



Gambel's Tales

The Newsletter of the Sonoran Audubon Society

Volume 7 Issue 4

December 2005

IBA NEWS

By George Wall

Excerpts taken from the Brochure "Arizona's Important Bird Areas Program"

Most of you have heard of the acronym IBA, but what does it stand for? What does it involve and how does it work?

IBA stands for Important Bird Areas. These are sites that provide essential habitat for one or more species of bird. Sites can be those used by birds for breeding (nesting), wintering, or during migration. They may be a few acres or thousands of acres in size. They may be public or private lands, or both, and they may be protected or unprotected. Sites are identified as IBAs by the Arizona IBA Scientific Review Committee and then a national committee approves the sites. Our Arizona Committee is composed of 12-14 biologists and bird experts from all regions of the state. Sites qualify as IBAs under one or more of the following criteria via a nomination form.

1. Sites important to populations of endangered, threatened, or species of high conservation concern.
2. Sites where significant populations of birds congregate (breeding, wintering, or during migration).
3. Sites that contain rare or unique habitat or that are an exceptional example of an ecological community type, and that hold important species or species assemblages largely restricted to a distinctive habitat or ecological community type.
4. Sites supporting programs in avian research or educational programs focusing on birds.

To get a site designated as an IBA, a lot of work must be done by the Arizona IBA program. There must be counts, GPS readings, photo documentation, monitoring and a myriad of other things. This is the main area where YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!

Contact your local Audubon Chapter. In our case, con-

(Continued on Page 2)

At our next meeting December 14, 2005

DR. DAVID PEARSON: "Why are there more bird species some places than others?"

Our speaker at the December 14 meeting is David L. Pearson, Ph.D., Research Professor at Arizona State University.

For conservation policies, choosing protected areas, and sometimes just simply knowing where you want to go bird watching, this question is both interesting and critical. For years we have known that as you go from high latitude temperate areas, such as Canada and Russia, toward the equator, you find more and more species of almost all animal and plant groups, including birds. The pattern is obvious, but we do not know the cause of this pattern. Unless we know WHY, it is difficult to apply this information to protect and conserve habitats and biodiversity effectively.

Using bird species numbers in six study areas in tropical rain forests around the world (Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Gabon, Borneo and New Guinea), Dr. Pearson was able to focus on what causes more birds to be on some of these sites than others. These data then help us also understand global scale patterns of biodiversity, such as the increasing number of species toward the equator.



Harpy Eagle—Photographer unknown

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from Page 1)

DAVID PEARSON

Dr. Pearson's research is focused on the interaction of history and ecology in structuring communities. He uses biogeographical, phylogenetic and ecological hypotheses to test predictions of species co-occurrence patterns. These patterns are then applied to basic community structure studies as well as to determining priority areas for conservation. Although he has worked on a breadth of organisms from crabs and insects to Paramecium and birds, and a range of habitat types from coral atolls to desert grasslands, his current research concentrates on a small group of insects, tiger beetles, in tropical lowland rain forests around the world. Dr. Pearson also works on developing new techniques for environmental education, especially in South America.

(Continued from Page 1)

IBA NEWS

tact one of the following: Josh Burns at josh_a_burns@yahoo.com, or Dwayne Fink at edna.fink@asu.edu both of the Sonoran Audubon Society. You can also contact Audubon Arizona's Director of Bird Conservation Tice Supplee at tsupplee@audubon.org

The program also involves protecting these sites for birds across the state. This means working together with citizens like you, landowners, land managers, biologists, and in our case Audubon Arizona, a chapter of National Audubon, who in turn, have key partners that include Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Park Service, Arizona State Parks, Arizona universities and many non-government organizations.

A SPECIAL THANKS -

To David Bradford who donated a very nice digital camera to the Sonoran Audubon Society. The camera will be used by one of the IBA teams when surveying Important Bird Areas. If any one else has a digital camera or GPS they like to donate, it would be greatly appreciated.

What's Happening? By Your Editor

Prior to the Sonoran Audubon Society board meeting on 2 November, 2005, Jenny Duberstein gave a presentation on the Sonoran Joint Venture. She showed us projects that we might become involved with sometime in the future.

The board meeting was then convened and here are some of the items discussed by board members Bob McCormick, Anne Durning, Loretta Richards, Dan Bohlmann, Dick Fogle, George Wall, Suzanne Cash, Karen LaFrance, Daniela Yellan, Alvin and Arlene Scheuer.

1. The treasurer reported that we received \$1,997.95 as our dues payment from the National Audubon Society.
2. The committees made their reports.
 - a. **Membership:** SAS members 588, newsletters by mail 38 and web viewers 148.
 - b. **Conservation:** Karen discussed the Rep. Pombo bill in the House Resources committee which will weaken the Endangered Species Act. She advised us to send personal handwritten letters to our congressmen to vote against this bill.
 - c. **Field Trips:** The trips are generally set through April, but there will be some changes.
3. The Tres Rios Nature Festival, March 11-12, 2006, will be free this year though it is not yet clear whether the parking fee of \$5 will be charged. The Board approved the contribution of \$500 for the festival.
4. The Sonoran Audubon Retreat set for November 19, 2005 at Hassayampa Preserve was discussed. This retreat will start at 8:00AM with a bird walk at 7:00AM. The retreat is open to all people who have an interest in or who want to have an input to the future activities of the Sonoran Audubon Society.
5. Ken Clark reported that he can no longer monitor the Butterfly Garden at Lake Pleasant. He has been maintaining the 50x10 foot garden for 4 years. The maintenance requires weeding, pruning, irrigation monitoring and plant replacement about once or twice a month. If anyone is interested in doing this, contact our president Bob McCormick.
6. The Audubon Council meeting was in Tucson in October. \$1 per member dues was set.

(Continued on Page 7)

Book Review

By Nancy Kroening

Most of us know the Endangered Species Act and all environmental legislation passed in the last 30 years is under attack in Congress. But, who is proposing new legislation to assure that America's ecosystems will survive? The answer: Bruce Babbitt, Arizona's governor (1978-1987), Attorney General (1975-78), and U.S. Secretary of the Interior (1993-2001).

In his fine book, *Cities in the Wilderness: A New Vision of Land Use in America*, 2005, Island Press/Shearwater Books, Babbitt travels from Florida to the Pacific Northwest to Las Vegas to Tucson, then to Iowa and Flagstaff, Montana, and Wyoming. He explains environmental laws and how they affect the land and resources (including birds). He urges the environmental community to come together to endorse new legislation with incentives to form various kinds of "open space" schemes. Babbitt sees benefit for people, industry, and animals in win-win efforts to dedicate land to assure ecosystem health. This book would be a good holiday present for any environmentally concerned family. And, it's an interesting on-the-ground journey.

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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The above sign was prepared by Jak Keyser, one of our talented members, and will be displayed at our meeting refreshment table: Thank you Trader Joe's

AZFO

By George Wall

Have you heard of the Arizona Field Ornithologists (AZFO)? I hadn't until just recently. As an avid birder, I had to check out their website at www.azfo.org. When I read their mission statement, "The Arizona Field Ornithologists is an organization of birders and ornithologists dedicated to increasing knowledge of the identification, status, and distribution of Arizona's birdlife", I was hooked.

Here's an excerpt from their Subscription Form. "Membership in Arizona Field Ornithologists is free! There is nothing to sign up for yet. Over the next several months to a year we shall continue to offer the Website and Online Publication as a free service, and by doing so hope to generate interest and expand participation in the organization. Though we will eventually have membership dues to offset costs, the immediate goal of AZFO is to provide a high quality ornithological resource to draw participation from a wide range of persons interested in Arizona's birds."

From the home page, you can go to the latest issue on line of *Arizona Birds*, a 20 page magazine that will be put out quarterly. You can also click on "Arizona Bird Committee" that takes you to their home page which has a lot of info including reports and rarity photos. The Arizona Bird Committee is one of the links on our own website.

When I looked at the list of officers of AZFO, I was impressed. They are Troy Corman the Interim President; Tracy McCarthy, Secretary; Kurt Radamaker, Treasurer and Webmaster; our own Daniela Yellan, Membership Secretary; Mark Stevenson, Seasonal Field Reports Coordinator. Doug Jenness has been the Editor of *Arizona Birds Online*, but recently this on-line publication has been split into two, with Doug editing the AZFO Bulletin (the first issue of this has yet to appear) and Roy Jones as the new editor of *Arizona Birds Online*.

Check it out!

EAGLE NESTING AREAS TO CLOSE FOR SEASON

This was the heading for an article written by Kate Nolan in the Saturday, November 26, 2005 issue of The Arizona Republic. Here is part of that article.

"In December, an Arizona bald eagle's fancy turns to breeding. The result is one or two babies per nest.

But before eaglets appear each year, Arizona Game and Fish Department closes 15 eagle nesting areas to vehicles, foot traffic and sometimes boats, from December 1 generally to June.

Even small human disturbances can cause nesting failures, said James Driscoll, head of the Arizona Bald Eagle Management Program, which is run by Game and Fish.

"We want to give these birds every chance to thrive," Driscoll said.

The department recently announced closures at Tonto Creek, the Salt, Verde and San Carlos rivers; Lower Lake Mary, Lynx Lake, Luna Lake, Lake Pleasant, Roosevelt Lake and Talkalai Lake.

To view the threatened species in December or January without disturbing them, the agency recommends Lake Mary and Mormon Lake near Flagstaff or the Verde River Canyon Train in Clarksdale. For specific closure locations go to www.gf.state.az.us or call (602) 789-3500."



Picture taken from website www.baldeagles.com

WHERE HAS OUR ATTENDANCE GONE?

In the past months, we've had outstanding programs presented by Kurt Radamaker, Terry Stevens, George Wall, Troy Corman and James Driscoll; yet, our attendance is down.

We have 588 members in the Sonoran Audubon Society, but only 45 showed up at the last meeting. That is less than 10%. Come on out and support your chapter. We need you.

THE IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER

By George Wall

I think most of you know about the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, but if you don't, here is a little synopsis of what has happened.

The Ivory-billed Woodpecker isn't even mentioned



in Sibley's or Kenn Kaufman's birding books or many of the other books on birds. It is mentioned in the National Geographic Society's book "Birds of North America" that said it was last seen in the 1950s. I have a book entitled "Birds in Jeopardy" published in 1992 and the Ivory-billed Woodpecker is listed as endangered and mentions it was last sighted in the 1950s. A newspaper article says it was last sighted in 1948 and another says 1944. So, even the experts couldn't agree on this bird's existence or when it was last seen. Most birders like me, considered the Ivory-billed Woodpecker to be extinct; in fact, it was declared extinct in 1997 even though they kept it listed as endangered. It was supposedly seen in Cuba in the 1980s and then by a Louisiana man in 1997, but there was nothing to support these claims. What makes the claims so hard to prove is that this bird is similar to the more common Pileated Woodpecker that is 3 inches smaller and lacks the extensive white wing patches and the noticeable ivory bill.

What is so interesting about this bird? One thing, of course, was the controversy over its existence. People who said they saw it were ridiculed or scorned and so many birders just kept their mouths shut. Another was the fact that it was considered to be the largest woodpecker in North America with a wingspan of 3 feet. Also, even when it was sighted in the early 19th century, it was very hard to find as it lived in mainly forest or cypress swamps.

Its primary diet was wood-boring insects and the big bird would strip the bark off of dead trees in search of this food. It also ate seeds, nuts and berries as a supplement. In its heyday, it was found in

southeastern Oklahoma, southeastern Missouri, southern Indiana, North Carolina south to the Gulf of Mexico, Florida and Cuba. What made its demise in the United States was the large-scale logging of cypress trees.

What a surprise when earlier this year in the newspapers and on TV were reports of confirmed sightings in Arkansas. As soon as the confirmed sightings were announced, all of the people who had kept quiet about their sightings popped out of the woodwork. Some of these earlier sightings is what prompted the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to finance an expedition in February of 2005. On that expedition, they had 15 sightings - 7 of them confirmed. There was a short news article in the July 20th edition of the Arizona Republic that said 3 biologists disputed the sightings. However, a few days later, another article appeared stating that they withdrew their protest after viewing the evidence.

You can read more about the sightings at <http://birds.cornell.edu/ivory/>. The picture shown in this article was copied from the first web site above. There is also an article in Volume 3, Number 19 of the Audubon Newswire dated Friday, October 28, 2005 telling about Audubon's role in the search efforts for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker.

I just finished reading the book "The Grail Bird" by Tim Gallagher. It was a top-notch book about his search for the bird. It kept you interested to the end and was written along the same style as Kenn Kaufmann's "Kingbird Highway". If you enjoyed that book, you'll certainly like "The Grail Bird".

HASSAYAMPA RIVER PRESERVE EVENTS

Reported by Bernadine McCollum

Saturday, December 10, 2005, 10-11:30 a.m. Local author, Martha Maxton, will discuss her new book, "The Real Roadrunner" which provides a lively, in-depth look at the natural history of roadrunners.

Saturday, December 17, 2005: There will be a guided interpretive nature walk from 8:30-10 am with an experienced Docent.

Wednesday, January 28, 2006, 8 a.m.—4 p.m. Dale and Debbie Keiser, award-winning photographers, will conduct a digital camera workshop for beginners. Class includes basic techniques, field work and digital photography software.

ARIZONA (& VICINITY) CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT SCHEDULE [2005-2006]

The National Audubon Society has conducted Christmas bird counts since 1900. Volunteers from across North America and beyond take to the field during one calendar day between December 14 and January 5 to record every bird species and individual bird encountered within a designated 15-mile diameter circle. These records now comprise an extensive ornithological database that enables monitoring of winter bird populations and the overall health of the environment.

Participants are typically assigned to teams based on their bird identification skill level and endurance. Many counts hold a compilation dinner at the end of the day where results are tabulated and stories shared. A \$5.00 participation fee defrays a portion of the cost of tabulating and publishing the overall count results. Help is needed on most of these counts, so find one that interests you and contact the compiler for more information.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Count Name</u>	<u>Compiler</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-Mail</u>
12/14	We	Pipe Spring Nat. Monument	Andrea Bornemeier	928-643-7105	andrea_bornemeier@nps.gov
12/14	We	Salt-Verde Rivers	Kurt Radamaker	480-837-2446	kurtrad@mexicobirding.com
12/16	Fr	Buenos Aires NWR	Bonnie Swarbrick	520-823-4251	bonnie_swarbrick@fws.gov
12/16	Fr	Phoenix-Tres Rios	Daniela Yellan	602-942-7791	danielay11@earthlink.net
12/17	Sa	Ajo-Cabeza Prieta NWR	Curt McCasland	520-387-6483	curtis_mccasland@fws.gov
12/17	Sa	Avra Valley	George Montgomery	520-682-8530	gmontgomery@desertmuseum.org
12/17	Sa	Martinez Lake-Yuma	Henry Detwiler	928-343-8363	henrydetwiler@earthlink.net
12/17	Sa	Mormon Lake	Elaine Morrall	928-526-1022	elaimorr@npgcable.com
12/17	Sa	Nogales	Michael Bissontz	520-577-8778	seetrogon@comcast.net
12/17	Sa	Puerto Peñasco, Sonora, MX	Steve Ganley	480-830-5538	sganley@cox.net
12/17	Sa	Santa Catalina Mountains	Bob Bates	520-296-5629	batesr@u.arizona.edu
12/17	Sa	Timber Mesa	Jimmy Videle	928-537-5144	moonrise@wmonline.com
12/18	Su	Camp Verde	Anita MacFarlane	928-282-4063	ajmac@sedona.net
12/18	Su	Chino Valley	Russell Duerksen	928-925-5567	duerksen@msn.com
12/18	Su	Patagonia	Thomas Arny	520-394-0146	tarny@theriver.com
12/18	Su	Ramsey Canyon	Ted Mouras	520-803-0221	mourast@saic.com
12/18	Su	Tucson Valley	Susan Birky	520-743-9390	sbirky@mindspring.com
12/21	We	Prescott	Carl Tomoff	928-778-2626	tomoff@northlink.com
12/26	Mo	Superior	Cynthia Donald	480-283-4515	planres@earthlink.net
12/27	Tu	Gila River	Troy Corman	602-482-6187	aplomado@cox.net
12/28	We	Green Valley-Madera Canyon	Reid Freeman	520-625-9895	wallcreeper@cox.net
12/28	We	Havasú NWR	Norma Miller	520-578-1399	n8urnut@comcast.net
12/29	Th	Bill Williams Delta	Kathleen Blair	928-667-4144	kathleen_blair@fws.gov
12/30	Fr	Dudleyville	Tracy McCarthey	602-451-4179	tmccarthey@msn.com
12/30	Fr	Hassayampa River	Vanessa Montgomery	623-465-0012	hassayampacbc@hotmail.com
12/31	Sa	Flagstaff-Mount Elden	Terry Blows	928-774-8028	terence.blows@nau.edu
12/31	Sa	Peloncillo Mountains, NM	Alan Craig	520-558-2220	narca@vtc.net
12/31	Sa	Sierra Pinta-Cabeza Prieta NWR	David Griffin	505-382-2080	djg1@zianet.com
1/1	Su	Elfrida	Tom Wood	520-432-1388	tom@sabo.org
1/1	Su	Portal	Larry Gates	520-558-1020	hummers@vtc.net
1/1	Su	Sedona	Dottie Hook	928-204-1894	dothook1@aol.com
1/2	Mo	Carefree	Walter Thurber	480-483-6450	wathurber@cox.net
1/3	Tu	Saint David	Tom Wood	520-432-1388	tom@sabo.org
1/4	We	Glen Canyon	John Spence	928-608-6267	john_spence@nps.gov
1/4	We	Jerome	Betsy Feinberg	928-203-0676	betsyfpub101@catharon.com

(Continued from page 2)

What's Happening?

7. The Phoenix Mountain Preserve spring trek will be held 3/4/06 at South Mountain. There will be bird walks and presentation tables. Last year we assisted in this event. The Board approved Karen LaFrance to facilitate as nonprofit partner.

8. The Sonoran Joint Adventure was discussed and it was decided we need a little more information before committing to any of the projects.

Rio Salado (future home of the Nina Mason Pulliam Audubon Center) had its grand opening November 5, 2005 and it was a smashing success. Probably a 1,000 people showed up during the time frame of 10:00AM – 2:00PM. Most of Arizona's Audubon Chapters were represented. Dick Fogle and George Wall manned the SAS table.



Dick Fogle & George Wall

At the monthly Sonoran Audubon Society meeting held on 9 November, 2005, James Driscoll gave a great program on the Bald Eagle in Arizona. Approximately 45 people attended.

On Saturday, 19 November, 2005, the Sonoran Audubon Retreat was held. Mike Demlong of Arizona Game and Fish was the facilitator and he did an excellent job keeping us all on track in order to meet time frames for our agenda. The participants were Bob McCormick, Dan Bohlmann, Loretta Richards, Anne Durning, Suzanne Cash, Dick Fogle, Karen LaFrance, George Wall and Daniela Yellan. Chuck Richards joined the group after leading the SAS bird trip held earlier. Barbara Meding attended for a short period of time and had some input. A lot of brainstorming, planning and some goals were set for 2006. Some of the main focuses were on membership attendance, publicity and Important Bird Areas (IBAs). Details will be hammered out at board meetings and planning get-to-gethers. Hopefully, you'll see some nice changes in the coming year.

Fall/Winter 2005-6 Field Trips

All field trips are open to anyone who has an interest in nature. This especially includes members of the Maricopa Audubon Society and Birders' Anonymous. The Maricopa Audubon Society has its own website and its list of field trips at www.maricopaaudubon.org and I feel sure we'd be welcome on their trips. Birders' Anonymous trips are included below along with the SAS field trips and are denoted by an asterisk (*).

Call the leaders to get your name on the list and any necessary information.

***Tuesday, December 6, 2005**

Tres Rios: Hayfield & Cobblestone areas

Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

You're always going to see a lot of birds at these two areas right next to each other. At an earlier outing in August of this year, 43 species were seen including the Least Bittern, Sora, and lots of Green Herons. This time of the year, there should be several ducks on the ponds.

Difficulty: 1 – easy flat walking trails

Leave at 7:30 a.m. from the Sun Bowl parking lot (107th Ave just south of Peoria in Sun City); so be there a few minutes early for car-pooling.

Saturday, January 14, 2006

Arlington Valley

Leaders: Dean and Joan Luehrs (623) 875-1016

dluehrs@cox.net

Arlington Valley, west of Phoenix and south of Arlington, with its fields, ponds, canals, a dam and a desert butte offers a variety of habitats to search for birds. At this time of year there could be flocks of blackbirds, ibis and egrets feeding in the fields. Last year a White-tailed Kite and a Bendire's Thrasher were seen. A Prairie Falcon and Swainson's Hawks were among the 70 species sighted. Eurasian Collared-doves seem to have become "locals." There should be a good mixture of sandpipers and other shorebirds present.

Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave. just South of Peoria Ave. in Sun City at 7:30 a.m.

Difficulty: 1 (Very little walking; some birding from the car) Bring lunch.

***Wednesday, January 18, 2006**

Thunderbird Park Area

Leader: Carolyn Modeen 623-972-6273

ctmodeen@juno.com

This area contains a large pond to view water birds and

(Continued on Page 8)

(Continued from Page 7)

Fall/Winter 2005-6 Field Trips

another area to view desert birds. At this time of year, we should see 30 or more species of birds. Meet at Bell Recreation Center parking lot at Hutton & Boswell, Sun City to leave at 7:00 AM.

Difficulty: 1 (very little walking) Morning only

Saturday, Jan 28, 2006

Estrella Park, P.I.R. area

Leader: Dick Fogle 623-584-3922

rpfogle@yahoo.com

This regional park is a fine birding area with easy walking and the P.I.R. area has always been a good spot for birding. Last year at this time, 31 species were seen. Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave just south of Peoria Ave in Sun City to leave at 7:00 AM.

Difficulty: 1 (some easy walking) Morning only

Saturday, February 11, 2006

Gilbert Water Ranch

Leaders: Chuck & Loretta Richards (623) 594-6554

carichards@nowonline.net

The Gilbert Water Ranch is one of the Valley's better winter birding places. The ponds attract large numbers of ducks and shore birds. There are many common permanent valley birds, plus lots of other winter migrants.

The trails are well maintained, graveled and level. 50 birds were seen or heard on last year's trip to this site.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Meet at Lowe's parking lot on Thunderbird just west of 83rd Ave. by the Burger King. There is lots of parking available. We plan to leave at 7:30 A.M.

Saturday, February 18, 2006

Robbins Butte

Leader: Bob McCormick 602-237-3951

mcbobaz@aol.com

Robbins Butte is a Wildlife Area administered by the AZ Game & Fish Dept. This area hasn't been visited by our group of birders in a long time; so it's an unknown area as to what we'll find. Occasionally there are Sandhill Cranes and a White-tailed Kite is possible. Expect to see lots of hawks.

Difficulty: 1

Meeting place will be listed later.

***Thursday, February 23, 2006**

Tres Rios Wetlands

Leader: Eleanor Campbell (623) 977-7639

ercamp@juno.com

This constructed wetland complex on the Salt River at the 91st Ave. Waste Water Treatment Plant in Phoenix ranks among the best places to find birds in the area. Black-crowned Night Herons, Green Herons and Great Blue Herons are often seen in numbers. At this time of year Blue-winged Teal, Green-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Shoveler, and Common Goldeneye have been present. The Osprey is always sighted and there should be a variety of shorebirds including Greater Yellowlegs, Black-necked Stilt, and Long-billed Dowitcher. Expect to see egrets and passerines also.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave. just south of Peoria Ave. in Sun City to leave at 7:00 a.m. or call the leader to arrange a meeting place further east.

Saturday, March 4, 2006

Granite Reef/Coon's Bluff

Leader: Dick Fogle 623-584-3922

rpfogle@yahoo.com

The last March trip to this area produced 52 species. These areas are located on the Salt River in the Tonto National Forest and provide good habitats for ducks, herons, hawks and Bald Eagles. The mesquite riparian area is home to woodpeckers, juncos and the Vermilion Flycatcher.

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch

Meet at the Bell Recreation Center parking lot near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City. Leave at 7:00 AM. Call leader for directions for meeting farther east and for details.

Saturday-Sunday, March 11-12, 2006

Tres Rios Nature Festival

***Tuesday, March 21, 2006**

Hassayampa River Preserve

Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

This is one of our favorite spots to bird at this time of year—the start of the migration. Last year at this same time, we saw over 30 species including Lucy's Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat and the prize of the day a Lawrence's Goldfinch.

(Continued on Page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

Fall/Winter 2005-6 Field Trips

Meet at Site #1, Bell Recreation Center parking lot near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City. We'll leave at around 7:00 AM or you can meet the group at the Hassayampa River Preserve at 8:00 AM. There is a \$5 donation to the preserve for each person.

Difficulty: 1 This is a morning trip only, but you may want bring your lunch just in case the birding is good. There are nice picnic tables where you can eat and watch birds.

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 check 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 1mile 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) to leave at 7:00AM. 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.

***Friday-Sunday, 28-30 April, 2006 (Get-Away)**

Verde Valley Bird & Nature Festival

Contact Person: George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

Details are not posted on the birding festivals web site yet. It will be held from April 28-30, 2006 at the Dead Horse Ranch in Cottonwood. Last year there was a \$10 registration fee. There will be the normal workshops, exhibits and trips scheduled. Plan on leaving here (car pooling) on Friday morning & returning Sunday morning. Registration will probably begin on 1 February, 2006.

Saturday, May 6, 2006

Yarnell City Park

Leader: Donna Smith (623-556-9535)

rmslms15247@cox.net

Yarnell is a charming town that welcomes birders in the Weaver Mountains. Off route 89 northeast of Wickenburg. This is high desert valley at 4780 ft. 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.

Meet at Wickenburg Community Center at 7AM. As you travel northwest on Highway 60 entering Wickenburg, you will cross the bridge over the Hassayampa 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 scenic drive up the mountain to Yarnell.

Difficulty: 1

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.

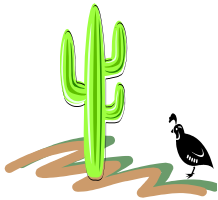
Calendar of Monthly Meetings...

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

December 14, 2005 David Pearson, Ph.D. Arizona State University: "Why are there more bird species some places than others?"

January 11, 2005 Shawneen Finnegan
Desert Plover and Peep Primer: "Shorebirds in Arizona"

Other Dates of Interest: December 7, 2005 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**