



Gambel's Tales

The Newsletter of the Sonoran Audubon Society

Volume 7 Issue 8

April, 2006

At our next meeting....

Wednesday, April 12, 2006 at 7 p.m.

On April 12 Scotty Johnson, the Senior Outreach Representative from Defenders of Wildlife, will be joining us to discuss current legislative threats to the Endangered Species Act. For thirty years the Endangered Species Act has successfully stopped extinction and represents our nation's commitment to protecting our nation's biodiversity legacy for future generations. This law is the reason we still have magnificent birds like the bald eagle, the peregrine falcon and the California Condor, to name a few. The American Bird Conservancy recent releases showing that of 43 birds protected under the Act, 44% have increased since listing, and a further 19% are stable, or have been stabilized by conservation measures.



Willow Flycatcher
Photo by Robert Shantz

Yet, like so many conservation measures in the current political climate, this cornerstone law is under attack by special interests and their friends in Washington. Last year the House of Representatives passed a bill misleadingly titled, "The Threatened and

Endangered Species Recovery Act." This bill may soon make its way into the Senate where Arizona's Senators can prove decisive.

Johnson will be talking about the Endangered Species Act, the history of its evolution as a cornerstone of an emerging land ethic and what Audubon members and the general public can do to keep this law strong for future generations.

Scotty Johnson is the senior Outreach Representative for Defenders of Wildlife. A native Arizonan, Scotty studied philosophy, humanities and music at Arizona State University before directing his work towards conservation education and outreach. He writes and publishes a weekly electronic publication for Defenders of Wildlife and has authored several publications for Defenders and other journals. He lives in Tucson with his wife Janelle.

What's Happening?

By Your Editor

The Sonoran Audubon Society board meeting convened at 7 p.m. on March 1, 2006. Here are some of the items discussed by board members Bob McCormick, President, Anne Durning, Dan Bohlmann, Karen LaFrance, Loretta Richards, Daniela Yellan and George Wall. Others present who had input were Chuck Kangas, Tom Lazzelle, Chuck Richards and Tice Supplee.

1. Committee reports were made.

A. Membership: As of February, there are 572 members and 112 Friends of SAS. There are 144 known web viewers belonging to SAS and 37 members are sent a newsletter by mail.

B. Field Trip: There will be a Trip Committee meeting on 8 June, 2006 to plan trips for the fall.

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What's Happening?

C. **Program:** It was stipulated that SAS would pay a stipend of \$100 for each speaker and in some cases to organizations as needed.

D. **Conservation:** The Conservation Committee met just before the board meeting. Tice Supplee advised group of two state bills that SAS might support. Tom Lazzelle said he would draft a letter of support for the Martinez Canyon preservation project. Chuck Kangas and Chuck Richards will attend the Upper AF Water Conservation meeting in April. Anne Durning will follow the ANWR issues. Karen LaFrance will follow ESA to alert the Chapter on any issues needing attention.

E. **Publicity and Newsletter:** Information for the monthly newsletter needs to be into the editor's hands no later than the third weekend of each month. The regular monthly meetings will be listed in the Arizona Republic Calendar of Meetings and also in the Arizona Outdoor Calendar of the Arizona Game & Fish Newsletter.

2. The majority of the meeting was spent on Membership issues. Chuck Kangas described what he does to keep up with the membership losses and gains. Ideas on how to help resolve some of the issues were brought forward. Several action items were listed that will be tackled immediately and some in the near future.

3. Other ideas tossed around at the meeting included membership surveys, start meeting with program instead of business, start clipboards before the meeting and there was a discussion of the website including adding a counter.

At the regular monthly meeting, John Brister gave an excellent program on "Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness". There were two visitors, Diana Barnum and Annie Teff, who gave indications that they would be joining the society.

The Tres Rios Nature and Earth Festival held March 11th and 12th would have been a lot better if it hadn't rained on Saturday. Still, our society provided a lot of people to work as docents and man the booth. The docents were Eleanor Campbell, Anne Durning, Dick Fogle, Richard Kaiser, Karen LaFrance, Bob McCormick, Carolyn Modeen, Penny Schneck, Andrée Tarby and Daniela Yellan. Managing the booth were Dan Bohlmann, Karen LaFrance, Chuck Kangas, Tom Lazzelle, Ann McDermott, Donna Smith and Sam Stearman.

On the bird walks 49 species were recorded including several warblers and a Scott's Oriole which means maybe the spring migration might start a little earlier this year.

EVENTS IN AND AROUND THE VALLEY

Rio Salado

www.phoenix.gov/riosalado. They have bird walks, nature programs and other items of interest. Their location is 2439 S. Central Ave., Phoenix.

Birds & Breakfast at the Rio Salado Audubon Center site Friday, May 12.

This field trip and event are part of the celebration of International Migratory Bird Day. Participants will gather at 6 a.m. by the Ramada at the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center site on the southeast corner of Central Avenue and the Salt River Bridge. Birders will be divided up in groups with leaders to view the wonderful wildlife found in the park. Please bring your binoculars. At 7:30, there will be a continental breakfast and a presentation by Phil Weddle, architect of the future Audubon Center. There is a cost of \$15 per person. Please RSVP to Donna Sauer at dsauer@audubon.org or (602) 468-6470.

Volunteers needed to lead a brief field trip at the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center site on the southeast corner of Central Avenue and the Salt River Bridge at 6 a.m. on Friday, May 12th. Breakfast will follow the field trip at 7:30 a.m. at the site. Please call Janice Miano at egret@cox.net or (480) 946-1327 to volunteer to lead a small group.

Hassayampa River Preserve

Bird Banding is scheduled for Saturday, April 15, 2006, from 6:30 a.m.—noon and again on Saturday, April 22, 2006, from 6:00 a.m.—noon.

Birding 102 is scheduled for Saturday, April 15, 2006 from 8-11 a.m. Learn the B, C, Ds (beaks, behavior, calls and diet) of basic birding with Kathie Anderson, Director of the Adult Birding Program at the Gilbert Riparian Institute. Includes a short walk to practice birding skills.

On Saturday, April 29, 2006 from 8:30—10 a.m., there will be an Interpretive Nature Walk. Enjoy the last bit of spring flowers and catch sight of returning migratory birds.

Desert Botanical Gardens

Each Monday morning from now until September there will be bird walks from 8 a.m. to approximately 10 a.m. They see as many as

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SNOWY EGRET

By John Hardison



This picture by John Hardison was taken at the Tres Rios Hayfield site on January 7, 2006. It is currently on display at the Cobre Center of Arts in Globe, AZ. The picture is dedicated to his half brother's wife. John Hardison's brother passed away on February 20, 2006.

Join the National Audubon Society

New adult or family membership: \$20.00

Seniors and students: \$15.00

Renewal fee for seniors and students: \$15.00

These fees cover membership in the National Audubon Society and a subscription to Audubon magazine. An application form for National membership may be obtained from the chapter at the regular meeting or by contacting <chuckkan@mindspring.com>.

Each year all National members in the Sonoran Audubon chapter area receive the September *Gambel's Tales* that describes major chapter activities for the year. All monthly issues of *Gambel's Tales* may be obtained free from the chapter website <www.sonoranaudubon.org> or by mail for \$10.00 per year. If you wish to get the newsletter by mail or to be notified when a new issue is placed on the website, please contact chuckkan@mindspring.com or by mail to: Sonoran Audubon Society, P O Box 8068, Glendale, AZ 85312-8068

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www.az.audubon.org

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EVENTS IN AND AROUND THE VALLEY

Desert Botanical Gardens entrance fee of \$10.00 (\$9.00 seniors) apply unless you're a DBG member. Membership is \$55 a year. See their website at www.dbg.com for further information.

Lake Pleasant

On April 15, 2006, from 2-4 p.m. at the Lake Pleasant Regional Park Visitors Center, The Arizona Game & Fish Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center will exhibit some live mammals and talk about these furry critters. Lake Pleasant is home to a wide variety of mammals, from pocket mice to mountain lions!

This is free other than the \$5 fee per vehicle to get into the park.

Birders' Anonymous

Birders' Anonymous, a group of birdwatchers, has their monthly meeting on April 21, 2006 from 10—11:30 a.m. They meet on the third Friday of each month all year around at the Church of the Palms on the corner of Boswell and 103rd Ave in Sun City.

Cry in the Wilderness Wildlife Rehabilitation Center will present the program. There will be live raptors at this meeting.

Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival

April 27-30, 2006—All day, every day

Held at Dead Horse Ranch State Park in Cottonwood, AZ. Check out birdyverde.org or contact 928.282.2202 for registration information. Exciting field trips, workshops, exhibitors, sales, and special programs all four days. Keynote reception features Rick Wright speaking on the early Arizona Naturalists. Birding's cultural heritage honored with "10,000 Years of Birding" petroglyph artwork featured on the event's t-shirt and event programs. Bird by bike, bronco, canoe or train. Visit Out of Africa or take a geology hike. From the Verde Valley to Prescott, Flagstaff and the Grand Canyon to spot California Condors, there's lots to do at this award winning annual event.

IBA Celebration & Dedication Event

On Monday, April 17, 2006, there will be a Lower Oak Creek Bird Area Celebration & Dedication Event.

There will be guided walks at Bubbling Ponds Hatchery & Red Rock State Park at 7, 8, and 9 a.m. Everyone is welcome to walk the trails.

Senator John McCain will be present at the IBA Dedication Ceremony at 11:30 a.m. to be held at the Red Rock State Park Visitor Center (on the roof). Light lunch and beverages afterwards.

To be present at the dedication ceremony, please reply by April 10, 2006 to Tice Supplee 602-468-6470 or e-mail tsupplee@audubon.org

Directions to Bubbling Ponds at Arizona Game and Fish Department Page Springs Hatchery: The Hatchery is located approximately 10 miles south of Sedona and 10 miles north of Cottonwood off Highway 89A on the Page Springs Road. Travel on Page Springs Road for 6 miles to the visitor parking lot that is located about .3 miles past the bridge over Oak Creek on the south side of the road.

Directions to Red Rock State Park: From Interstate I-17, take the Sedona exit 298 and follow State Route 179 to Highway 89A. Turn left and take 89A to Lower Red Rock Loop Road. Turn left on to Lower Red Rock Loop Road to Red Rock State Park entrance.

If traveling from Bubbling Ponds, take the Page Springs Road to Highway 89A and turn right. Travel on 89A approximately 5 miles to the second junction with Lower Red Rock Loop Road. Turn right and take Lower Red Rock Loop Road to Red Rock State Park entrance.

Entry fees to Red Rock State Park are waived for those attending the Dedication or going on the walks.

BURROWING OWL PROJECT

By George Wall

I was out at the Burrowing Owl Project in Peoria on Plaza del Sol off of Thunderbird for a short period of time on Saturday, 25 March, 2006. What I saw was a lot of school kids and Girl Scouts, supervised and assisted by adults, putting in Burrowing Owl nests. Before the day was out, 5 pairs of owls were transplanted to this location.

What is the Burrowing Owl Project? Here is an excerpt from one of their flyers.

“As Arizona continues to grow, one of the greatest chal-

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Merlin Magic

By Ann McDermott

There are times when the bird feeder has not been emptied by the close of day. This never happens unless there's been a new face in amongst the daily regulars. A face that isn't interested in seed and causes the sparrows, finches, doves, quails, cardinals, towhees, thrashers, etc. to hang back in the creosote, hiding. When this happens in the winter, I begin looking for Merlins.

I first saw one when I noticed nobody was scarfing up the seed I'd just scattered, rare behavior indeed for the piggish birds that feed in my yard. I went out to hunt for the hunter and glimpsed a small raptor shooting from a creosote patch, flying low to the ground, expertly keeping the moderate canopy between itself and my line of vision. It was small and dark. That's about all I could see. That and the fact that it could fly like the devil and the sparrows were rightly afraid.

Later, I saw both of them sitting companionably together on the garden fence - a male and female and so different that I never would have guessed them to be the same species. Merlins demonstrate incredible sexual dimorphism. The male is smaller than the female, nine inches long to her twelve, and bluish in dorsal plumage. Females are brown. These falcons breed up north, but winter throughout Arizona. Males are only slightly larger than the kestrel, but they are heavier on the wing and don't hover as kestrels do. They are powerful hunters, adding a new element of terror to the lives of the seed-eating bunch. They easily live up to their moniker, "Pigeon Hawk", though they prefer smaller birds.



Photo by Terry Sohl from website www.sdakotabirds.com

When I saw my visitors together on the fence, they'd just finished gulping down a dove, as evidenced by the pile of gray feathers beneath them.

Even so, no small birds were moving around the feeder, just in case the predators might want desert. When the Merlins saw me, they exploded into flight, dropping immediately to skim the desert floor under cover of the foliage, fleet stealth so typical of their species. My vision of these handsome hunters was brief, but impressive. I'm sure the sparrows would beg to differ, but I hope Merlins are always winter visitors to my yard.

Spring in the Mountains - South Mountain Preserve Environmental Center

By Tice Supplee

March 4th was a beautiful morning for the 30th Annual Spring in the Mountains event held at South Mountain Environmental Center. The day began with the release of a rehabilitated Harris' Hawk by the Arizona Game and Fish Department Wildlife Center. Sonoran Audubon Society led a fun bird walk where highlight birds included a flock of Lark Buntings and a pair of Gilded Flickers that were "in the mood for love", a sure sign that spring is in the air. White-crowned and Brewer's Sparrows were staging for the flight north. Wendy Hodgson of Desert Botanical Gardens led a longer hike through the beautiful upland desert habitat at South Mountain Preserve.

Audubon Arizona was a hit with the kids, giving them the materials to make pine cone and peanut butter birdseed feeders.

Arizona Game and Fish Department Wildlife Center had a fabulous display with live birds that fascinated everyone. The Burrowing Owls and Turkey Vulture were real stars.

Liberty Wildlife had a display about a brand new training program designed to teach citizens how to be field volunteers on scientific projects. The first training workshop will be offered this spring. Contact Liberty Wildlife at to learn more about this exciting new Citizen Science program.

Biscuitflat Chuckwagon served up cowboy style breakfast that was fantastic. Everyone wanted the recipe for Shirley's gravy. The morning ended with a presentation by Dr. Jim Dawson about the Harris' Hawk. While he spoke about these unique raptors of our desert a live hawk flew over the audience, giving us all an overwhelming appreciation for these birds.

PRONOUNCED BÛRD

By Kurt Radamaker & Michael A. Patten

This is a continuation of last month's article of pronouncing some of the names of birds using the "moo-goo-gai-pan" method where the phonetic pronunciation of a syllable is spelled out and where syllables are separated by dashes. The syllable on which the stress falls is capitalized (e.g., PLO-ver).

CRAVERI'S

Krah-VAIR-eez (e.g., Craveri's Murrelet). First collected by Dr. P.L. Schlater off Baja California, was named by him in honor of Frederico Craveri (1815-1890).

CRISSAL

KRIS-uhl (e.g., Crissal Thrasher). The word "Crissal" is defined as relating to or having a crissum, the region surrounding the cloacal opening beneath the tail of a bird.

FALCATED

FALL-kate-ed (e.g., Falcated Teal). "Falcated" from the Latin falx "sickle", means hooked or curved like a sickle, and refers to the long, sickle-shaped tertials of the male Falcated Teal.

GLAUCOUS

GLAW-kuhs rhymes with raucous (e.g., Glaugous-winged Gull). "Glaucous" is derived from the Latin glaucus, and refers to a silvery, gray, or bluish-green color.

GOSHAWK

GAHS-hawk (e.g., Northern Goshawk). "Goshawk" is derived from Old English goshafoc "Goose Hawk."

GYRFALCON

JER-fall-ken (as in New Jersey) or JER-fal-ken (fal as in pal). "Gyr" evolved from giri, an Old High German term which means "greedy," i.e., greedy falcon.

JABIRU

JAB-ih-roo or jab-ih-ROO. "Jabiru" is a Tupi-guarani Indian name for bird.

LAZULI

LAZH-uh-lie or LAZ-uh-lie (e.g., Lazuli Bunting). "Lazuli" refers to the colors of lazulite—an azure blue mineral.

MURRE

MUR (e.g., Common Murre). "Murre" is of obscure origin. It may be related to marrot or morrot, dialect English words used to refer to these species.

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BURROWING OWL PROJECT

lenges is to minimize the impact of growth on displaced wildlife. The Burrowing Owl (the only owl in the world that lives underground) is especially affected by development. These small owls live and raise their young underground and are at risk of being buried during construction. Burrowing Owls are a species of "Special Concern" in many areas and endangered in Canada.

In 1993, Bob and "Sam" Fox, directors of Wild at Heart (WAH), began small experiments by constructing the first artificial underground burrows in Arizona and relocating rehabilitated Burrowing Owls into these new homes."



Greg Clark (yellow jacket) of Wild at Heart and Tom Lazzelle of the Sonoran Audubon Society are working on installing the entrances to Burrowing Owl nests.

"In 2001, this prototype program expanded with the assistance of Greg Clark, WAH's Burrowing Owl Habitat Coordinator, to include the rescue and relocation of resident owls from areas being developed. A permit from U.S. Fish & Wildlife is required for each site prior to owls being trapped and removed. The captured owls are cared for by WAH volunteers for a minimum of 90 days: 60 days at the WAH facility and an additional 30 days at the release site. This length of time is necessary to break the owl's bond to its former habitat."

Greg's biggest problem is finding proper sites. If you know of a place that is open and will not be developed for many years and the owners would be willing to open it to Burrowing Owls, Call Greg Clark at 480-688-0118 or e-mail rai@primenet.com.

Spring/Summer 2006 Field Trips

An * means a Birders' Anonymous sponsored trip

Saturday, April 1, 2006

New River Preserve

Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

This is a new area to bird and hopefully, it will provide us with several nice migrants at this time of year. There are a few palm, walnut, cottonwood as well as the usual mesquite trees. Last year at this time when I first checked it out, we saw several Bullock's Orioles and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and I only spent a half hour there. Who knows what we'll find on this trip.

Difficulty: 1 - Morning only with about a 1 mile walk

Note: This is a rough road and does require a high clearance vehicle for car-pooling.

Meet at the Bell Recreation Center parking lot (near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City) to leave at 7:00 a.m. Call for alternate meeting place.

***Tuesday, April 11, 2006**

Box Bar-Tonto National Forest

Leaders: Chuck and Loretta Richards

623-594-6554

carichards@nowonline.net

Box Bar is an area along the floodplain of the Verde River just northeast of Rio Verde. There are cottonwoods, willows and tamarisk along the banks of the river. We should see spring migration warblers, tanagers and sparrows as well as some water birds. We will be walking up and back on level ground about a total of one mile over sand and some river rock. Wear sturdy shoes. Last fall, we spotted a Black-throated Blue Warbler. This area is in the Tonto National Forest and has a \$4 fee per vehicle.

Morning only.

Meet at Denny's just W of I-17 at Bell (SW corner) to leave at 6:00 a.m. There is a large parking lot to drop off excess cars. We'll carpool from there. Those who want to meet at Box Bar can call the leader for directions.

Saturday, April 15, 2006

Gilbert Water Ranch

Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

The Gilbert Water Ranch during migration should attract a myriad of birds passing through. Along with the migrants, we should see several shore birds. Of course,

there is always the Peach-faced Lovebirds that have made their home here.

Difficulty: 1

Meet at the Bell Recreation Center parking lot near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City. We'll leave at 7 a.m. Alternate meeting place is the Water Ranch itself in front of the Library on Guadalupe Rd.

***Saturday-Sunday, April 29-30, 2006**

In Tucson—Sonoran Desert Museum, Tucson Botanical Gardens & Sweetwater Wetlands

Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

This trip is a little different. We'll be visiting the Sonoran Desert Museum, Tucson Botanical Gardens and the Sweetwater Wetlands. See the sites listed below.

www.tucsonaudubon.org/birding/sweetwater.htm

www.tucsonbotanical.org

www.desertmuseum.org

We'll leave early Saturday morning at 7 a.m. and we'll be stopping at the Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson to bird. From there, we'll go to the Tucson Botanical Gardens (cost \$5) and then on to the Super 8 motel at 1550 Grant Rd (cost about \$73 and I've reserved a block of rooms). Sunday morning after breakfast, we'll go to the Sonoran Desert Museum (cost \$12) where you can spend as much time as you want before heading back to Phoenix. Call or email me as soon as possible if you want to go. Deadline for sign-up is April 16th.

Saturday, May 6, 2006

Yarnell City Park

Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

rms15247@cox.net

Yarnell is a charming town in the Weaver Mountains that welcomes birders. It is northeast of Wickenburg on State Route 89. This is high desert valley at 4,780 feet. The park has restrooms and picnic tables with well cared for trails. There is a nice restaurant in town where some of us will have lunch. The rest can have a picnic lunch in the park.

Birds that have been seen are nesting juniper titmouse, acorn woodpecker, all three towhees, warblers, vireos, and orioles.

Difficulty: 1

Meet at the Wickenburg Community Center at 7 a.m. As you travel northwest on Highway 60 entering

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Spring/Summer 2006 Field Trips

Wickenburg, you will cross the bridge over the Has-sayampa River. Turn right immediately after the bridge. The road goes around a bend and you will see a large white building and parking lot on the right. It's a short but scenic drive up the mountain to Yarnell.

Saturday, May 13, 2006

Sycamore Creek and Canyon

Leader: Dan Bohlmann 602-938-8244

dansbohlmann@prodigy.net

The south end of Sycamore Canyon is located about 10 miles north of Clarkdale. The trail into the canyon drops down about 100 ft at first and is level from then on. There are lots of trees (Cottonwoods, Sycamores and Ash) and water in the creek and several springs. Usually there are lots of birds due to all the water year round. I've seen Kingbirds, Flycatchers, Warblers, Phoebes, Swallows, Woodpeckers, Jays, Titmice, Wrens, Bluebirds, Vireos, Robins, Sparrows, Waxwings and Gnatcatchers.

Difficulty: 2—Bring Lunch

Meet at Fry's Electronics parking lot at the SE corner of 31st Ave and Thunderbird. We will leave at 7:00 a.m.

Friday-Monday, May 26-29, 2006

Sierra Vista

Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

rms15247@cox.net

Sierra Vista will be the starting point for excursions to various birding sites. There are many canyons to explore: Garden, Miller, Ramsey and more. The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area along the San Pedro River is close by. On Saturday, we'll be led by professional birder Stuart Healy who lives in the area. At this same time frame in 2004, 95 species were seen including the Elegant Trogon and an Elf Owl. Who knows what will be in store for us in one of the best birding areas in S.E. Arizona.

Please call the leader to get on the list for this trip as the limit for is 16 people. She will then provide you with more information as the time approaches.

Saturday, June 10, 2006

Mingus Mountain

Leader: Eleanor Campbell 623 977-7639

ercamp@juno.com

Mingus Mountain, a 7,700 ft. peak in the Prescott National Forest near Jerome, supports many breeding warblers. Painted Redstart, Olive, Grace's, Black-throated Gray, and Red-faced Warblers and Hepatic Tanager

inhabit the pine forest where exploration of quiet campgrounds, trails and a pond should be rewarding. Pygmy Nuthatch and Band-tailed Pigeon are locals along with forest dwelling woodpeckers and flycatchers. Hooded and Townsend's Warblers have summered there in numbers in the past.

Difficulty: 1 ALL DAY TRIP. Bring lunch, snacks and drinks.

Meet to LEAVE at 5:30 a.m. at Bell Recreation Center, corner of Hutton Dr. and Boswell Blvd., in Sun City OR at 5:50 a.m. at McDonald's just east of Rte. 17 on the north side of Cave Creek Rd. (Exit 223).

Please call the leader to register and for details.

***Wednesday, June 21, 2006**

P.I.R. and Area

Leader: Marshall Esty 623-977-1637

mne@juno.com

This is a morning trip only for the early risers to see some birds before the morning gets too hot. There are always several species of birds in the P.I.R. Gila River area like the Black-crowned Night Heron, Least Bittern and other waterfowl.

Difficulty: 1

Meet at the Bell Recreation Center parking lot near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City. We'll leave at 6:30 a.m. in order to be back by 10 a.m.

Thursday, June 29, 2006

The Narrows of Oak Creek Canyon

Leader: Dan Bohlmann (602) 938-8244

dansbohlmann@prodigy.net

This is a little known section of Oak Creek that has a trail that leaves Grasshopper Point Rec. Area heading west along the north side of the creek. This section is heavily shaded in Sycamore, Cottonwood and Ash trees, has lots of flowing water and ponds and naturally attracts lots of birds. In this area I've seen Blue Grosbeaks, Summer & Western Tanagers, Warblers, Vireos, Bullock's Orioles, Western Bluebirds, Swallows, Lesser Goldfinches, Townsend's Solitaires, Plain & Bridled Titmouse, Flycatchers, Black & Say's Phoebe, Hairy Woodpecker, and Scrub Jays. It would be great if I could just get half of them to show up for you.

Difficulty: 2

Meet at Fry's Electronics parking lot at the SE corner of 31st Ave and Thunderbird. We will leave at 7 a.m.

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Spring/Summer 2006 Field Trips

***Friday, July 7, 2006**

Stoneman Lake

Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

rms15247@cox.net

Stoneman Lake is one of several spring-fed mountain lakes on the Mogollon Plateau and located 36 miles south of Flagstaff and 125 miles north of Phoenix. Take Interstate 17 to the Stoneman Lake Exit #306, and follow the clearly marked signs.

The lake is probably pretty low at this March writing considering the drought, but hopefully by the time the trip takes place, the Monsoon will have started or at least we'll have had some rain there. At the last outing, 42 species were observed. This is a good way to get out of the city heat and enjoy the cool air of the mountains.

Meet at the Bell Rec Ctr parking lot near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City for car pooling and be ready to leave at 6:30 a.m.

Difficulty 1-2 – some trail walking. Bring a lunch.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday July 14 –16, 2006

California Gulch and Southern Arizona

Leader: Andrée Tarby 480-948-1074

atarby@cox.net

This is a repeat of some very successful trips that Andrée Tarby has previously led. In the past we have seen almost all of the target birds we went to see, including the Five-striped Sparrow, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Varied Bunting, and the Botteri's Sparrow. I believe all the target birds were seen through the scope, so all of us had good looks at them. This year we also will look for the Buff-collared Nightjar, a Mexican specialty. This is a bird that many of our members need for a life bird. The plan is to drive to Nogales and spend the night leaving very early Saturday morning. Some of us will plan to see some birds on Friday on our way down to Nogales. We go along some very rough roads so 4-wheel drive vehicles are necessary. We hope to have enough 4-wheel drive vehicles to put in extra people who might want to drive their own cars. It's only the last few miles where 4WD vehicles are necessary. Call leader for more details.

Friday-Sunday, July 21-23, 2006

Grey Feathers Lodge, New Mexico

Leader: Eleanor Campbell 623 977-7639

ercamp@juno.com

Watch 4,500-5,000 hummingbirds PER DAY feed at

Grey Feathers Lodge nestled at 7,000 ft. 25 miles north of Silver City, New Mexico, in the Gila National Forest. An annual Hummingbird Festival is scheduled for July 22-23 with guided walks and hummingbird banding at Lake Roberts a few miles from the Lodge. Allen's, Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, Calliope, Blue-throated, Magnificent and Rufous hummingbirds may be seen during this migration time.

A stream and a mountain across from the Lodge plus several primitive wooded campgrounds offer ample habitats for birding. Acorn Woodpecker and Pygmy Nuthatch are residents. Western Tanager, Western Bluebird and Common Yellowthroat are found nearby. Check the website: www.greyfeathers.com for their extensive bird list and information on the Lodge. Make a reservation soon since there are only eight rooms and four suites available. Their phone number is: (505) 536-3206.

Difficulty: 1 Please call the leader to register and for meeting place and time. (Leader is staying until July 25 so consider a longer stay if you want to explore the area further.)

***Wednesday, August 9, 2006**

Forest Road 300

Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

Drive north on US 17 to exit 287, Camp Verde, turn right and proceed along HWY 260 as it goes up the Mogollon Rim. Turn left on HWY 87, after several miles you will see a sign for Forest Rd. 300, turn right. Immediately after you turn there is a pullout on the right in a small clearing, we will regroup there. The gravel road is well graded for passenger cars. This is a beautiful drive in dense forest of pine and oak at 6000 to 7000 ft. We will travel to a burned out area, birding along the way, where we will listen for woodpeckers.

Hopefully we will see the Three-toed Woodpecker. On the way back we may stop at Potato Lake.

Some of the birds seen last year on July 28th were Red Crossbill, Painted Redstart, Red-faced Warbler and Williamson's Sapsucker.

Meet at the Bell Rec Ctr parking lot on Hutton near Boswell in Sun City to leave at 5 a.m. Alternate meeting place is at McDonalds on Carefree Hwy. at 5:45 a.m. Exit right off US17 and at the first stoplight, make a left. McDonald's is to the right.

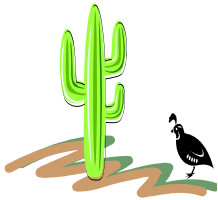
Difficulty: 1—Bring a lunch as this is an all day trip.

Calendar of Monthly Meetings...

**Location: Auditorium, Glendale Public Library, 5959 West Brown Street
(one block south of Peoria Ave. & 59th Ave. intersection) Time: 6:30 p.m.**

April 12, 2006 Scotty Johnson: "From Leopold to Carson: Saving the Endangered Species Act"
May 10, 2006 Andy Holycross: "Herps of Arizona"

Other Dates of Interest: April 12, 2006 at 6:45 p.m. Board Meeting at Glendale Library in the small meeting room. All SAS members welcome.



**Sonoran Audubon Society
P.O. Box 8068
Glendale, AZ 85312-8068**