAKEET / MATT BOHAN

VANISHED BIRDS AND SHOOTING STARS: LIFE AND DEATH FROM THE SKY with Chris Cokinos

From the stories of extinct North American birds to the seemingly unrelated subject of meteorites and their effects on the Earth, author Christopher Cokinos will explore themes of extinction, life and deep time in a talk that takes listeners from flocks of Carolina parakeets to swarms of "killer" asteroids. He will discuss environmental responsibility toward the contemporary biosphere and how we, as keepers of our natural world, can act to conserve and protect what we value.

Christopher Cokinos is the author of *Hope Is the Thing with Feathers: A Personal Chronicle of Vanished Birds* and *The Fallen Sky: An Intimate History of Shooting Stars*. He has won several national writing awards and is currently an Associate Professor of English and Affiliated Faculty with the Institute of the Environment at the University of Arizona.

February 2 • Green Valley

CONNECTING MOUNTAIN ISLANDS AND DESERT SEAS: THE SKY ISLANDS OF SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA With Vince Pinto

The 70,000-square-mile Sky Islands region of southeastern Arizona, southwestern New Mexico, and northwestern Mexico is globally important because of its rich diversity of species and habitats. It is the last North American stronghold of such

magnificent predators as the Mexican wolf and jaguar.

These mountain "islands," forested ranges separated by vast expanses of desert and grassland plains, are among the most diverse ecosystems in the world. As an example, the region harbors over half the bird species of North America.

Wildlife Biologist and Naturalist, Vincent Pinto, is the co-founder of Ravens-Way Wild Journeys, based in Patagonia, AZ. He has been teaching people of all ages, interests, and backgrounds about the natural world since 1987.

February 11 • Tucson



YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO / STEVE BARANOFF

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO HABITAT USE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR RIPARIAN HABITAT CONSERVATION With Matt Johnson

Did you know that Yellow-billed Cuckoo populations fluctuate significantly in response to local caterpillar populations? Or that they often lay eggs in the nests of other birds? The Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo is a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Populations of these striking birds have severely declined throughout their range mostly because of the loss of critical riparian habitat for breeding. Matt will tell you more about the populations, behavior, and ecology of this species and what information is needed to best to conserve their populations. Matt has 21 years of experience studying avian populations and behavior. Currently, he is with

the USGS Biological Resources Division's Southwest Biological Science Center, Colorado Plateau Research Station at Northern Arizona University.

March 2 • Green Valley
March 11 • Tucson



IBA SURVEY / ERIN OLMSTEAD

AN ARMCHAIR TOUR OF ARIZONA'S IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS With Jennie MacFarland

The Arizona Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program is an exciting, field-oriented program rooted in science and focused on the conservation of Arizona's imperiled, native bird populations and their most critical habitats. Arizona has 42 designated IBAs, 8 of which have Global Status, and cover 3.38 million acres of habitat. Join Jennie MacFarland, co-coordinator of the program and staff at Tucson Audubon as she takes you on a photographic tour of these IBA's and highlights the different bird populations that depend on them for survival.

April 8 • Tucson

A DELTA ONCE MORE? PROSPECTS FOR RESTORING THE COLORADO RIVER DELTA With Karl Flessa, Director of the School of Earth & Environmental Sciences at the University of Arizona

The damming of the Colorado River significantly altered important habitats for birds and other wildlife in the Delta that cross the borders of the U.S. and Mexico. Karl will illustrate how these habitats have been altered and present efforts to restore them. ■

TUCSON AUDUBON NEWS ROUNDUP

Your Library is Ready and at Your Fingertips

In an effort to make the Tucson Audubon Library more user-friendly, you can now access the collection's catalog from our website. Go online and search by Title, Author, Keyword, Subject, ISBN, Publisher, or Call Number, then come down and check the book out.

The physical library at our Main Nature Shop is available to all Friends of Tucson Audubon in good standing

and is open Monday through Saturday from 10 AM to 4 PM. We have more than 1200 titles in subject areas ranging from birding, bird species, hiking, botany, reptiles, mammals, and much more.

For more information on the Library and the online database of available books please visit: tucsonaudubon.org/library.



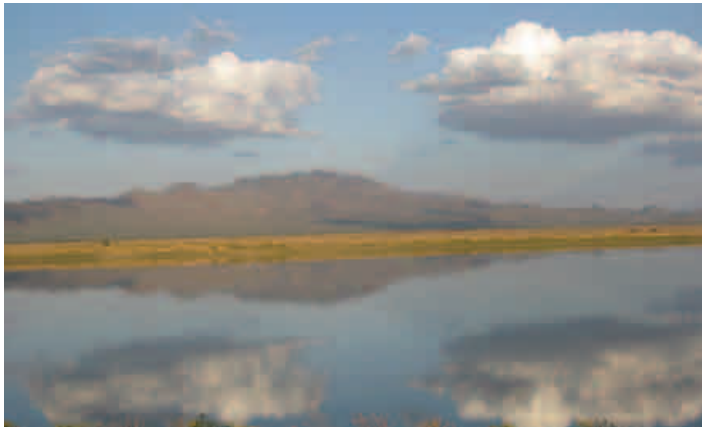
JENNIE MACFARLAND

This update to the library would not have been made possible without the generosity of past volunteer the late Gene Loring, and the dedication

of volunteers Sherry Massie, Hal Myers, Carol Eagle, Olga Harbour and Sherry Kistler.

Important Bird Areas Program

Jennie MacFarland, IBA Conservation Biologist



MATT GRIFFITHS

Cochise Lakes State Wildlife Area, an excellent waterfowl and Sandhill Crane viewing area in the Willcox Playa/Cochise Lakes Global Important Bird Area. On Jan 17th a new viewing deck will be unveiled here.

This New Year brings some exciting times for the Arizona Important Bird Areas (IBA) program. Right out the gate we have an opportunity for you to join the proud ranks of IBA survey volunteers. There will be a free **IBA Training workshop** the mornings of **January 24–25** to learn all of the survey techniques and protocols that we use to monitor existing IBAs and to gather data on areas that we would like to nominate as new IBAs. After this training, you would be an official IBA volunteer and could adopt a regular survey route (4 times a year) and would be eligible to help on backcountry IBA survey expeditions.

There will also be a new kind of IBA workshop in February intended for those who are already IBA volunteers. **February 21–22** we will have a free **IBA Above and Beyond workshop** where those who already know how to do an IBA survey will learn some of the newer more specialized survey techniques used by other agencies. These other surveys such as nightjar surveys, Yellow-billed Cuckoo call back surveys and Coordinated Bird Monitoring surveys have specific protocols and could really use the expert help of our volunteers. If you would like to expand on your IBA knowledge and join a special task

force of volunteer survey experts, this is the workshop for you!

If you would like to see for yourself what the IBA program is all about, consider joining us **February 9** for the particularly fun **San Rafael Grasslands IBA survey**. This will be a one day mass effort to monitor the abundant sparrows and longspurs that winter in this beautiful habitat. This is a driving survey with some walking and the focus species is the Chestnut-collared Longspur a bird of global level conservation concern.

You are also cordially invited to the celebration of a particular IBA that recently gained Global IBA status. On **January 17** we will have an official **Recognition Ceremony for the Willcox Playa Cochise Lakes IBA**. This event will be held in conjunction with the Wings Over Willcox festival and the event will also include the ribbon cutting of a new viewing deck that looks out onto the IBA. This will be a great event with a bird walk, lots of information about the area and its special birds and free food! Look for more specific details closer to the event on our website.

With so much happening in the first part of 2013, I can't wait to see what the rest of the year looks like for IBA!

Tucson Audubon at Tucson Festival of Books

Please come and visit Tucson Audubon at the upcoming Tucson Festival of Books March 9–10, 2013 on the University of Arizona campus. We will have two tents again this year. One will be for our nature shop and outreach, where we will feature books, stuffed animals and other items for sale. We will also be playing the bird game here for prizes! Our other tent will be in the Science City and will feature citizen science opportunities that advance our knowledge of birds. We will be playing a kid-friendly bird habitat game with prizes and will have several bird survey demonstrations in which families will be welcome to participate. For further information on the time and meeting place for the surveys, check the Tucson Festival of Books information flyer. We will once again be raffling off a pair of binoculars. To enter you only need to visit both Tucson Audubon tents. Please come on down to the Tucson Festival of Books and share our love of reading and learning.



JEAN BARCHMAN

Visit tucsonaudubon.org for updates and more.

JANUARY–MARCH 2013 *Vermilion Flycatcher* Tucson Audubon

Ways to Give

MATCHING GIFTS: YOU COULD BE SEEING DOUBLE!



DAVID QUANRUD

Many companies offer matching gift programs to encourage employees and retirees to contribute to charitable organizations. Some also provide matching funds to support employee volunteer hours. Most of these programs match contributions dollar for dollar, and some will even double or triple the amount of your gift!

Procedures vary; you can get more information from your employer's human resources department.

We thank those employees and retirees of IBM, Grainger, American Express, Microsoft, Freeport-McMoRan, Pfizer, and other employers who have generously multiplied the impact of recent gifts.

FREQUENT FLYERS HELP TUCSON AUDUBON SOAR: THANK YOU!

Signing up to become a "Frequent Flyer" is an easy and convenient way to maximize your support for Tucson Audubon throughout the year. A monthly giving plan is the perfect choice for donors wishing to help Tucson Audubon on a continuing basis and who would like to budget their contributions. You choose the amount, automatically charged to your credit card each month, and your member benefits never expire! Your fully tax deductible contributions will be listed on your credit card statement, and we will send you summary receipt of your annual gifts in January, making tax time that much easier.

Special thanks to Frequent Flyer Donors for their contributions: Myrna Beards, Melanie Builder, Andrea Cohen and Mary Beth Bolen, Mich Coker and Kate Galloway, Christine Curtis, Karl and Sandy Elers, Peggy Ford, Robert King, Susan Kozacek, Nora Miller, and Deborah Vath.



DAVID QUANRUD

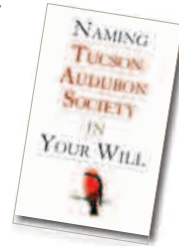
CREATE YOUR LEGACY THROUGH PLANNED GIVING

There are a number of ways to invest in the future of wildlife conservation and environmental education. By designating Tucson Audubon Society in your will or estate plan, you can make a lasting gift to protect the precious birds and habitats of Southeastern Arizona for generations to come.

To receive our updated pamphlet "Naming Tucson Audubon Society In Your Will" please contact Paul Green at ext. 7001 or pgreen@tucsonaudubon.org For tax and estate planning advice, please consult your attorney or other financial advisor.

If you decide to arrange a bequest or planned gift to Tucson Audubon, we hope you will notify us. We value the opportunity to express our gratitude for your commitment and honor you as a member of the Vermilion Society.

For more information about Frequent Flyer monthly giving plans, Matching Gifts or Tucson Audubon's Vermilion Society, or to make a contribution, please contact Erin Olmstead at 209-1809 or visit tucsonaudubon.org/donate.



ADAM KERFOOT-ROBERTS

Blackbird Singing in the Dead of Night!

May 23–June 3, 2013

Beatle Paul McCartney wrote about this songster, *Turdus merula*, the European Blackbird. I invite you to come and share the songs of this and other European species in May 2013 with me, and Arizona guide Rick Taylor of Borderland Tours, Richard Fray of Fun Birding Tours (and former Tucson Audubon Board member), and British bird artist Andrew MacKay.

We'll spend time in the birders' mecca of north Norfolk, then head north to Scotland to explore the birds and wildlife of the Isle of Skye and the Cairngorms. You'll be birding with three Brits and an Arizona native, and we'll make sure that you enjoy the birds, the banter, the beer, and the food.

More information from Borderland Tours borderland-tours.com, or by email rtaylor@borderland-tours.com or call 520-882-7650. *Paul Green, Executive Director*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Eleanor Alden, Kristina Allen, Jo Andersen and John Coinman, Dr. George and Barbara Ball, Glen and Melody Ballard, Grant Bashore, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Baumrind, Marcia Becker, Dr. Mindy Blaski, Ron and Sue Bridgemon, Robert Bulechek, Shirley Burke, John and Brooke Bushman, Marilee Cowan, John and Eva Cross, Richard and Bonna Cunningham, Sally Darcy, Elizabeth Davis, Dane and Di Dawkins, Gabriella and William Duncan, Murray Eden, Joe Eigner, Lois Estok, Elizabeth Fennema, Catherine Cole Ferandelli, Mary Lou Fragomeni-Nuttall, Laurie French, Donna Gill, Mary Gossick, John Haddix, Gay

Haefner, Peter Hardin, Diane Harris, Lynn Hassler, Liz and Russ Healy, Cheryl Helwig, Mike Heston, Philip and Annalora Horch, Melanie Huegel, Richard Johnson, Kathy Jorgensen, Margaret Kopriva, Wendy Kreider, Anne Leight, Sharon Long, Robert C. and Roseann Marsett, Stephen Mattix, Linda McMullen, Dr. Richard and Judith Meyer, Charles and Kim Miller, Christopher Miller, Don Mills, Karen Moulder, Jon R. Nelson, Jill Nelson-Debord, Karen Nichols, Carol Ovorkin, Mickey Ray Parker, Meredith Parson, Merri Pendergrass, Gary Platford, Dan and Jane Powers, Roland Provost, Henne Queisser, Virginia Reynolds, Bruce A. Ries,

Rhonda Robbins, Irene Robinson, Alan Rose, Lois Rose, Roggie Ross, Beth and Will Russell, Lawrence Schmahl, Marcia Scott, Susan Sferra, Sukhi Singh, Sarah Smith, James Spinhirne, Tim (and Benjamin and Claudia) Stellar and Pat Machelor, Elizabeth Strong, Paul Suchanek, Craig Thayer, Eugene and Anita Thomas, Mike Unger, James Veltman, Marie Vergata and Jack Smith, Dr. Frances Ann Walker, Geoffrey Williams, Karen Zipser, Sylvia and John Zwick

*Jean Barchman,
Membership Coordinator*

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Birthday Fund: We thank Rich Barchman, Lori Bryant, Daniel Davis, Sandy Elers, Joanne Garner, Mary Habib, Ann Tousley, and Joan Warfield for their generous donations to the birthday fund.

Gifts in Honor/Memory: We thank these donors for their special gifts:

In honor of Julia Gordon from the Barton Family Foundation

In memory of Elizabeth Edwards from Beverly Bechtel

In memory of Liz Edwards from Gene and Sandy Gerner

In memory of Beth Rubio from Karen Greene, Margaret MacLeish, and Betty Ord

Volunteer News Roundup

Kara Kaczmarzyk, Volunteer & Development Coordinator

Welcome New Volunteers

Marcia Becker, Chris Bjorgaard, Mike Hayes, Susheel Jones, Alice Kennedy, Kristin Leger, Susan Romero, Brad Steinagel, Christine Schirmer, Linda Tabor, Jason Thomas, and Jessica Sue Wiles.

Farewell Kate Reynolds

Thank you for a spectacular year of coordinating Tucson Audubon's free field trips!



Your Volunteer Season: January–March 2013

The next three months might be the most active time of the year for volunteering at Tucson Audubon, and a perfect time to join the fun! Tabling events beginning in January are ways to meet lots of interesting people. Cavort with birders from near and far during **Wings Over Willcox**, January 17–20. We'll have a large Nature Shop, membership, and outreach booth there. On March 9–10, our largest offsite booth of the year is at the **Festival of Books**. Over 100,000 people come to the UA campus for the event, and we'll have our Nature Shop and info booth in one area, and the IBA and Tucson Bird Count in the Science City area.

While the weather is still cool, we will continue Saturday morning efforts to **Restore Atturbury Wash**. Already, over 150 volunteers have dug rainwater basins and planted natives at the site, but there is more to be done!

On January 30th, the **River of Birds Gala** promises to be a lovely evening, raising funds and awareness. On the day of, join us to help decorate the Hilton El Conquistador's ballroom and set up the silent auction.

Those interested in the **Important Bird Area** program can attend a two-day training, January 24–25th, to learn all about the field survey and data collection methods of this conservation-based program, in time to adopt a route or participate in group surveys in the year.

Jumping ahead, April will see myriad education and outreach opportunities during **Earth Day festivities**. From Agua Caliente to Reid Park to Patagonia and beyond, ways to participate in this celebration of sustainability abound.

Some unique **individual projects** are also available. Help **coordinate free field trips**, or capture events as an **amateur event photographer**. Stellar volunteer captain Sherry Massie, who recently upgraded the member **library** with a group of volunteers, is looking for someone to help check in library books.

These and more exciting opportunities are in store in 2013! Please contact me at volunteer@tucsonaudubon.org or 520-209-1811, or visit www.tucsonaudubon.org/volunteer for more details. ■

Congratulations to

Tim Helentjaris, the Tucson Audubon Society 2012 Volunteer of the Year! Tim volunteers for the Important Bird Area (IBA) program, and the Nature Shop, and restoration workdays, and tabling events, and field trip leading, and writing articles for the *Vermilion Flycatcher*, and the Institute of Desert Ecology...wow!

Tim was a volunteer spotlight a few years ago in the *Vermilion Flycatcher*, where we noted his background as a plant geneticist and former UA scientist. But, we neglected to mention his crime-solving work. The PBS show *Scientific American Frontiers* once featured a story about the first time the DNA fingerprint of a plant was used in a criminal trial. It was 1993, and detectives needed to match Palo Verde seedpods to their mother tree at the scene of a murder. After fourteen geneticists turned down the challenge, the detectives contacted U of A geneticist Tim Helentjaris. The rest was history.

In the last year, Tim took on additional responsibilities in the Nature Shop. Besides his weekly shift, Tim now opens and closes the shop when employees are absent. Matt Brooks, former Nature Shop Manager, raved that Tim sells binoculars like a "Wildman" and wants people to be matched up with their perfect fit. He's engaged in new products and often has great product suggestions. Personable and knowledgeable, he is just an all-around great volunteer. Sara Pike echoes that Tim is such a positive and enthusiastic volunteer. He brings a different energy to the shop



MARK HENGESBAUGH

on Monday mornings. His birding skills are excellent and he can talk birding with anyone who comes in the door.

Volunteering for offsite events, Tim is flexible to help "wherever he's needed most." Afterwards, he provides thoughtful, detailed feedback on each. Tim has supported the IBA program since 2007. He participated in all of the group back country surveys this year (Chiricahuas, BHP San Manuel, Pinalenos, Harshaw Creek, San Rafael Grasslands), in addition to his regular Cave Creek route.

Jennie MacFarland, the IBA Program Coordinating Biologist, notes that Tim shows all the time that he cares deeply for Tucson Audubon. He is upbeat, interested, and engaged in what we do at IBA, often helping with the planning process of a back-country survey or event. He is helpful to less experienced surveyors. Lastly, she says "I am always happy to see Tim walking up to me in the office to razz me about something." Even when he is not volunteering with IBA at that moment, he is still caring and thinking about it. ■

Kara Kaczmarzyk



KENDALL KROESEN



KENDALL KROESEN



KENDALL KROESEN



BRAD STEINAGEL

"Tweet Dreams" Quilt Raffle

All proceeds to benefit Tucson Audubon. Buy tickets online at tucsonaudubon.org or in our Nature Shops.



The quilt measures 44" x 44" and is embellished with embroidery, beads, hand painting, and some original artwork in addition to the heirloom bird squares.

Visit tucsonaudubon.org for updates and more.

Interesting stories about birds with interesting names

Northern Mockingbird

LARRY LIESE

"Where is that Crissal Thrasher? I know he's in there somewhere but all I see is that ... mockingbird. ... Oh." I think most birders have a story like this to tell, but luckily being able to discern when it's a mockingbird that is singing does get easier with experience.

Northern Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*) are year round residents of the lower forty-eight states and much of Mexico, with entry into Canada's lower tier of provinces with some seasonal movement there. It is the most northern of roughly ten mockingbirds that populate the New World, most with fairly similar body shape and ability to imitate other birds' songs. Both males and females sing, with unmated males sometimes singing through the night. Less time is spent singing in the fall, and females sing somewhat less than males.

Luckily for birders, mockingbirds will usually give about three repetitions of the imitated song then switch to a new species' song. Other clues to keep in mind are whether the habitat or season fits or not. Many male mockingbirds' repertoires of songs exceed 150 distinct song types, and the quality of imitation is such that it prompted a compilation of bird song recordings all made by mockingbirds! Interestingly, detailed studies of spring and fall repertoires have shown only about 1% overlap. Furthermore, the following spring will only include from one-third to two-thirds of the previous springs' songs with the rest new songs both learned directly or from other

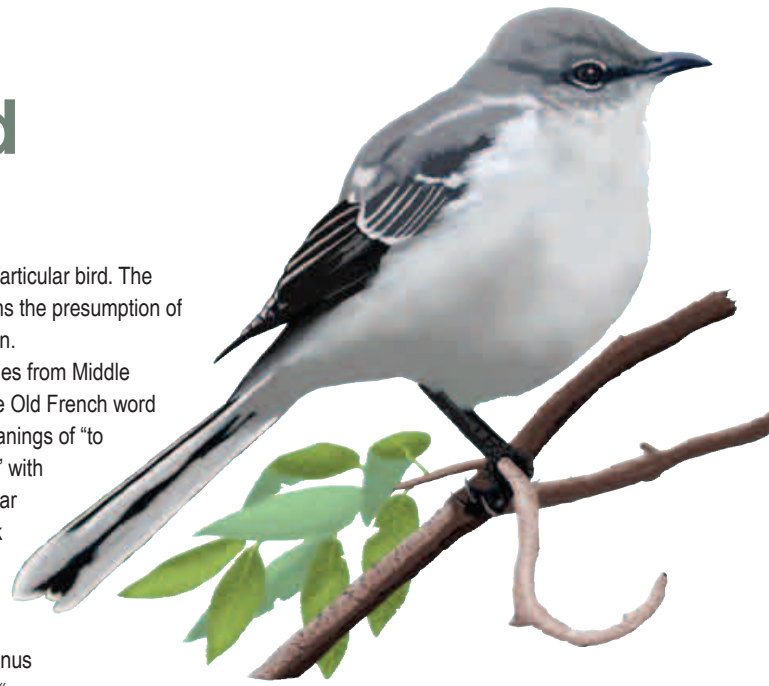
mockingbirds. I've personally recognized songs given by mockingbirds of species that they shouldn't ever have had contact with. I'd wondered how many mockingbird individuals those songs had gone

through before reaching that particular bird. The fact that this occurs strengthens the presumption of the very high fidelity of imitation.

The word mockingbird comes from Middle English *mocken* (itself from the Old French word *moquer*), which had both meanings of "to wipe the nose" and "to deride," with Italian and Latin words of similar nature. We use the word mock to imitate in fun, which seems somewhat appropriate as these birds imitate the songs of many other species. The genus name is from the Latin *mimus* "a mimic," with the Greek *poly* and *glotta* for "many" and "tongue" respectively, of course alluding to the bird's varied mimicry.

Northern Mockingbirds are highly territorial year round, with smaller winter territories. Territory borders are defended at times by the "boundary dance," where birds (usually males) face off at the boundary, stepping to the side while still facing each other, sometimes moving up and over bushes while continuing the face-off for several minutes.

There are three recognized courtship displays. The first involves a swift paired flight through the territory. A second is the interesting display where a male flies upwards from a perch while continuously singing then parachutes back down to the same or nearby perch. The remaining display involves the male running along tree branches, thought to perhaps be a showing of potential nest sites in the territory. Pairs are generally monogamous, usually for the length of a breeding season, but



occasionally they mate for life. Nests are located fairly close to the ground, with up to six nests built by a pair observed in one breeding season (not all nests received eggs). Young are highly altricial, born without feathers, blind, and quite helpless. They fledge in about twelve days, with parents still providing food for up to three weeks and protection from predators.

You shouldn't have any trouble running into these birds. Most areas of desert scrub with some semi-open areas have them, and Northern Mockingbirds often live their entire life on their chosen territory so if you like you can follow individuals through time after you've found them. Be careful though! Northern Mockingbirds recognize humans that repeatedly enter their territory and will attack those who get too close to nests in the breeding season while letting one-time passers-by go through unmolested. Good luck avoiding that! ■



ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE WEST

AVAILABLE IN OUR NATURE SHOPS

Tucson Audubon's Nature Shops have an a wide range of birding, natural history, and other book titles. Call us at 520-629-0510 x2 and ask if we have a book you're looking for. If we don't, we can often get it for you quickly.



Adventures Along the Tanque Verde Wash

BRIAN NICHOLAS

I discovered a birder's paradise rarely visited by other birders. Its diversity of habitats is remarkable, including the junction of two major washes, mesquite bosque, agricultural fields, desert scrub, a large lake, cattail marsh, cottonwoods, grassland habitat, and even a pecan grove. Although it is considered lowland riparian habitat with little elevation gain it has also attracted mountain species such as Mexican Jay, Arizona Woodpecker, Yellow-eyed Junco, Greater Pewee and Rufous-crowned Sparrow. In fifteen years I have recorded over 240 species over just a 4 mile section of this lush riparian habitat along the Tanque Verde and Agua Caliente washes. I consider my skills average and have to wonder what would turn up if more birders frequented this local "hotspot."

One of the great benefits of the Tanque Verde watershed is that it is local, and can be birded around your schedule. You can walk your dog, clean house, or even check out your backyard birds before heading over. Some of my unusual finds were from short afternoon birding "breaks." Others have been while conducting surveys for the Important Bird Areas Program, Christmas Bird Count, and the Tucson Bird Count.

Walking up to a point count to discover a Tricolored Heron took me totally by surprise. Or the Sage Thrasher which flew up on a fence during a transect count. Stopping the clock to watch a young bear run circles around a family of bewildered coyotes was a priceless moment.

I love to bird this wash in winter, especially during or after a rain when I can have the wash all to myself. Mountain species escaping the cold and snow on Mount Lemmon see this long green ribbon of riparian habitat as a



Tanque Verde Wash (above) is local birder Brian Nicholas's favorite 'secret' hotspot. Long-eared Owl (below) can be found in the area. Check Wentworth Road for Red-breasted Nuthatch (left) during an irruption year. Don't skip the south shore of large pond at Castlerock (right).

welcome retreat. Woodland Road, with its fields, mesquites, and pecan groves, has attracted rarities such as Bay-breasted Warbler, Arizona Woodpecker, Yellow-eyed Junco, Greater Pewee, Red-breasted Sapsucker and Lewis's Woodpecker. Scan the blackbirds for Rusty Blackbird or Common Grackle, and listen for mountain species while enjoying the woodpeckers, raptors, meadowlarks, and scores of Vermilion Flycatchers.

At the east end of Woodland is a place to park and a trail going to the wash. A walk east along this stretch can produce a good variety of sparrows and raptors, especially falcons. This area is great for Western Meadowlark, Lark Bunting, Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrow. More unusual sightings here have included Ferruginous Hawk, Bobolink, and Sage, Cassin's, and Clay-colored Sparrows.

The large pond in the Castlerock development can be birded from the south shore, and has turned up some interesting waterfowl including Greater White-fronted Goose, three merganser species, Surf Scoter, Snow Goose, Western Grebe and Wilson's Snipe. East of the lake is the Isabella Lee refuge, where you can get lost in the bosque of mesquite, Arizona walnut, soapberry and desert willow. Look for Long-eared Owl (semiannual), Clay-colored Sparrow, and Gray Hawk in late summer. Taking a left up the Agua Caliente Wash brings you

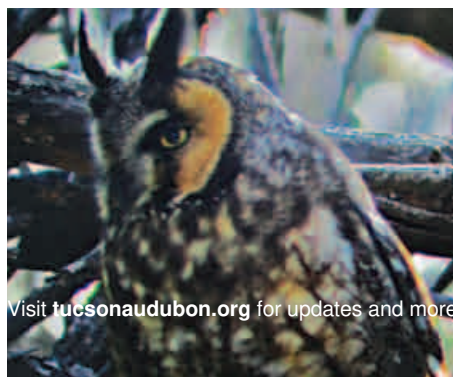
past Bonanza Road and La Mariposa resort, whose cottonwoods have lots of variety to round out your bird list.

Tanque Verde Loop usually has good warbler action just north of the wash in the tall cottonwoods, and birding a hundred yards in either direction along the wash gives you most of the birds with little effort. Start early since traffic picks up quickly. Look for Inca Dove, Bridled Titmouse, Orange-crowned and Black-throated Gray Warblers, robins, bluebirds, and wintering White-winged Dove. Rarities have included Fox Sparrow, Purple Finch, and Yellow-throated Vireo in summer.

Wentworth Road has the best warbler flocks, and has water when other sections are dry. This area could be a great place for Red-breasted Nuthatch during this irruption year, especially around the cottonwoods by the golf maintenance yard.

Birding the Tanque Verde lets you recharge your batteries without filling your gas tank or rearranging your weekend. You can drive to various points or walk the wash, reconnecting with nature and forgetting all your cares as you appreciate our local wildlife. ■

Brian Nicholas's passion for birding started over twenty years ago in Connecticut. His enthusiasm for nature prompted his move to Arizona where he loves to explore its rich diversity of wildlife.



Visit tucsonaudubon.org for updates and more

Tucson Audubon, Meet Your Mascot

BOB BOWERS

Sixty-three years ago, when twelve friends met to organize what was to become the Tucson Audubon Society, choosing a bird to represent the organization might have been on the agenda. We don't know for certain, since little information about those early days is readily available. If not that night, though, it wasn't long before a mascot/logo, iconic bird, was chosen to symbolize the group, its newsletter and mission; the strikingly beautiful Vermilion Flycatcher.

In researching this article, I tried unsuccessfully to discover the story behind that selection. I wondered if the choice had been unanimous, or if it had been hotly contested, maybe between the flycatcher and the state bird, the Cactus Wren. As we all know, birders are rarely quick to agree on anything. However, I wasn't able to dig up any dirt, and finally agreed with those old-timers I did reach that the choice was a good one, regardless. Selecting a single bird from the 600 plus species documented in Arizona might seem a daunting task, but the Vermilion Flycatcher was an excellent choice for lots of reasons.

First, naturally, is its range. It's not U.S. exclusive to southeast Arizona, like the Rufous-winged Sparrow, but you can count its other states on one hand, so it's not seen in 90 percent of the country. Besides, as a magazine title, 'The Rufous-winged Sparrow' lacks the zing of 'The Vermilion Flycatcher'. Even though many of our Vermilion Flycatchers winter in Mexico, many others are year-round residents. This twelve-month presence, coupled with the

flycatcher's adaptability to urbanization (they're commonly found near the water features of parks and golf courses) also adds weight to its selection. In addition, the bird has exotic, neotropical credentials. Common in Mexico, you can also find our mascot in Central America and as far south as the tip of Argentina. Surprisingly, the Vermilion Flycatcher is even found in the Galapagos Islands, only one of a half-dozen species resident both in the U.S. and the archipelago. There is even a colorless, melanistic subspecies found in and around Lima, Peru.

However, if our bird were the melanistic version, we might be reading *The Rufous-winged Sparrow* after all, since there is little doubt that the flycatcher's selection had much to do with the male's striking color. I remember vividly my first encounter with the Vermilion Flycatcher. It was on the San Pedro River in spring, and I caught my breath as I watched what appeared to be an exotic, brilliantly red butterfly flutter above the trees and spiral back down to a perch, repeating this unique courtship display again and again. Some other tyrant flycatchers also have dramatic courtship displays, but none are as stunning as this. However, courtship is but one of several characteristics that differentiate the Vermilion from other North American flycatchers. While all but one other of our flycatcher females and males look alike, the Vermilion sexes differ markedly. Females lack the male's brilliant color, but are beautiful nonetheless, with streaked white breast colors gradually darkening to salmon undertail coverts. Additionally, immature Vermilion flycatchers stand apart from adults, again unlike almost all of our other flycatchers. Young males are mottled, while first year females have yellow bellies, rather than pink.

The eggs of Vermilion Flycatchers are unique, as well. Unlike the plain-colored eggs of other flycatchers, those of the Vermilion are special, wreathed in patterns of soft olive, brown and lavender. Discovering a well-camouflaged nest with three of these is like finding a cache of Easter eggs.

Many things make this bird appropriately special as our mascot, but



Male (above) and female (below) Vermilion Flycatcher, and nest with eggs (inset below). Icons at left show the evolution of the Vermilion Flycatcher logo.

perhaps none so much as the color of the male. In the first place, 'vermilion' suggests something extra, raising the ante on 'red', and ornithologists competed poetically to name the bird. The scientific name is *Pyrocephalus rubinus*, or 'ruby firehead', and the Spanish name, Mosquero cardinal (Cardinal-colored fly-killer), evolved from the more colorful Brasita de fuego (little red-hot coal of fire). Author Herbert Brandt's descriptions epitomize poetic reference, as found in his *Arizona and Its Bird Life*. Brandt's five-pound classic was published just two years after that first meeting of the fledgling Tucson Audubon Society, and might well have influenced their choice of mascot. In those days, the Vermilion Flycatcher was also known as the Firebird, and it was obviously one of Brandt's favorites. His book mentions the flycatcher on 27 pages, and his eloquent descriptions range from crimson, fiery, rich ruby, blazing comet, brilliant fire jewel, splendor, gem, gorgeous flame, blazing livery to 'glowing like firebrands against the flawless blue of the sky.' Could those early founders have picked a better mascot? I don't think so. ■

Bob is a birder and freelance writer specializing in nature and travel articles. He writes a monthly birding column for an Arizona newspaper, and lives with his wife, Prudy, in SaddleBrooke, in northwest Tucson. He writes a birding and travel blog, www.birdingthebrooke.com, and his email is bobescribe@gmail.com.



TUCSON *meet* YOUR BIRDS



AMERICAN KESTREL, JOHN KENNEDY; VERDIN, LARRY SELMAN

From the rarest migrant to the most common backyard finch, for most of us birds are the most colorful, charismatic and accessible part of nature. Tucson Audubon encourages anyone who has an interest in wild birds. Birds really are for everyone to enjoy.

If your interest in birds is new, the following pages provide you with an introduction to some of Tucson's birds. We cannot cover them all because more than 300 species are found in the metro area! There are so many species to see and they are around us almost all the time.

This diversity comes about because of our range of elevations, mild seasons, Sky Island mountains that link the

Rockies to Mexico's Sierra Madre, influences from Sonoran, Mojave, and Chihuahuan deserts, migratory flyways, and tropical areas south of the border.

Tucson is such a good place for birds that the most comprehensive urban bird count in the world—the Tucson Bird Count—was developed to study them. Nearly 100 volunteers count birds on an annual or quarterly basis at over 1,000 different locations around Tucson.

The huge number of bird enthusiasts and other wildlife watchers who live in, or visit, Arizona contribute a surprising annual "total economic impact" of \$1.5 billion to Arizona's economy. It doesn't matter if you are buying some bird seed,

a pricy spotting scope, or staying in a bed and breakfast on a trip—you are part of the action.

Bird watchers are you! Whenever you see a backyard hummingbird or that hawk in the local park, you are joining the ranks of a popular hobby! Tucson Audubon stands as the unique southeast Arizona outlet for information and expertise about wild birds. Whatever your bird interests, make us your "go to" organization.

Find out more at our website or come to our Nature Shop (see below). The shop staff can answer all your questions about birds, binoculars and many other things.

Kendall Kroesen
Habitats Program Manager

ROAD WARRIOR



"A" MOUNTAIN IN SENTINEL PEAK PARK, the crowded tourist spot overlooking downtown Tucson, is an unlikely birding hot spot. But on windy days this steep little hill becomes our local "Hawk Mountain." Seven kinds of raptors have been seen, often at eye level, including Zone-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk and Peregrine Falcon. Common Ravens, White-Throated Swifts and migrant swallows also swoop low over the upper parking lot. A surprising variety of Sonoran desert birds can still be found in this urban "sanctuary." Forty-seven observed species include Greater Roadrunner, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher and Rock Wren. Five kinds of warblers migrate through the park, such as Wilson's, Townsend's, Hermit and Black-Throated Gray. During the summer Purple Martins, Ash-Throated Flycatchers and White-Winged Doves are easy to find. Five kinds of sparrows and towhees are seen, especially in the winter and spring. The park opens at 8 AM (walk in) but upper road does not open until 9 AM.

John Higgins

Special 4-page Pull-Out

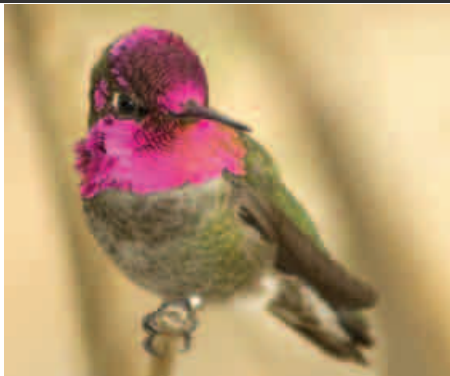
GREAT BIRD PLACES IN TUCSON

OUR MISSION: Tucson Audubon promotes the protection and stewardship of southern Arizona's biological diversity through the study and enjoyment of birds and the places they live.



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 Tucson Bird Count: tucsonbirds.org • Volunteer: tucsonaudubon.org/volunteer
 Tucson Bird & Wildlife Festival: tucsonaudubon.org/festival
tucsonaudubon.org 520-629-0510





ANGELA PRITCHARD

Anna's Hummingbird

Any hummingbird feeder in urban Tucson probably has a resident Anna's Hummingbird defending it from all intruders. This beautiful and large hummer is a common sight in backyards across the city and the male's striking rosy-pink flashing head plumage makes it a compelling reason to keep your feeders full of nectar. In the first half of the last century this bird's breeding range was limited to southwestern California. As the century progressed parks were created and gardens were planted and the birds steadily expanded their range north into Oregon and east into southern Arizona. Some Anna's Hummingbirds live in Tucson year-round but from December to May their numbers increase as birds come to urban Tucson to nest and take advantage of the abundant flowers and feeders our yards provide. This time of year you may also witness the spectacular courtship display of the male Anna's Hummingbird right in your yard. The male flies to a high point above an available female and then dives straight down and suddenly pulls up right over her with an explosive popping sound (caused by air passing at just the right velocity over special feathers in the tail). It is an amazing thing to witness and happens all over Tucson all winter and early spring.

Jennie MacFarland, IBA Conservation Biologist



GATOR GRAY

Gila Woodpecker

Gila Woodpecker is the woodpecker commonly seen in Tucson suburbs and parks. They are a rich, creamy brown with fine horizontal black and white bars on the back, wings and tail. Males have a small red patch on their heads.

In the U.S. Gila Woodpecker is mostly seen in the southern half of Arizona, but its range extends down much of Baja California and the coastal plain of western Mexico.

Yes, this is the bird that drums annoyingly on your eaves and your evaporative cooler! Fortunately, it only lasts a short time in the spring when males are establishing and defending a nesting territory.

They are aggressive not only toward rival woodpeckers, but toward other birds as well. I once saw one mercilessly pecking a House Finch to death. It may have been preparing to eat the finch because Gilas have a diverse diet, including mostly insects but also fruit, eggs and sometimes other birds (mostly small nestlings).

Gila Woodpeckers are one of two species that make nest holes in saguaros (along with Gilded Flickers). Its old saguaro holes provide nests for many other bird species as well, from Ash-throated Flycatchers to Purple Martins.

Kendall Kroesen, Habitats Program Manager



JAMES PRUDENTE

Lesser Goldfinch

There is nothing lesser about the sweet tune or striking and colorful wing patterns of a Lesser Goldfinch. These small finches, of the family Fringillidae, are a charm to find flocking in your backyard or local park.

Stephen H. Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1819-20 collected the first known specimen of this species on the banks of the Arkansas River between Colorado Springs and Pueblo, Colorado. The Lesser Goldfinch name became official on the 5th edition of the AOU Check-List.

Did you know that the Lesser Goldfinch is an accomplished mimic? It is surpassed in North America in the number of species it can mimic in one song only by Lawrence's Goldfinch. While this bird is the smallest of the American goldfinches, to sit and watch a treasury of Lesser Goldfinch congregate, communicate, and consume from feeders or flowers, is a much greater experience for any lover of birds than the name implies.

To enjoy Lesser Goldfinch in your urban yard, try planting seed bearing flowers or bushes (such as sunflowers, Desert Marigold or Clevelandii sage). Or, put up a nyjer feeder and water feature, and then enjoy the sights and sounds of this beautiful bird.

Sara Pike, Operations Manager

Special 4-page Pull-Out

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA CAMPUS AND ARBORETUM features plants adapted to arid regions throughout the globe and represents some of the most diverse, unique, and lush plantings in urban Tucson. Common desert residents and a nice variety of unexpected species can be found here at all seasons. Verdin, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Northern Cardinal, Lesser Goldfinch, and other residents are ubiquitous. Winter and early spring should also produce Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped Warblers and lush patches may produce a Cassin's Vireo, Plumbeous Vireo, or a wintering Black-throated Gray Warbler. White-throated Swift (near the stadium) and Broad-billed Hummingbird are probably as easy to see here in winter as anywhere in the city. Birds can be found throughout campus but the best areas include the Main Gate area along Park Avenue, the cactus garden on the mall south of the student union, and near the community garden and park on Mabel Road north of the Highland Parking Garage.

Carl Lunblad



CARL LUNBLAD



DORIS EVANS

Phainopepla

This bird's questioning "wurp?" call is a common sound in desert habitat in and around Tucson. With the male's handsome glossy black plumage, flashing white wing patches and ragged crest this bird is often described as a 'black cardinal with a red eye.' The matte slate gray female is quite beautiful in a more understated way. In winter these birds aggregate in areas of high mistletoe concentration, fiercely defending clumps of native mistletoes in Palo Verde and Mesquite trees against other Phainopeplas, males and females holding their own feeding territories. The slim silhouette of this bird may seem a common sight in regions of Tucson with desert vegetation, but this bird has a complicated seasonal migration pattern that is still not fully understood by scientists. Phainopeplas may actually be one of the only birds in North America to nest first in one habitat and then again in another all in the same year. In the spring these birds nest in Sonoran Desert habitat, often in a tree that is hosting native mistletoe so a steady food supply is always within wing's reach. When temperatures begin to rise in early summer, these birds gather in nearby riparian woodlands or higher elevation oak woodlands (such as Madera Canyon) and then raise another brood.

Jennie MacFarland, IBA Conservation Biologist



MUIRIEL NEDDERMEYER

White-crowned Sparrow

After a long scorching Tucson summer, a welcome sign of the cooler weather to come is hearing the first White-crowned Sparrow sing in mid-September. Chances are good that this first sparrow is of the Rocky Mountain sub-species (*oriantha*) which are more likely to be seen in early fall on their way to Mexico for the winter. In Tucson, the more common *gambelii* sub-species arrives from the forests and tundra of Alaska and northwestern Canada a bit later to spend the winter here.

These birds are fairly common in Tucson, frequenting even small natural patches in the city. You can easily have White-crowned Sparrows in your own yard if there's adequate vegetative protection and a good seed source for food. They are also easy to identify because you can stumble into a small flock and spend countless minutes studying the black-and-white striped crown of these large sparrows.

Songs of White-crowned Sparrows are among the most studied of any bird. Sub-species and sometimes breeding populations can be distinguished by their dialects. Some males along breeding borders are "bilingual," singing the songs from both breeding populations. Soak up these songs now—before you know it, White-crowns will leave and the heat will return!

Matt Griffiths, Communications and Restoration Specialist



GATOR GRAY

Cooper's Hawk

The Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) is a common year-round resident in Tucson. This medium-sized hawk has a long tail and gray back, and adults have a salmon-colored breast (hawks in their first year of life have a white breast with brown streaks). Although common in Tucson, the Cooper's Hawk is not especially conspicuous in January, unless you are lucky and have one visiting your yard to hunt for doves and other small birds. Cooper's Hawks clearly know the yards where people feed birds, and take advantage of the concentration of prey. In February, the nesting cycle begins anew, and Cooper's Hawks become easy to see, especially early in the morning, when both males and females participate in courtship flights and nest building activities. They also vocalize (*kek-kek-kek-kek*) regularly during this time of year. Cooper's Hawks typically build their nests in relatively large trees (Eucalyptus or pine) and occupy many of the parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and apartment complexes throughout Tucson. Next time you are out birding, don't forget to listen for their calls, and look on the ground under groves of large trees for piles of bird feathers, and streaks of "white-wash"—tell tale signs of their presence.

Bill Mannan, Professor of Wildlife Ecology, University of Arizona, and specialist in urban raptors

Special 4-page Pull-Out

RILLITO WEED PATCH On the northern end of central Tucson's Columbus Boulevard there is a small parking area with direct access to the Rillito River path. Head west ¼ mile along the paved walking path to the bridge and check the numerous hackberry trees and wolfberry shrubs, both of which provide berries for local winter species such as thrushes and sparrows. This path runs along the southern end of the locally famed "weed patch," which is full of seed producing tall grasses and maybe one of the 14 species of sparrows recorded here! Back at the parking area continue east along the paved bike path as it skirts a large restoration area that frequently hosts a lesser-known southeastern Arizona specialty, the Rufous-winged Sparrow. Don't forget to look up at the tall electric towers that run down the middle of the typically dry riverbed. They provide excellent perches for many raptor species, like Peregrine Falcon. *Jake Mohlmann*

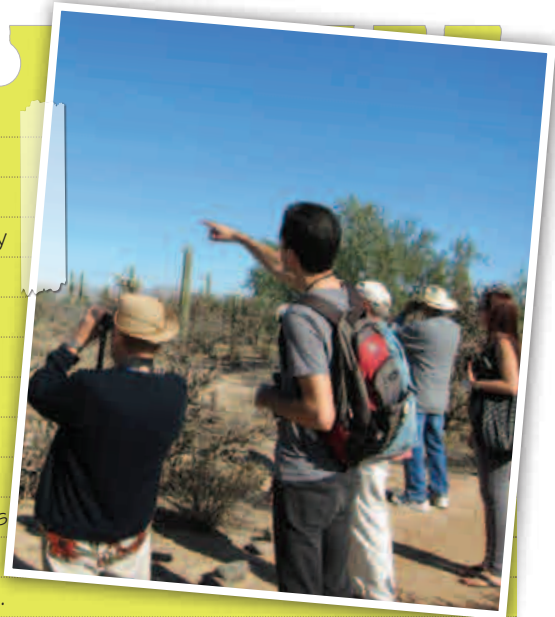


JAKE MOHLMANN

There are scores of places to see birds in Tucson. Here are a few places that might surprise you, contributed by some of Tucson's top Tucson bird experts.

TUCSON AUDUBON MASON CENTER SW corner of Thornydale and Hardy Rds: Twenty acres of desert dominated by saguaros, ironwoods, and several species of cholla. On a slow walk of the 1-mile well-defined loop trail, which starts 100 feet north of the buildings, expect to see 12 to 15 bird species such as American Kestrel, Gambel's Quail, Mourning Dove, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Gila Woodpecker, Verdin, Cactus Wren, Curved-billed Thrasher, Phainopepla, Black-throated Sparrow, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch. Gilded Flickers, Red-tailed Hawks and Cooper's Hawks are other regular sightings. Up-close views of Gila Woodpeckers and Gilded Flickers provide opportunities to appreciate differences between similar species in behaviors and in color patterns, and differences between the males and females. Along the trail many plants are labeled.

Jim Gessaman



ANGELA SALIMON

ORO VALLEY MARKETPLACE URBAN BIRDING PATCH Between the Oro Valley Marketplace and Canyon del Oro Wash is a wonderful patch of habitat that is especially productive in winter. This area, located right across from Catalina State Park, is easily accessible near the In-N-Out. In mitigation for the habitat lost to the stores, the adjacent area was enhanced and provides excellent birding. The planted native trees are still on the small side but this area will only improve over time. It has also been planted with so many native grasses that it is excellent winter habitat for native birds. A recent field trip produced many Western Bluebirds, Lawrence's Goldfinches, Green-tailed and Abert's Towhees, and numerous species of sparrows. For those living on the northwest side of town, this is an easily accessible place to go birding and see for yourself just how important relatively small patches of urban habitat can be for native birds. *Jennie MacFarland*

JENNIE MACFARLAND

Special 4-page Pull-Out




RIO VISTA NATURAL RESOURCE PARK Located at the top of Tucson Boulevard where it meets the Rillito, this pleasant and underbirded park is always worth a couple hours in the morning. It contains about a mile of meandering, unmarked trails through desert scrub with a few larger trees. Typical desert species like Costa's Hummingbird, Greater Roadrunner, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Cactus Wren, and Northern Cardinal can be found here. Lucy's Warbler nests in spring. Phainopepla can be abundant in winter. The small manicured grass field and playground area attract Vermilion Flycatcher, Say's Phoebe, and Cassin's Kingbird. These flycatchers sometimes stay late into wintertime. Nearby, dense mesquite bosque surrounded by tall weeds can hold migrant sparrows. Migrating swallows can be seen moving along the Rillito in the proper season. Finally, this park is as good a location as any to watch for the Prairie Falcons that patrol the Rillito during the winter months. Water and restrooms are available. *Scott Olmstead*

Merlin at Rio Vista Park



JOAN GELLATLY



Tucson Audubon's eighth edition of **Finding Birds in Southeast Arizona**, brings together the latest information on finding birds in southeast Arizona in its 372 pages. This is your best source of detailed information to help you plan bird watching adventures throughout southeast Arizona. Available from Tucson Audubon's Nature Shops. 

CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION NEWS

CHRIS MCVIE, PAUL GREEN, KENDALL KROESEN, AND BÉTÉ PFISTER

SunZia Update

We have reported before on the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Project, designed to carry power over two 500-kilovolt (kV) lines from central New Mexico to central Arizona, and how it could threaten the Lower San Pedro River Global Important Bird Area.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is evaluating alternative routes, some of which pass through the Lower San Pedro River Valley and Aravaipa Canyon. If constructed, up to 300 sixteen-story towers would run down the valley, with an access easement up to 1000 feet wide and access roads to every tower. Vegetation beneath the lines would be kept clear to avoid potential fire damage.

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

The comment period for the SunZia Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) ended on August 22, 2012, and the next step will be for the BLM to issue a revised or final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for public review. We believe they should issue a

revised EIS, as the initial draft EIS was deficient in many respects.

The BLM's preferred alternative follows the west side of the San Pedro Valley for approximately 45 miles, opening an entirely new corridor for much of this distance.

Meanwhile, we have learned that the BLM, which should be an impartial arbiter in the National Environment Protection Act (NEPA) process, has introduced an egregious bias in presentations made to Congress, the Tohono O'odham Nation, and others, which is not in keeping with the agency's role.

In sum, the BLM has claimed during presentations that major organizations and agencies (including the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Parks Service, and The Nature Conservancy) concur with the BLM preferred route down the San Pedro River Valley when in fact they do not. The External Affairs Office of the FWS has formally requested that the BLM inform the Tohono O'odham Nation that the FWS is not in concurrence with the preferred alternative. The BLM also made false claims regarding TNC in October to a congressional delegation. While TNC has corrected BLM on this point, BLM has persisted in making these false claims since those complaints.

The Cascabel Working Group has reviewed the entire BLM presentation to the Tohono O'odham Nation on preferred SunZia routes and has identified multiple falsehoods, misrepresentations, and omissions that they intend to contest with the BLM.

Many groups, including Tucson Audubon, have called for the "No Action" alternative, recommending that this project not be built, and some comments have provided clear alternatives for addressing energy transmission needs in the region. The proposed Southline Transmission Project is a sound example.

The BLM's timeline for the project originally called for releasing the final environmental impact statement for public comment toward the end of 2012, although this has clearly been delayed now. According to the BLM's Adrian Garcia, the official scheduled date for the Record of Decision (ROD) is May 3, 2013.

SunZia's majority owner has a long-standing interest in providing transmission capacity for its large planned and permitted natural gas-powered plant in Bowie, Arizona. Many of the formal comments made by agencies and organizations on the SunZia Draft EIS are available at www.nmeader.com/sunzia/route/deis.html.

No News on Rosemont is Good News

At a media event on November 16, Coronado Forest Supervisor Jim Upchurch said he doesn't know when he will be issuing a Final Environmental Impact Statement. Nor does he know whether a Supplemental or New EIS is needed. The Forest Service website had been saying for months that a Final EIS would be issued this December, but as the time grew closer, it became clear that such action was extremely unlikely.

Upchurch re-emphasized the complexity of the project and said that he still needs more information relating to the mine's impacts, including air quality, endangered species, cultural resources, lighting, and the changes in the mining plan.

It is important for everyone to understand that even if the Forest Service issues a Final EIS, the project is by no means ready to start. At that point the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will begin their analysis of the impacts of "dredging and filling" on the watershed of Cienega Creek and Davidson Canyon. These streams are both "Outstanding Waters" of the state of Arizona and their water quality cannot be degraded. We think it is highly unlikely that Rosemont can cover 4,000 acres of the eastern slopes of the Santa Rita Mountains with tailings and waste mountains over 70-stories in height without that material having a toxic impact on downstream waters.

And, as you may know, photos of one or more jaguars (listed since 1997 as an endangered species) are now known from the vicinity of the proposed mine.

*Gayle Hartmann, President,
Save the Scenic Santa Ritas.*

Gray Water Ordinance Under Review

In 2007, Tucson Audubon was part of a working group that developed a new Residential Gray Water Ordinance that was adopted by the Mayor and Council in September 2008. It required builders to include a stub-out to enable gray water usage in new homes. The innovative, forward-looking ordinance was designed, in part, to address the possibility of a time when our CAP supply is reduced.

Currently, more than 40 percent of our potable water is used for outdoor landscaping by City Water customers. Does it make sense to you to use

drinking water for landscape irrigation that has been extracted from the Colorado River and pumped 350 miles uphill, using electricity generated by the Navajo Generating Station, Arizona's largest carbon emitter?

Following the long and inclusive process that led to the gray water and rainwater harvesting ordinances, the City Council recently discussed completely dismantling the ordinance as recommended by the Joint Consolidated Code Committee for local amendments of the 2012 International Residential Code.

Instead, Council referred the matter back to council offices who are holding meetings and consulting to look at all water-saving options. They will report back to the City Council in April 2013. As citizens we need to ensure that at least part of the gray water ordinance survives so that this resource is not lost from our landscaping. We recommend that above-grade stub outs for passive irrigation be implemented.

Voters Give Landslide Approval for Spending on Conservation Nationwide

The Trust for Public Land reports that all of us---in different states and of all political leanings--- gave overwhelming approval in the November 2012 elections to taxing ourselves to establish new parks in our communities.

Of the 57 measures on local and statewide ballots, 46 passed, an approval rate of 81 percent. The measures in 21 states will provide more than \$2 billion overall, including \$767 million in new money to support protection of water quality, new parks, other natural areas, working farms and ranches. Complete results can be found on The Trust for Public Land's LandVote website www.LandVote.org.

In Arizona, Tucson Audubon had encouraged voters to Vote Yes on Prop 119 (you did) and NO on Prop 120 (you did!). The Yes vote

on Prop 119 provides us with a way to conserve the most culturally and biologically significant state lands for future generations via an open and transparent public process.

Arizona's State Legislature has repeatedly demonstrated that it is unable to manage the resources currently under its jurisdiction in a fiscally responsible manner for the public benefit. By voting No on Proposition 120, a Constitutional Amendment, you wisely refused to give them exclusive control over all air, land and water in the state.

Meanwhile, renewable-energy promoters Paul Newman and Sandra Kennedy, running with political newcomer Marcia Busching on a "Solar Team" ticket, were ousted from the Arizona Corporation Commission. They had advocated an increase in

the state renewable-energy mandate, citing higher standards in other states. Incumbent Republican Commissioner Bob Stump, former Senate President Bob Burns and cable-industry executive Susan Bitter-Smith won four-year terms on the five-member panel. The newcomers and Stump will join Commission Chairman Gary Pierce and Commissioner Brenda Burns, creating an all-GOP utility regulating panel for the first time since 2009. All members are from Maricopa County.

Much of the campaign centered on support for solar and other renewable energy sources. An all-Republican commission adopted the current standard in 2006, requiring state-regulated utilities to generate power equal to 15 percent of their retail sales from renewable sources by 2025.



DAVE BEZAIRE

The GOP candidates said they would keep the standard as is and consider increasing it only after studying the long-term costs.

Burns said his main priority was to keep utility rates low to avoid damaging the fragile economy.

Bitter-Smith, a longtime cable industry executive and past President of the Central Arizona Project Board, ran largely on a platform of reforming regulation of small water companies to make it easier to adjust rates to avoid insolvency or huge rate increases.

Your Chance to Comment on Pima County's Multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan

It has been 15 years since the listing of the Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-owl under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) prompted a community-wide dialogue that resulted in Pima County's award-winning Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP). With the goal of balancing growth and the conservation of our unique cultural heritage and biodiversity, Pima County launched an overarching process that went beyond mere compliance with federal law. Yet that need to comply is what has led Pima County to apply to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

(Service) for an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) under Section 10 of the ESA. If approved, the thirty-year ITP would authorize incidental take of forty animal species, five of which are currently listed under the ESA and four of which are currently designated candidate species for listing. Thirty-one identified species will be covered if they are listed during the term of the permit.

The Service published Notice of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Draft Multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan (DMSCP) in the Federal Register on

December 7th, www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-12-07/html/2012-29391.htm. A public meeting will be held on February 21, 2013, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 pm at the Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Conference Room at 3500 W. River Road, Tucson, AZ 85741. The Service is seeking data, comments, new information, or suggestions. Public comment will be accepted on or before March 15th, 2013. Submit YOUR written comments or data to the Field Supervisor, Arizona Ecological Services Office, 2321 West Royal Palm Road, Suite 103, Phoenix, AZ 85021. Comments will also be accepted by fax at 520-670-6155, as well as by email to PimaMSCP@fws.gov with the subject line "Pima County Draft MSCP and Draft EIS."

Downloadable copies of the Draft MSCP and Draft Implementing Agreement (IA) may be found on the Internet at www.pima.gov/cmo/sdcp/MSCP/MSCP.html and the Draft EIS is available at www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona. For those without access

to the Internet, a printed or CD-ROM copy of these documents is available upon request to Ms. Julia Fonseca, Pima County Office of Sustainability and Conservation, 201 N. Stone, 6th floor, Tucson, AZ 85701, phone (520) 740-6460, or email mscp@pima.gov. Additionally, persons wishing to review the Draft MSCP, Draft IA, and Draft EIS may obtain copies by calling or faxing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (520-670-6144, phone; 520-670-6155 fax). Copies of the Draft MSCP, Draft IA, and Draft EIS are also available for public inspection and review at numerous Pima County Public Libraries.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeff Servoss, by mail at the Arizona Ecological Services Office --Tucson Suboffice, 201 N. Bonita Avenue, Suite 141, Tucson, AZ 85745; by telephone at 520-670-6150 extension 231; or by email at jeff_servoss@fws.gov.



KEN LUND

Your Chance to Comment on Tucson's New General Plan

Tucson Audubon encourages YOU to get involved in developing Tucson's new General Plan which the City is required by State law to update every decade. The new draft General Plan is available for public comment, and includes consideration of our natural environment, parks and recreation, arts and culture, public infrastructure and facilities, revitalization and redevelopment, land use and transportation, and economic development. A series of Open House events will be held as follows:

Wednesday, January 9, 2013—7:00 PM to 8:30 PM. Tucson Police Westside Service Center, Meeting Room, 1310 W. Miracle Mile

Saturday, January 12, 2013—9:00 AM to 10:30 AM. Tucson Police Department Hardesty Multi-Service Center, Meeting Room, 1100 S. Alvernon Way

Thursday, January 31, 2013—7:00 PM to 8:30 PM. Ward 2 Council Office, Conference Room, 7575 E. Speedway Blvd

Each Open House begins with a half-hour presentation followed by an opportunity to review the Plan, fill out comment forms and talk one-on-one with members of the City's Plan Tucson Team. The Draft Plan may also be viewed and commented on at the Plan Tucson website, www.tucsonaz.gov/plantucson. Comments received will be shared with the Mayor and City Council, the Planning Commission, and considered in the preparation of the Final Draft Plan. The Plan will be on the November 5, 2013 ballot. For questions regarding the Open Houses or Plan Tucson in general you may call Maria Gayosso at (520) 837-6972.

Birds of Ancient Egypt

Saturday, March 16, 2013
2:00 PM, Westin La Paloma

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

A program offered jointly by the local chapter of ARCE (American Research Center in Egypt) and Tucson Audubon. Speaker: Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer *Between Heaven & Earth—Birds in Ancient Egypt*

Birds and bird imagery filled the world of the ancient Egyptians. Every fall, the arrival of millions of waterfowl in the Delta marshes coincided with the Nile flood. The Egyptians saw in these natural and cyclical events a symbolic reenactment of the moment of creation when, according to some versions of the myth, a divine goose laid an egg on the first mound emerging from the water. From this egg hatched the sun god, who flew high in the sky and created the other gods and humanity.

From cradle to coffin, birds permeated most aspects of Egyptian society: religion, art,

writing system and diet. For the first time in the United States, a special exhibit at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago is entirely dedicated to the avifauna of ancient Egypt and illustrates the omnipresence of birds in this ancient society. Using the artifacts on display in this exhibit, learn how, at every stage of a person's life, birds were present as deities and protectors; as rulers and citizens; as food supply and commodity.

Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer is a PhD candidate in Egyptology at the University of Chicago and guest curator of the exhibit *Between Heaven and Earth: Birds in Ancient Egypt* at the Oriental Institute. After studying Chemical Engineering in France and completing a MA in Greek & Latin in Vermont, she is now able to combine her passion for birds and her academic interest in ancient Egypt. Her dissertation is entitled "The Exploitation of Avian Resources in Ancient Egypt: A Socio-Economic Study."



Trekking Rattlers Club: SASUN's New Look

For the last two years, the Sunnyside Audubon Student Urban Naturalists met as an afterschool ecology club at Billy Lauffer Middle School. This year, we formed a hiking/birding club in partnership with Inner City Outings and the Sunnyside School District to offer the student population one outing a month to a different local destination. The program provides an important and rare opportunity for inner city children to deepen their understanding of nature, birds, and our local environment through hands on exploration.

This school year, students have already explored Madera Canyon, the fall colors on Mt. Lemmon, planted seeds at Atturbury Wash with Tucson Audubon staff and volunteers, splashed around Tanque Verde Falls and hiked to see the petroglyphs on the Wasson Peak/King Canyon Trail. The schedule for the spring looks just as exciting! In January, on Martin Luther King Day, they will participate in the third annual buffelgrass pull in the wash behind their school along with Tucson Audubon staff. Other spring destinations include: Saguaro National Park, Reid Park, Ramsey Canyon Preserve, and an overnight camping trip at Catalina State Park to end the school year!

We are currently raising funds to continue this program into the spring and the upcoming school year. One of the ways we are doing this is asking you to direct your Arizona state income tax credit to this club to fund transportation for their outings, entrance fees to their destinations, and materials*. This contribution costs you nothing! Instead of paying the state tax to the government, you are redirecting those monies to directly support the students at Lauffer Middle School and you will receive a tax credit when you file.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION? Pick up your tax credit forms in our Nature Shop, check Lauffer Middle School and next to the school's name, write SASUN Club OR contact Bété Pfister at bpfister@tucsonaudubon.org or 520-629-0510 x 7012 for electronic copies of the forms.

**For public school donations an Arizona tax credit is available up to the maximum \$200/yr (single) or \$400/yr (married filing jointly). These monies are not used to fund regular school activities. The donations you make can only be used for extra-curricular activities, and you are allowed to specify which programs you'd like your donation to support.*

KENDALL KROESEN



Visit a New Garden at Mason Center

Several board members recently helped to plant three Kino Heritage Fruit Trees at the Mason Center. These trees represent broadly adapted genetic stock descended from fruit trees brought to the Southwest by the earliest European explorers. These are real survivors, believed to be well adapted to our desert conditions.

The trees—in our case quince, pomegranate and sweet lime—are the backbone of a new demonstration garden that combines useful habitat for birds with food production for people. In addition to the trees, the garden will eventually contain a small demonstration of seasonal heritage vegetable crops like those sold at Native Seeds/SEARCH, as well as native shrubs that are useful for wildlife and that have edible or useful parts for humans.

Of course we are always trying to be sustainable in our landscape design, so lots of harvested rainwater will be available to the garden. The northwest side of the bathroom building drains directly to an innovative “French drain” located in the midst of the trees. Other water from the house and bathroom roof is captured in new cisterns, to be used when the ground around the trees dries out. Scarce and expensive potable water, rather than being the first option, is now the third option.

The demonstration is part of our TogetherGreen Innovation Grant, which promotes innovative, wildlife-friendly and sustainable landscaping. TogetherGreen is a program of National Audubon Society, funded by Toyota.

*Kendall Kroesen,
Habitats Restoration Manager*

The Nature Shop Wildlife Garden

If you've been to the Audubon shop at University and 5th Ave recently, you may have noticed some changes in the garden out front.

Botanist/gardener/birder Lynn Hassler is spearheading a volunteer effort to upgrade our wildlife garden. For those of you who don't know her, Lynn has been writing a bimonthly column on birds and gardening for *Bird Watcher's Digest* since 2001 and teaches various classes for Tucson Audubon.

Emphasis to date has been on removing and/or transplanting non-performers as well as eliminating same-species plants that have volunteered or were initially over-planted. Major battles are being waged against Queen's wreath vines along the western fence line and invasive Bermuda grass throughout.

I personally have contributed quite a few hours to the project (yanking invading Queen's wreath is particularly satisfying) and fellow board member Linda Stitzer has also added her gardening skills to the undertaking.

But most of the work has been accomplished by Lynn and her team—egged on by a couple of Curve-billed Thrashers. Volunteer gardeners

include Alice Kennedy, Kristin Leger, and Miriam Kogan. Kristin and Miriam are becoming Bermuda grass removal pros, and Alice has almost singlehandedly uprooted many of the Queen's wreath tubers—extremely difficult and heavy to boot. Thank you to our stalwart volunteers!

Goals for the upcoming spring include: installing an automated irrigation system; adding to the plant palette to expand wildlife-attracting capabilities (in particular, to lure in more butterflies) and to ensure color and interest at every season. On that note, we could use donations for purchasing plants and upgrading the irrigation system.

We are confident that the Audubon garden will become a go-to inspiration destination for Tucson urban gardeners looking to create habitat in their own backyards.

We're always looking for volunteers, so if you are interested in helping out in the garden, please contact Volunteer and Development Coordinator, Kara Kaczmayk at 520-629-0510 ext. 7011, or email to volunteer@tucsonaudubon.org

*Cynthia Pruett
Board President*

Conservation Corner!

The lack of strong urban planning rules in most of the U.S.—of the sort more common in other western nations—has led to urban sprawl. Take a look at Tucson when you come down from Mt. Lemmon: free-market capitalism coupled with low fuel prices and car ownership rewarded speculative developers who built on the urban fringe, gobbling up valuable wildlife habitat. In recent years, the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan has made strides to arrest this pattern. (How many people have you met who say that there used to be more wildlife around their home, but as more houses were built they've seen less and less?)

Now fuel prices are high and the inevitable economic downturn has

come. We spend huge amounts on fuel and our taxes are not enough to fill potholes in the streets that connect our huge metropolitan area. The City of Tucson alone has almost 1,900 miles of streets! A well-planned urban area would concentrate people in a smaller area, resulting in fewer miles of streets per capita (not to mention fewer miles of water lines, sewer lines, electrical lines, cable TV lines, sidewalks, streetlights, stoplights and other amenities).

Now, unable to change this system, we are now forced to adapt to it.

I pledge to ride my bike or take public transportation at least one day per week, in spite of the sprawling distances. Why? Because the next

problem we are not changing is global warming. Our leaders are failing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That means we will be forced to adapt to higher temperatures. Biking and public transportation reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

I challenge you to do the same. Watch the Tucson Audubon blog for posts about my attempt to get around sans auto!

You can get lots of information about how to get around Tucson without a car at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/transportation>.

There was a heartwarming news item today (December 9, 2012) in the Arizona Daily Star about an 86-year old man in Minnesota who didn't know if he would ride the bike his family gave him. But now he's a bikeaholic, even riding a short newspaper delivery route every morning. If he can



Kendall and his bicycle

do it, so can I. Two members of the Tucson Audubon staff, Matt Griffiths and Jonathan Horst, ride to work almost every day.

*Kendall Kroesen,
Habitats Restoration Manager*

MARY BETH TYNDALL

TUCSON AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

KATE REYNOLDS | FIELD TRIP COORDINATOR

YOSTY



Reddington Pass

January

January 5—Saturday 8:00 AM

Keystone Peak Trail

Plan to spend a few morning hours exploring mixed habitat in this very seldom birded area in the Sierrita Mountains. We will bird the hillsides while walking dirt roads and will check a wash. Expect uneven terrain and steep climbs along a couple of stretches. Please note there are no rest facilities after leaving Tucson. Rain cancels. No limit but you must contact leader to sign up. Leader: Darlene Smyth dsmyth3@comcast.net

January 8—Tuesday 7:15 AM

Peña Blanca Lake

Join me for a walk around beautiful scenic Peña Blanca Lake, one of the best birding spots in SE Arizona especially in Spring Migration. We will walk to the dam and back, about 2 miles, so wear sturdy shoes, bring water, sunscreen, snacks and lunch. Meet at the Green Valley McDonald's exit 63 I-19 at 6:30 AM for the hour long drive to the lake. Limit 8, contact leader, Sally Johnsen after January 1. 520-399-4050 Empidonax@netzero.net

January 12—Saturday 7:00 AM

Reddington Pass in the Rincon Mountains

Meet at Catalina Highway and Tanque Verde at the McDonald's at 7:00 AM. We will make a short stop at Wentworth to check the wash, then head into the Rincon Mountains as far as Bellota Pond. High-clearance vehicles are desired. Short excursions over uneven terrain is to be expected. With any luck, we should find Western Scrub Jay, Juniper Titmouse, Black-chinned Sparrows, Western Bluebirds, Crissal Thrasher... maybe??? Return after lunch. Bring plenty of water and your lunch.

35 miles. Leader: Melody Kehl melodysbirding@cox.net 245-4085

January 19—Saturday 7:30 AM

Patagonia Sonoita Creek Preserve

Join Tucson Audubon for a winter romp through the Nature Conservancy's Preserve for looks at those challenging brown winter sparrows and more. A late morning visit to the Paton's is likely as well. Meet in the preserve parking lot at 7:30 AM. Standard Nature Conservancy fees apply (\$3 for TNC members, \$5 for non-members). Please register with the leader Clifford Cathers at AZCliffy@Q.com or 520-647-3273. Limit of 20 participants.

January 22—Tuesday 7:00 AM

Tubac-Tumacacori

Meet at 7:00 at the Fry's parking lot just east of I-19 on Irvington Road. We'll head down to the DeAnza trail seeking out sparrows, wintering flocks of migrants, and riparian species around Tubac and Tumacacori for the morning, returning to Tucson by about 1 PM. Please contact the leader, Gavin Bieber at Kingbird77@hotmail.com to sign-up or for any logistical questions.

January 26—Saturday 7:00 AM

El Sewer de Tucson

Meet at 7:00 at the Fry's parking lot, corner of Ina and Thornydale (Gold Canyon Plaza). Take an odoriferous tour of some of the Tucson area's more bird friendly watering holes. We will look for wintering water fowl, raptors, sparrows and whatever else happens along. Dress for the weather, bring water, snack, lunch and scope, if you have one. Nose plugs/clothes pins at the discretion of participants. I can't guarantee specific species but will promise a garderobe at every stop. Back by 3:00 PM. Leader: Michael Bissontz seetrogon@comcast.net

January 27—Sunday 7:30 AM

Tanque Verde Wash

Great trip for new birders. Come explore the lush and varied habitats supported by the Tanque Verde Wash. Areas covered will be Woodland Road, the Castlerock lakes, and Tanque Verde Loop. We will search for falcons, waterfowl, and winter warblers and sparrows. Bring sturdy shoes for walking washes and weedy fields, sunscreen and water. Meet at the McDonald's at the northeast corner of Tanque Verde and Catalina Highway. Limit 20. Leader: Brian Nicholas weehawker2@gmail.com (Read about Brian's birding adventures along the Tanque Verde Wash on p 11)

Thursdays—January—March: 8:30 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., 520-615-7855.

Saturdays—8–9:30 AM.

Tucson Audubon's Mason Center.

Families and birders of all skill levels are welcome. Visit tucsonaudubon.org/masoncenter for details.

Saturdays—November to April: 8:00 AM

Arivaca Cienega of Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. All skill levels welcome. For more info call Bob Rolfson at 520-399-2873.

Visit tucsonaudubon.org/fieldtrips for more trips and the latest or expanded field trip information or call us at 520-629-0510.

General Information

Tucson Audubon field trips are free. For general information call 520-629-0510. 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 (e.g. 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 520-629-0510 ext. 3. Report rare birds at 520-629-0510 or rarebirdalert@tucsonaudubon.org

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

MATT GRIFFITHS



Tanque Verde Wash

January 29—Tuesday 7:30 am

Atturbury-Lyman Bird & Animal Sanctuary, Lincoln Park

Join us to find resident and wintering birds (and early migrants?) at Atturbury Wash, located at Lincoln Regional Park, on Tucson's east side. This is one of Tucson's premier washes and the site of a Tucson Audubon project to improve habitat. The location is lower Lincoln Park off Escalante east of Pantano Road (not upper Lincoln Park off Pantano south of Escalante). Meet at lower Lincoln Park at 7:30 am. Bring water and sunscreen; finished before lunch. Call leader for exact directions: Kendall Kroesen kkroesen@tucsonaudubon.org or 520-971-2385.

February

February 2—Saturday 8:00 AM

Sabino Canyon Recreation Area



We'll bird Sabino Canyon Recreation Area walking a 4-mile loop that includes both Sonoran desert uplands and the riparian area of Sabino Creek along rocky uneven trails. Meet at the ramada by the Visitor's Center. \$5 parking fee or a pass required for Sabino Canyon Recreation Area. Return by 11 AM. Sunhat, water and walking shoes recommended. Leaders are Sabino Canyon Volunteer Naturalists. Group size limited to 15, email to reserve a spot. Leaders: Jean & Mark Hengesbaugh jhhenge@yahoo.com

February 9—Saturday 7:00 AM

Sweetwater Wetlands

Meet at the parking lot on Sweetwater Drive at 7:00 AM. Winter is a great time to visit Sweetwater to view ducks and waterfowl along with other species. Plan to spend a couple of hours of easy walking. Bring water and snacks as needed. Use the Ruthrauff/El Camino del Cerro Exit 252. Participants limited to 10 people. Trip leader: Janine Spencer janines07@comcast.net. 520-245-6200

February 16—Saturday 7:00 AM

Northeast Tucson Areas



Join Tucson Audubon for a late winter romp through a few of NE Tucson's key birding spots including Tanque Verde Wash, Agua Caliente Park and/or Woodland Road. Meet at the McDonald's at the corner of Tanque Verde Road and the Catalina

DAVE KUTILEK



LeConte's Thrasher

Highway at 7:00 AM. Please register with the leader Clifford Cathers at AZCliffy@Q.com or 520-647-3273. Limit of 20 participants.

February 19—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 invited. Meet in front of Edith Ball Adaptive Recreation Center, which looks like a big white tent near the zoo. Do not go to the zoo entrance. No need to sign up before the trip, but call leader if questions. Leader: John Higgins 520-578-1830. jhiggins@comcast.net

February 23—Saturday 5:00 AM

LeConte's Thrashers

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 Ina Road at the Motel 6 parking area at 5:00 AM. 400 miles. Leader: Melody Kehl melodysbirding@cox.net 520-245-4085

February 22–24—Friday, Saturday, Sunday
Departure time: TBD.

Rosy Finch at Sandia Crest, Albuquerque, N.M.

Depart Tucson early Friday morning arriving in Albuquerque for dinner and a good night's sleep. Saturday, up Sandia Crest in quest of all three species of Rosy-Finch, even if that means coming back the next day. Time permitting, we'll enjoy some of the area's other birding hotspots. Sunday, we're back to Tucson via a quick trip through Bosque Del Apache. Limited to 12. 1200 miles. Contact leader for more details, sign up after January 1. Leader: Vivian MacKinnon 520-323-6452 or v_mackinnon@yahoo.com. \$50 fee to cover leader expense.

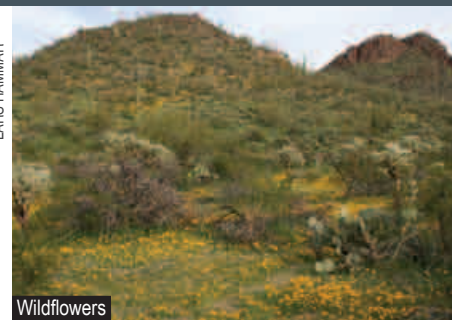
March

March 2—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

LARS HAMMAR



Wildflowers

excellent opportunities for studying identification challenges. Also many raptors and other wintering birds can be seen. About 120 miles. Limit of 12 participants. Contact the leader to sign up starting February 15. We will finish in early afternoon. Bring a lunch. Meet the leader at Bashas' parking lot in Catalina, on the northeast corner of Oracle Rd. and Golder Ranch Rd. Leader: Doug Jenness d_jenness@hotmail.com 520-909-1529

March 9—Saturday 8 AM

Wildflowers of the Tucson Hills

Let's go find the early spring wildflowers in the Tucson Hills. Depending on how much rain we get, the flowers here can be great in early March. Lets meet at the Saguaro National Park West Visitor Center at 8 AM. Expect some walking so bring walking shoes and water. A lunch would also be a good idea since there are no restaurants on our route. Go ahead and bring your binoculars too. \$5 National Park entrance fee (or a National Park pass) required. For questions, call Anthony Mendoza 520-219-0366 or email me at anthony_mendoza@hotmail.com or just turn up.

March 12—Tuesday 6:00 AM

Patagonia Lake State Park

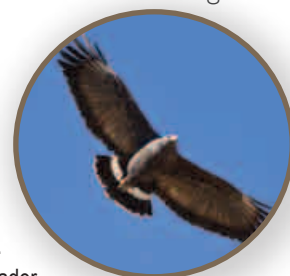


There are almost always plenty of birds at Patagonia Lake at this time of year. We'll walk a mile or two on mostly level but not always clearly marked trails. Expect some mud. Bring lunch and park fee or pass. We may visit other sites in Patagonia and its environs as well. Meet at Fry's at Irvington and I-19 at 6:00 AM or at the Green Valley McDonald's (Continental Road Exit) by 6:30 AM. (140 miles round trip). Trip limited to 12 participants. Call or email leader Dave Dunford after February 15 at 520-909-1809 or ddunford@dakotacom.net to sign up.

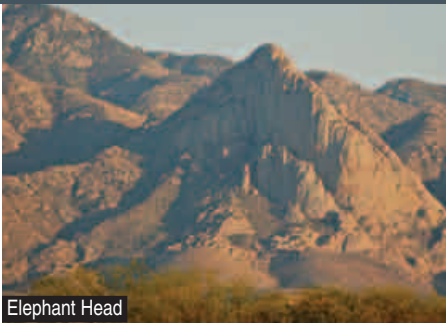
March 16—Saturday 6:30 AM

Tubac Black-hawk Lift Off

Join Tucson Audubon for the annual spring ritual of watching Common Black-hawks lift off from the riparian corridor at Tubac. Hopefully we'll catch the first few spring migrants as well. Meet at the Green Valley McDonald's on Continental Road at 6:30 AM. You must register with the leader



COMMON BLACK-HAWK / NED HARRIS



Elephant Head

Clifford Cathers at AZCliffy@Q.com or 520-647-3273. Limit of 20 participants.

March 19—Tuesday 5:30 AM


The Pond at Elephant Head

Join us for a few hours of bird/nature photography in Amado. We'll visit the property of the owner of PhotoTrap, a high speed photographic trigger system. We will sit in the blinds by the pond and photograph desert birds and whatever else shows up. The PhotoTrap owner will later demonstrate his products. Meet at Green Valley McDonalds. Use the Continental Rd. exit off of I-19 and turn right to the McDonald's. Take your camera, tripod etc. and plenty of water & snacks. Back before noon. Limited to four participants. Contact Kate Reynolds to sign up. TASKateReynolds@gmail.com

May

May 24–27 (Memorial Day Weekend)—
Friday/Saturday/Sunday/Monday 8:00 AM

Q Ranch/Mogollon Rim/Tonto National Forest

On Friday, drive to Q Ranch where 150 species of birds have been identified. Dark clear night skies at 5600 feet with plenty of stars. Visit to the 1000-year-old Q Ranch Mogollon-Culture Pueblo ruins. Ranch is cell-phone dead zone, but Verizon service available within a few miles. Depart Monday after breakfast. All meals included. \$135/person/night for shared room (we will link up sharers if possible). \$175/person/night for single room. Full online payment due by March 29, 2013 (<http://www.qranch.com>). Limited to 12 people total. Riders will pay \$50 each for drivers' gas cost. For reservations and more info, contact trip leader Steve Buck (stevetucson@aol.com). Birding guide (present at Q Ranch only): Ken Furtado ken@qranch.com. 

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/fieldtrips

Birdathon 2013: Because you love birds!

■ All April features fun Birdathon events, and the Big Week is April 19–28!

Join a team and see how many species you can count in a day. Or, go on a trip: expert led Big Days or less intense half day outings.

■ Birdathon is fun for everyone, kids, adults, beginners, experts and more!

How does it work? Join a team or a trip, and go out birding. Raise money for your “-athon” from supporters. After Birdathon, we all celebrate with a party, and donations are used by Tucson Audubon Society for conservation of bird habitats.

■ Celebrate migration!

Southern Arizona is one of the most fascinating areas for birding in the United States, with over 400 species each year. Southern Arizona birds also face significant conservation challenges through effects on their habitats by development and groundwater pumping. This Birdathon, celebrate the birds and help to conserve their habitats.

■ Great birding and a great cause

Raise awareness during Birdathon. Do you know people who would be interested in Tucson Audubon's conservation work? Our education activities? The recreational birding opportunities?

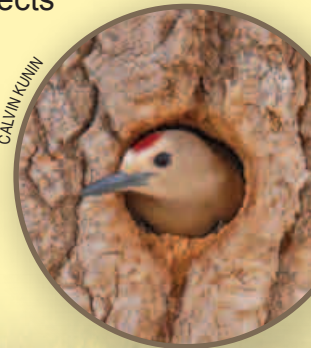
GATOR GRAY



JIM BURNS



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Visit www.tucsonaudubon.org/birdathon for details, events, teams, and more!

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Big Bend Nat'l Park, Texas: Colima Warbler short tour May 1–5, 2013, \$1095.

Leader: John Yerger. Big Bend is one of the most remote birding hotspots in the U.S., and home to some of its most spectacular scenery! It's the only place in the country to find Colima Warbler, the focus of one long day hike. A surprising number of habitats and oases are found within Park boundaries. Ideal for anyone desiring lots of birding and sightseeing on limited vacation time. Lucifer Hummingbird, Painted Bunting and Golden-fronted Woodpecker are just a few others we'll seek on this fun-filled adventure!

South Texas: Rarities and Specialties short tour February 27–March 3, 2013, \$1195.

Leader: John Yerger. Limited vacation time? This "short tour" will target some of the rarest birds in the ABA region! Our main focus: find mega-rarities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. In recent years, species included Crimson-collared Grosbeak, Golden-crowned Warbler and Black-vented Oriole. In addition, we'll seek rare residents like Brown Jay and Red-billed Pigeon. And of course, spectacular South Texas specialties like Green Jay, Altamira Oriole and Buff-bellied Hummingbird will round out the trip! See website for details and extended alternative to this tour.

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Cameroon — Rockfowl, Rainforests & Sahel: 12 March to 02 April 2013 (22 days)

Tour Price (per person): US\$6,030 (Single supplement US\$340, approx cost of flights US\$360) Please note: these prices are subject to foreign exchange fluctuations. Our comprehensive three week Cameroon birding tour provides a thorough coverage of Central Africa's richest birdwatching destination. Forming the intergrade between West and Central Africa, Cameroon harbors a wide range of habitats from vast lowland rainforests, montane forests on some of Africa's highest peaks, broad-leaved woodlands, and in the far north, extensive Sahelian semi-desert, and our unbeatable Cameroonian birding adventure visits and explore all of these zones.

Ecuador — South Ecuador Endemics:

26 March to 10 April 2013 (16 days) Tour price (per person): US\$3,975 (Single supplement US\$450) Please note: these prices are subject to foreign exchange fluctuations. Our South Ecuador endemics birding tour takes us to one of the most diverse range of habitats in the world to look for a whole host of special and endemic birds. Within 200 miles of the Pacific Coast, one can travel from the arid xerophytic habitat,

through semideciduous tropical forest, over the continental divide's treeless paramos and down to lush, wet, foothill forests of the eastern Andes. Within these varied, pristine habitats, the evolution of many fine endemic species has occurred; and on our new South Ecuador Endemics tour, we will sample seven distinct habitats in search of these endemics and other specialties. Targets include El Oro and White-breasted Parakeet, El Oro (Ecuadorian) Tapaculo, Watkins's and the fantastic Jocotoco Antpitta, White-headed Brush Finch, Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner, the fabulous Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Rainbow Starfrontlet and the vociferous, colorful and extremely localized Orange-throated Tanager.

SOLIPASO TOURS

www.solipaso.com

Colorado Prairie Chicken and Sage

Grouse: April 2–10, 2013. \$3000. Leader: David MacKay. Colorado is the best and most beautiful place to see the species of Prairie-chickens and Grouse! The geographic position and geologic diversity creates a great array of varied habitats ranging from prairie grasslands through high plains to subalpine forests and alpine tundra! Although we will have our sights on finding all of the grouse, there are plenty of other birds to look for, including Mountain Plover, Three-toed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Rough-legged Hawk, Black, Brown-capped, and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, McCown's, Chestnut-Collared Longspur and many others. And because it is Colorado, the opportunities for encountering fantastic scenery and other interesting wildlife abound. Starts and ends in Denver, CO. Limited to 7 participants.

Northwest Mexico: August 8–15, 2013.

\$2100. Summertime in the Sierra Madre of Chihuahua and Sonora is a sight to see! Green meadows, blue sky vistas, lakes and waterfalls everywhere! In Madera, we see the endangered Thick-billed Parrot and Eared Quetzal. We visit the ruins of Cuarenta Casas and get to see the magnificent Basaseachic waterfall in full summer flow, the second highest in Mexico! In the mountain town of Yecora, we pick up more montane species including Mountain Trogon, Northern Trogon and Aztec Thrush. Starts and ends in Tucson, AZ. Limited to 7 participants. (Another way to see the Thick-billed Parrot and Eared Quetzal is on our Madera trip, August 19-22, 2013)

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JENNIE MACFARLAND

Birders Mean Business! Four Ways to Help Birds Today ...

Show your support for birds, habitat, and local birder-friendly businesses by exercising your consumer choices wisely. Some easy and impactful ideas:

1. Support your Tucson Audubon Nature Shops when shopping for gifts and gear! Our knowledgeable staff and volunteers actively seek out the best books and binoculars.
2. Choose Bird-friendly shade-grown coffee and help birds while satisfying your caffeine cravings! Several tasty options are available in the Nature Shops and in local grocery stores. Ask for it when dining out.
3. When you're booking travel or business services or making other purchases, wear your birder colors proudly! Consider patronizing a bird & birder-friendly business like those who have supported Tucson Audubon's work—you can learn more about these companies through our Birds & Business Alliance or in the 8th edition of *Finding Birds in Southeast Arizona* guidebook. These businesses have evidenced, in a variety of ways, an interest in bird and habitat conservation and/or accommodating birders.
4. The most important thing is to wear your birder colors proudly as a customer! Let businesses know you're a birder and Tucson Audubon member and that you value their support of birds and habitat.

For more info on the economics of birding and how local business and decisionmakers are taking notice, visit tucsonaudubon.org/birdingeconomics



TUCSON AUDUBON'S BIRDS & BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Birds & Business Alliance JOIN TODAY and connect with the Tucson Audubon community

For more information and to join, contact Erin Olmstead at eolmstead@tucsonaudubon.org or 520.629.0510 ext 7009.



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 tucsonaudubon.org/alliance for more information, including links to member websites.



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SOUTHWESTERN RESEARCH STATION,

Portal, Arizona. <http://research.amnh.org/swrs/>
Six-day birding tours in April, May, and September 2013. Round trip is included from Tucson airport. Newly remodeled rooms! Also, individual accommodations are available for birders, hikers, and naturalists. Rates include meals, pool, and great birding. For more information contact: 520-558-2396; emoisan@amnh.org

Nature & Heritage Festival: Birding & History along the Santa Cruz River May 2-5, 2013

Birding trips to Mexico: San Lazaro, Sonora; Rancho El Arababi and Cocospera, Sonora. Southern Arizona: Sycamore Canyon, Pena Blanca Lake, Patagonia Lake State Park, Sonoita Creek State Natural Area, Santa Cruz River and Las Lagunas. Program and registration: santacruznatureheritage.org

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

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Present the coupons below with your purchase at the Nature Shop to receive the discount.

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**Be sure to visit the Tucson Audubon
Nature Shop at these upcoming festivals.**

Wings Over Willcox: January 16–20

Tucson Festival of Books: March 9–10 (see p 8)



Showing Us the Way



Tucson is proud to host David Wilcove on the evening of January 30 at our fifth Annual Gala where he will share with us his insights on animal migration. David is an avid birder. He is also Professor of Public Affairs and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the Woodrow Wilson School and an accomplished popular communicator.

David was formerly Senior Ecologist at Environmental Defense in Washington, DC where he focused on developing economically and scientifically sound policies for protecting endangered species.

When he served as Senior Ecologist for The Wilderness Society, he developed the scientific foundation for the Society's campaign to protect the ancient forests of the Pacific Northwest.

David's passion for nature guides the work of a group of distinguished research students that uses a combination of ecology, economics, and policy research to find workable solutions to challenging conservation issues.

David has published more than 100 books, reports, book chapters, and a variety of popular articles and columns, including the two books reviewed below. Each book is completely gripping,

and reveals a meticulous attention to detail coupled with enormous feeling. Enjoy these illuminating books, have David sign your copies at the Gala, and feel his passion when he talks with us.

For a preview, listen to him interviewed on the radio by Terry Gross at npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16919118, and search for David's interviews on YouTube.

*Paul Green
Executive Director*



AUTHOR DAVID WILCOVE IS THE SPEAKER AT OUR FIFTH ANNUAL GALA, JANUARY 30

The Condor's Shadow: \$16.50

With gripping narrative power, *The Condor's Shadow* traces the ways in which human greed and ignorance have wreaked havoc on our ecological landscape.



The heir apparent to Peter Matthiessen's 1959 classic *Wildlife in America*, *The Condor's Shadow* is a brilliant and compulsively readable study of the state of North American wildlife and what is being done to reverse the damage humans have caused. With equal respect for the smallest feather-mite and the fiercest grizzly, the frailest flower and the stateliest redwood, David S. Wilcove illustrates—in jargon-free, often witty prose—nature's delicate system of checks and balances, examining the factors that determine a species' vulnerability and the consequences of losing even the tiniest part of any ecosystem. An examination of both the heart-wrenching failures and stunning successes of our conservation efforts, *The Condor's Shadow* chronicles the destruction and resilience of our American wilderness and offers an insightful, eloquent overview that will appeal to avid conservationists and recreational nature-lovers alike.

"Well conceived and very well written—It should serve to clarify hard decisions that our nation must face in regard to habitat preservation for the future."—Peter Matthiessen

"This engaging report, sprinkled with sensible, targeted solutions to specific problems, is essential reading for concerned nature lovers,

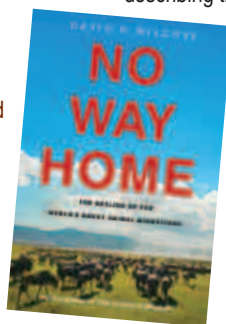
as well as a basic resource for environmentalists and policy makers."—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

No Way Home: \$24.95

Animal migration is a magnificent sight: a mile-long blanket of cranes rising from a Nebraska river and filling the sky; hundreds of thousands of wildebeests marching across the Serengeti; a blaze of orange as millions of monarch butterflies spread their wings to take flight. Nature's great migrations have captivated countless spectators, none more so than premier ecologist David S. Wilcove. In *No Way Home*, his awe is palpable—as are the growing threats to migratory animals.

We may be witnessing a dying phenomenon among many species. Migration has always been arduous, but today's travelers face unprecedented dangers. Skyscrapers and cell towers lure birds and bats to untimely deaths, fences and farms block herds of antelope, salmon are caught en route between ocean and river, breeding and wintering grounds are paved over or plowed, and global warming disrupts the synchronized schedules of predators and prey. The result is a dramatic decline in the number of migrants.

Wilcove guides us on their treacherous journeys, describing the barriers to migration and exploring what compels animals to keep on trekking. He also brings to life the adventures of scientists who study migrants. Often as bold as their subjects, researchers speed wildly along deserted roads to track birds soaring overhead, explore glaciers in search of frozen locusts, and



outfit dragonflies with transmitters weighing less than one one-hundredth of an ounce.

Scientific discoveries and advanced technologies are helping us to understand migrations better, but alone, they won't stop sea turtles and songbirds from going the way of the bison or passenger pigeon. What's required is the commitment and cooperation of the far-flung countries migrants cross—long before extinction is a threat. As Wilcove writes, "protecting the abundance of migration is key to protecting the glory of migration." *No Way Home* offers powerful inspiration to preserve those glorious journeys. ■

Common Ground

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

SHOP HOURS

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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 Wednesday 10 AM–1 PM,
Thursday 9 AM–2:30 PM,
Friday–Saturday, 10 AM–2:30 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).

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Vermilion Flycatcher

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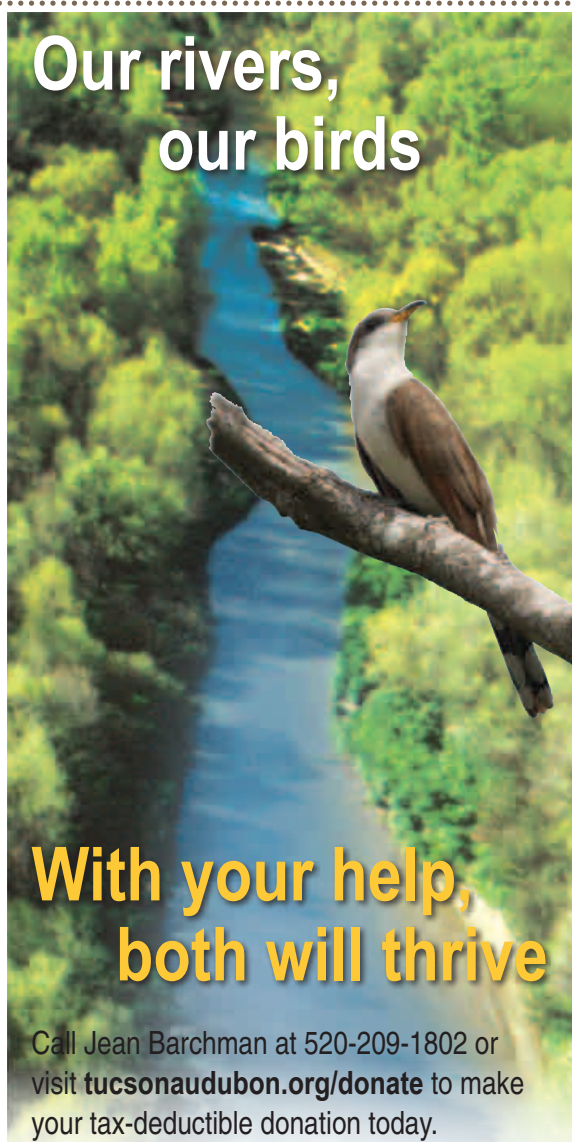
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