



# Gambel's Tales

The Newsletter of the Sonoran Audubon Society

Volume 6 Issue 2

October 2004

## Rio Salado - The Greening of the Salt By Dwayne Fink

Members of the Sonoran Audubon Society's Conservation Committee and several board members took a tour of the Phoenix Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project on Saturday, September 18, 2004. We wanted to get an overview of what it would look like upon completion, and see what progress had been made. Of course, as Audubon people, we took along our binoculars to check out what birds had moved in ahead of time - sort of without permission.

In case you're new to the Valley, or not up to speed on the Rio Salado, I'll present a crash course. Once upon a time there was water flowing year-round in the Salt River as it coursed its way through (now) metro Phoenix. The Salt dumped into the Gila River, which also gathered in the waters of the Agua Fria, Hassayampa - and others. The combined waters flowed westward for junction with the Colorado River, and thence to the Gulf of California.

We can only imagine the lushness, the abundance of wildlife, along the spiderweb-like riparian corridor of these rivers. Maybe today's luxuriant, but endangered; San Pedro River gives us a clue.

One day, sometime about the turn of the century, the wildlife of this Salt River\ Paradise discovered that their oases-in-the-desert was gone. Only desert remained - that and irrigated farm fields and scattered back yards. Dams had dried up the rivers. The now-dry river channels became community trash dumps: miles and miles of garbage, construction waste, old tires and everything the mind can imagine. It was a sorry scar - right through the middle of our great city.

About 20 years ago some architectural students at Arizona State University, who were not encumbered with bottom lines and such, dreamed of water flowing - again - in the Salt River. Gradually others, and eventually a whole lot of others, got on board the dream to move it to reality.

The Town Lake in Tempe became the first pearl, in what someday will be a precious necklace of restored riparian habitats, stretching from Granite Reef Dam on the east to Gillespie Dam on the west.

(Continued on Page 2)

## At our next meeting....

**October 13, 2004**

**Randall Ortega Chaves  
Certified Naturalist Guide  
"Tales from a Costa Rican Birder"**



Turquoise-browed Motmot  
Photo by Randall Ortega Chaves

Randall Ortega Chaves welcomes you to come and hear stories of birding from his tropical homeland, Costa Rica. Randall, a licensed and certified naturalist guide of Costa Rica who has been guiding birding and other natural history groups for seven years, offers to share some of his most treasured experiences, best spots to bird watch, and an incredible collection of photographs to Costa Rica. The presentation will include: an intro, slideshow and stories and description and handouts of upcoming 2005 birding journeys. Don't miss this opportunity to hear from an expert about the extensive birdlife (874 species - more species than are found in North America north of the Mexican border) or this fascinating country.

A number of our members have been on birding trips to Costa Rica the last several years. You can talk to them and you'll find out that they'll support Randall's enthusiasm for birding Costa Rica. Birders' Anonymous went on a trip there the year before last and George Wall can vouch for the excitement that their group felt for their trip. Dwayne Fink and his wife, Edna, went on a Costa Rican trip last year and will be able to fill you in on the details of his trip. Chuck Kangas and his wife went a few years back. They all went to different areas of Costa Rica and had very positive experiences. Fell free to talk to them about their trips.

(Continued from Page 1)

### **Rio Salado - The Greening of the Salt**

Tres Rios will be one of the pearls. Its demonstration site provides us an exciting clue of what ingenuity, cooperation, work, money and water can produce. The Tres Rios demo site is already a wildlife paradise. Other pearls are in various stages of planning and construction.

The Phoenix Rio Salado project is next in line for completion. It's been about five years in the doing. It will be five miles long - stretching from 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue to about where I-10 crosses the Salt. The upstream portion is being cleaned up and converted to Lower Sonoran habitat - this to discourage large water birds from venturing near the airport. Sneak a look down river next time you cross the I-10/Salt River Bridge.

The downstream portion will have permanent streams and lakes, and associated vegetation, to create a lush riparian habitat. The scattered dumps and riverbanks are already rid of their 100 years worth of accumulated debris, and are shaped for planting. The cement works and earth moving for the terrace stream and lakes are quickly taking shape. The stream at the bottom of the Salt River channel has been flowing uninterrupted for several years now, and has a healthy green ribbon of cattails extending its length - except for some created breaks of open water.

Of course the riparian-attracted birds have found this permanent stream. The Conservation Committee spotted such marker birds as Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Double-crested Cormorant, Osprey, Mallard, several species of shore birds, and MacGillivray's Warbler. We logged 23 species in one hour and one mile of actual birding. Remember - we really weren't there to bird.

The bird list for the site is now about 50 species - most obtained by casual observation. It will be interesting and scientifically informative to watch the list grow after the project is completed, and the habitat matures, and regular sustained counting begins. The City claims that beavers have moved in. Maybe Auduboners can verify that when we're there looking for owls.

Right in the middle of this great riparian restoration project, Arizona Audubon will build its first Arizona Nature Center. It will be part of National Audubon's adventurous plan to reach out to 1 in 4 children throughout the United States by 2020 with an inspirational purposeful education program that will blossom into a Conservation Consistency of 1% of the entire U.S. Population. No small dreams by Audubon. No indeed.

The local Arizona Audubon office has been up and running for two years, building support-groups and planning for the Nature Center. Sam Campana is in charge, with support staff of Randy Schilling and Jane Layne.

They are currently searching for someone to develop and run the educational program. The educational program, the heart of the Center, will soon take wings.

More information on the Education Center and the education program director will appear in subsequent newsletters.

The City of Phoenix is planning a habitat ribbon cutting ceremony for Rio Salado for 9 April (next year). Get it on your calendar.

Rio Salado will become a regular birding stop for local birders and visitors alike. It could well become Phoenix's Central Park. Maybe "Pale Male" or his offspring will select Rio Salado for a nesting site. If slogging beavers can find the site overland, winged creatures should discover it in a breeze.

Most certainly volunteers from Sonoran Audubon and the throughout the Valley will become active in various projects for Rio Salado and for Audubon Arizona. Rio Salado is the central pearl of the riparian necklace being planed or the Salt/Gila complex of historical rivers. Plan on getting involved.

### **New Riparian Site Scheduled for the Valley**

Chandler has revealed plans for an \$8 million, 113-acre wetlands park and public fishing lake to be located northeast of Lindsay and Chandler Heights Roads in that city. Similar to the current Gilbert Riparian Preserve southeast of Greenfield and Guadalupe roads in Gilbert, the plans include a 5-acre public fishing lake, man-made hills, a horse trail, education building, police substation and picnic areas.

The first public meeting about the park will be held from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on October 13 at Basha Library, 5990 S. Val Vista Drive in Chandler, where Consultants Carollo Engineers will unveil the park's design and answer the public's questions and suggestions about the project.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **New Bird Field Guide for the Valley**

Jim Burns and Michael Rupp have authored a new booklet titled "Beginner's Field Guide to Birds of Phoenix". It is written in both English and Spanish, and costs about \$2. It is available at Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix; Changing Hands Bookstore, 6428 S. McClintock Drive, Tempe; Wild Bird Center, 10701 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, as well as other locations.

## A message from your president...

Summer is finally loosening its grip on the valley. There is a chill in the morning air (yes, you can call 60s chilly after an Arizona summer). The fall migration is in full swing. Nine different warbler species were seen at the Tres Rios Hayfield site last Monday including Townsend's, Nashville, and Black-throated Gray. Good birding!

This month's poem . . .

COME IN by Robert Frost

<http://www.americanpoems.com/poets/robertfrost/690>

## Board Retreat

The Sonoran Audubon Society is planning a board retreat on Saturday November 20. Tentatively it will take place at the classroom at Tres Rios when all the details can be worked out. The purpose of the retreat is to come up with a plan for this year's chapter operations. As always, other chapter members are welcome to attend. Please consult with Bob McCormick or one of the board members if you would like to attend. Of course, the chapter board members are anxious to get feedback from any of you concerning your ideas or suggestions to increase member participation and better serve our membership. More detail on the retreat will appear in November's newsletter.

**SAS Web Site: [www.sonoranaudubon.org](http://www.sonoranaudubon.org)**

## 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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:chuckkan@mindspring.com) or by mail to: Sonoran Audubon Society P O Box 8068 Glendale, AZ 85312-8068

## Sonoran Audubon Society Officers & Board Members:

### Officers

President Robert McCormick 602-237-3951  
[mcbobaz@aol.com](mailto:mcbobaz@aol.com)  
Vice-President Dan Bohlmann 602-938-2881  
[dansbohlmann@prodigy.net](mailto:dansbohlmann@prodigy.net)  
Treasurer Loretta Richards 623-594-6554  
[carichards@nowonline.net](mailto:carichards@nowonline.net)  
Secretary Anne Durning 602-237-9635  
[a.durning@earthlink.net](mailto:a.durning@earthlink.net)

### Board Members at Large

Suzanne Cash 602-942-0727 [roxiep@msn.com](mailto:roxiep@msn.com)  
Dick Fogle 623-584-3922 [rpfogle@msn.com](mailto:rpfogle@msn.com)  
Tom Jones 602-861-1217 [trjones@grand-canyon.edu](mailto:trjones@grand-canyon.edu)  
Karen LaFrance 602-788-9646 [klaf@cox.net](mailto:klaf@cox.net)  
Tom Lazzelle 602-843-8451 [lazzelle.tom@ev.state.az.us](mailto:lazzelle.tom@ev.state.az.us)  
Tice Supplee 602-258-7080 [vsupplee@gf.state.az.us](mailto:vsupplee@gf.state.az.us)  
George Wall 623-875-7057 [walaby@worldnet.att.net](mailto:walaby@worldnet.att.net)

## Committee Contacts

Programs Daniela Yellan 602-942-7791  
[daniela11@mindspring.net](mailto:daniela11@mindspring.net)  
Education  
Field Trips Eleanor Campbell 623-977-7639  
[ercamp@juno.com](mailto:ercamp@juno.com)  
Finance Treasurer Loretta Richards 623-594-6554  
[carichards@nowonline.net](mailto:carichards@nowonline.net)  
Hospitality Marian Bound 602-370-7795  
[kireisonia@yahoo.com](mailto:kireisonia@yahoo.com)  
Membership Charles Kangas 623-931-6677  
[chuckkan@mindspring.com](mailto:chuckkan@mindspring.com)  
Newsletter Bill Higgins [bill\\_higgins\\_tempe@msn.com](mailto:bill_higgins_tempe@msn.com)  
Publicity George Wall 623-875-7057 [wallaby@worldnet.att.net](mailto:wallaby@worldnet.att.net)  
Conservation Tom Lazzelle 602-843-8451  
[lazzelle.tom@ev.state.az.us](mailto:lazzelle.tom@ev.state.az.us)



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, and Fry's Marketplace for your generosity.

**Sonoran Audubon Society Membership**  
**By Chuck Kangas**

I think most of you are aware that I am the new Sonoran Audubon Society membership chair. I'm interested in putting together an active membership committee. Those of you who are interested in helping our society get new members and keeping track of our current members please give me a call at 623-932-6677. It can be a fun job.

A number of our members paid to have the monthly newsletter mailed to their homes. The fee for this service is now due for our new season. Remember, the fee is now \$10.00 per year. We have seven newsletters from September until May. The \$10.00 covers the printing and mailing costs.

Many of our members became Friends of the Sonoran Audubon Society this past year.. This money has allowed us to stay afloat in these difficult times when our dues's share from National has been cut drastically. This is an annual subscription and this year's dues are now due. National Audubon starts notifying you of your membership dues several months before your membership lapses. This notice to all of our Friends of Sonoran Audubon is actually a month late. Please pull out that checkbook and send in your dues check today. Or, you can always give the check to our treasurer, Loretta Richards at the next meeting.

I hope all of you have noticed what an exciting program schedule program chair, Daniela Yellan has put together. Remember to thank , our program chair for her fine work.

And what an interesting assortment of field trips our field trip chair, Eleanor Campbell, has scheduled for this season.

What have the monthly programs and field trips to do with membership? Everything! It's much easier to recruit new members when we have Daniela and Eleanor providing us with such great monthly programs and field trips.

There will be application forms at the membership table for Friends of Sonoran Audubon and also application forms for joining National Audubon. Some of you have indicated that your Audubon membership has lapsed and are interested in renewing.

I'm looking forward to meeting you at the membership table at our October meeting and welcoming back our returning winter visitors.

**Field Trip - Arlington Valley - September 18, 2004**

**By Eleanor Campbell**

The "Fabulous Five" spent an exciting morning exploring the ponds and fields of rural Maricopa county Southwest of Phoenix. Leaders of the field trip, Joan and Dean Luehrs, have investigated the region extensively over the past few years and, by visiting each existing pond often enough, know that each year and each day is different regarding the bird population. Sighting SEVEN Burrowing Owls in their natural habitat near burrows in banks along the roadways (Cotton Lane and Old Route 80) was a highlight of the trip. They were posing outside in the early morning but had disappeared by a return trip at noon.

Hundreds of feeding shorebirds were busy at one receding pond. The group was able to identify a Pectoral Sandpiper which was so different from the abundant Least and Western Sandpipers. There were many Black-necked Stilts, some Long-billed Dowitcher, discernable Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Ospreys, and Forster's Terns. Ducks in non-breeding plumage challenged the group's expertise.

Mixed flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds and Yellow-headed Blackbirds provided colorful sightings in wet fields shared with White-faced Ibises. A regal raft of White Pelicans awaited the group at Gillespie Dam along with Double-crested Cormorants, Belted Kingfisher and Black Phoebe. Many Western Kingbirds and Turkey Vultures were still in evidence. In addition to those mentioned above the species list of 61 included:

Pied-billed Grebe, Eared Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Cattle Egret, Green Heron, Canada Goose, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Gambel's Quail, American Coot, Killdeer, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Mourning Dove, Inca Dove, Greater Roadrunner, Gila Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Western Wood-Pewee, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Rock Wren (heard), Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, American Pipit, Wilson's Warbler, Abert's Towhee, Brewer's Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Finch and House Sparrow.

## Fall and Winter 2004 Field Trips

### Sonoran Audubon strongly encourages carpooling on all outings!

Please organize your own carpool, consolidate vehicles at meeting places, and/or contact leaders for carpooling assistance. Field Trips are rated in difficulty levels one, the easiest, to five, the most difficult. It is recommended that passengers reimburse drivers at an agreed rate.

**REMINDERS: Don't forget water, sunscreen, hats and insect repellent. Wear neutral colors.**

**Saturday, October 2, 2004**

**Morgan Wash**

**Leader: Troy Corman**

**Contact: Daniela Yellan 602-942-7791**

**[daniela11@mindspring.net](mailto:daniela11@mindspring.net)**

Explore this isolated riparian grove at the confluence of the dry Agua Fria River and the spring-fed Morgan City Wash. Located northwest of Phoenix, just North of State Route 74 this area may yield any number of late migrants and early winter arrivals. Be prepared for bushwhacking, uneven flooring, and possibly walking in mud and some water. And don't forget bug repellent. Please contact Daniela for meeting time and place.

Difficulty: 2+

**Friday-Sunday, October 8-10, 2004 OR**

**Friday-Sunday, November 12-14, 2004**

**Northern Mexico Birding & Mata Ortiz**

**Leaders: Rochelle Gerratt and Juan Caicedo**

This is a trip offered by Tucson Audubon Society. Birds and pottery—what a combination! Join experienced guides on a trip combining the best of Northern Mexico birds with the best of Northern Mexico pottery at Mata Ortiz. Spend the first morning birding and exploring Ville Verde, located in the riparian habitat of the Upper San Pedro Watershed, just 15 miles south of the border. It's home to over 180 species of birds. Gray Hawks, Scott's Orioles along with many species of warblers, waterfowl, and other neotropical migrants may be seen. Lodging will be at the cozy inn of Jorge Quintana, one of the master potters in the famous pottery village of Mata Ortiz. Visit the museum and prehistoric ruins of Paquime in nearby Casas Grandes. Spend time birding along the adjoining river.

The price of \$549 includes transportation from Tucson, lodging, meals, activities and guides. \$100 of the tour price is a tax-deductible donation to Sonoran

For more information and to register contact Rochelle Gerratt at 520 696-2002 or [rochelle@naturetreks.net](mailto:rochelle@naturetreks.net).

**Saturday, October 9, 2004**

**Butterflies of Agua Fria Monument**

**Leaders: Melanie and John Dicus 623 374-5356**

**[redspottedpurple@aol.com](mailto:redspottedpurple@aol.com)**

Join area naturalists for an exploration of fall butterflies on the Agua Fria National Monument. With any luck, monsoon rains will bring good butterfly emergence and diversity. Take plenty of water, and don't forget hats, snacks, walking shoes and close-focusing binoculars. (Loaner close-focus binoculars are available through Sonoran Audubon.)

Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Agua Fria National Monument kiosk at the Badger Springs exit off I-17 (Exit 256.) Interested participants please RSVP with Melanie at [redspottedpurple@aol.com](mailto:redspottedpurple@aol.com) or leave a voice message at 623 374-5356.

**Saturday, October 16, 2004**

**Tempe Marsh**

**Leader: Daniela Yellan 602-942-7791**

**[daniela11@mindspring.net](mailto:daniela11@mindspring.net)**

Located at the Salt River and Tempe Lake, this area may be the winter home of ducks and shorebirds. Take advantage of Sonoran Audubon's special permission from Flood Control District of Maricopa County to enter and bird this closed haven. Please contact leader for meeting time and place.

Difficulty: 1

**Saturday, October 16-Sunday, October 24, 2004  
OR**

**Saturday, February 5-Sunday, February 13, 2005  
Copper Canyon, Mexico**

**Leaders: Rochelle Gerratt and Larry Giese**

This is a trip offered by Tucson Audubon Society. Copper Canyon offers some of the most breathtaking scenery and fascinating natural history of North America. Plan to spend part of every day birding while exploring the larger natural history of the canyon. Visit the flora and fauna of the coastal river plain, Madrean conifer forest, Piñon/oak woodland, tropical deciduous thorn forest and tropical rain forest.

(Continued on Page 6)

Continued from Page 5

## Fall and Winter 2004 Field Trips

See exciting neo-tropical bird species and observe the fascinating mix of Mexican and indigenous cultures present in Copper Canyon. The tour includes a boat trip down the Rio Fuerte where Russet-crowned Motmot, Bare-throated Tiger Heron, and both Common and Great Black Hawks can be seen, an excursion on the world-famous Copper Canyon train, a hike along the Cusarare waterfall trail to look for Eared Quetzals, and birding at the bottom of one of the deepest canyons.

The cost is \$1999 based on double occupancy which includes all ground transportation from Los Mochis, Mexico, round-trip train ride, two guides, all meals and hotels. The price includes a \$150 tax-deductible donation to Sonoran Audubon.

For more information and to register contact Rochelle Gerratt at 520 696-2002 or [rochelle@naturetreks.net](mailto:rochelle@naturetreks.net).

**Wednesday, October 27, 2004**

### Tres Rios Wetlands

**Leader: Carolyn Modeen 623 972-6273**

[ctmodeen@juno.com](mailto:ctmodeen@juno.com)

This wetland complex on the Salt River at the 91<sup>st</sup> Ave. Waste Water Treatment Plant in Phoenix ranks among the best places to find birds in the West Valley. Expect to find herons, egrets, raptors, passerines, perhaps some arriving waterfowl. Black-crowned Night Heron is often seen in numbers. Least Bittern is usually present.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Meet at Sun Bowl parking lot on 107<sup>th</sup> Ave. south of Peoria Ave. in Sun City to LEAVE at 7:00 a.m. or call the leader to arrange a meeting place farther east.

**Saturday, November 6, 2004**

### Desert Birds

**Leader: Bob McCormick 602 237-3951**

[mcbobaz@aol.com](mailto:mcbobaz@aol.com)

Explore a Glendale city park while learning about birding basics. The trip will start with information on identification, books, binoculars, etc. in the desert environment of Thunderbird Park in Glendale.

Then the Heritage Fund Pond will provide the scene to search for waterfowl, egrets and herons.

Last fall the group saw 38 species.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Meet at the south end of the Thunderbird Park picnic area at 8:00 a.m. where ramadas are near the restrooms. The park is located about 1 ½ miles North of Loop 101 on 59<sup>th</sup> Ave. Plan on about 3 hours of birding.

**Friday, November 12, 2004**

### Hassayampa River Preserve

**Leader: Donna Smith 623 556-9535**

[rms15247@cs.com](mailto:rms15247@cs.com)

Over 230 species have been recorded nesting or migrating along this riparian area where cottonwoods and willows surround running water and a pond. Trails traverse mesquite thickets and cottonwood stands. There are river overlooks where a variety of species are seen at The Nature Conservancy's preserve near Wickenburg. Anna's Hummingbirds are regulars. The Preserve has been the nesting site for the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and the Red-shouldered Hawk. Although they may not be seen this time of year, there is always a good number of residents.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only (A picnic area is available for lunching after the trip.)

Meet at the Hassayampa River Preserve on Route 60 about 3 miles southeast of Wickenburg, about 45 miles west of Glendale at 8:00 a.m. Donation to The Nature Conservancy is \$5 per person.

**Monday, November 29, 2004**

### Arcosanti

**Leader: Dwayne Fink 480 967-9202**

[edna.fink@asu.edu](mailto:edna.fink@asu.edu)

Arcosanti is that conceptual self-contained city on-the-cliffs above the Agua Fria River, by Cordes Junction. The place is one of Arizona's architectural marvels, and worth a visit in its own right.

Old-timers to SAS will remember that our Conservation activities began with our preparing a Birding List for Arcosanti. We discovered that the intermittently flowing Agua Fria flows continuously between I-17 and Arcosanti. We will bird that section.

Difficulty: 1; but you might get your feet wet criss-crossing the shallow stream.

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Denny's just W of I-17 on Bell (S side of Bell). There's a large parking lot there where we can leave extra cars. We'll car pool from there. We'll bird until noon. PLEASE CALL LEADER to register.

**Tuesday, November 30, 2004**

### McCormick Ranch Lake

**Leader: George Wall 623 875-7057**

[wallaby@worldnet.att.net](mailto:wallaby@worldnet.att.net)

McCormick Ranch is a master planned community in North Scottsdale. It has several lakes/ponds with grassy areas and trees to explore. In this urban setting there are always wintering ducks and Canada Geese and occasionally some rarities. (Continued on Page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

## **Fall and Winter 2004 Field Trips**

We should see large flocks of American Wigeon. Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Meet at Bell Recreation Center, SW corner of parking lot (Boswell and Hutton Dr. one block south of Bell Rd.) in Sun City to LEAVE at 7:00 a.m. or call the leader for a meeting place farther east.

**Saturday, December 4, 2004**

### **Sparrow Workshop**

**Leader: Bob McCormick 602-237-3951**  
**mcbobaz@aol.com**

This is the first in a series of birding workshops that we hope to have. The plan is to try to identify as many sparrow species as possible and to try to define any characteristics that will make future identification easier. Some of the characteristics we will try to describe are appearance, song, habitat, and behavior.

The workshop will be held on Perry Mesa on the Agua Fria National Monument. If you have never been here before, the views are spectacular. A typical trip to this grassland produces 8 species of sparrows. These will include Brewer's, Lark, Vesper, Black-chinned, Savannah, White-crowned, Song, and occasionally Sage, Rufous-crowned, and Chipping sparrows. If time permits we will also visit some of the several of Native American ruins that litter the mesa and we may get a glimpse of the resident Golden Eagles and Prong-horn Antelope.

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Denny's just W of I-17 on Bell (S side of Bell). There's a large parking lot there where we can leave extra cars. We'll car pool from there. We will then meet any others at the entry Kiosk on the Bloody Basin Road exit at 7:30. It's about another 40min from there to the mesa (we'll bird on the way). I have room for three in my vehicle and, depending on interest we may need others to drive their high clearance vehicle (the road is not in bad condition, just dirt).

We'll bird until about 2PM. PLEASE CALL LEADER to register.

Difficulty: 1

**Friday, December 10, 2004**

### **Estrella Mountain Park**

**Leader: Jack Thompson 623-584-1691**  
**cathyandjack@yahoo.com**

This regional park and the nearby Gila River is an excellent birding area with easy walking. Last winter at the Tres Rios Nature Festival the beginning birders class found more than 50 species. Over 100 species have been recorded. Desert birds and shore birds may be seen. The Gray Flycatcher is usually there.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only. Meet at Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave. just south of Peoria Ave. in Sun City to LEAVE at 7:30 a.m. OR at the park entrance at 8:15. Entrance fee is \$5.00 per car.

Difficulty: 1

**Saturday, December 11, 2004**

### **Boyce Thompson Southwestern Arboretum**

**Leaders: Loretta and Chuck Richards 623-594-6554**  
**carichards@nowonline.net**

This unique state park near Superior remains a special birding and hiking area. The diverse flora and permanent water here attract many birds. There are a great many trees that are labeled and the terrain offers a great variety of habitats.

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch to enjoy in the park picnic area. Meet at the Burger King parking lot (near Lowe's) on Thunderbird Blvd. (south side) and 84th Ave. in Peoria at 7:00 a.m.

Entrance fee is \$7.50 per person. Call the leaders to register.

Difficulty: 1

The following two trips are just several of the ones which will be offered in the winter and spring 2005. A complete list of the field trips will be in November's newsletter.

**Wednesday, January 15, 2005**

### **Gilbert Water Ranch**

**Dwayne Fink 480-967-9202**

[edna.fink@asu.edu](mailto:edna.fink@asu.edu)

This is a combined SAS/Birders Anonymous trip to Gilbert Water Ranch, located SE corner Guadalupe Rd and Greenfield Rd (go east on Superstition Freeway (US 60), then south to Guadalupe Rd. Park south side of library.

Start time: 8:30 a.m. We'll bird until noon. West-siders may car pool from Birders' Anonymous Site # 2 (Parking lot of Sun Bowl at 107<sup>th</sup> Ave) at 7:30 a.m. Expect wintering ducks and migrating shore birds.

**February 25-27, 2005 Salton Sea, California**

**& Yuma, Arizona with Henry Detwiler**

**Contact: Chuck Kangas 623-931-6677**

**chuckkan@mindspring.com**

This will be a three day trip. We will drive to Yuma on February 25, bird the Yuma hot spots and spend the night there. On February 26 we will drive to Salton Sea and spend the day birding the area. We will drive back to Yuma and spend the night there. On February 27 we will again bird the area around Yuma and drive back to Phoenix.

Henry Detwiler is an extremely accomplished tour leader and there will be a charge of \$ 20.00 per person.

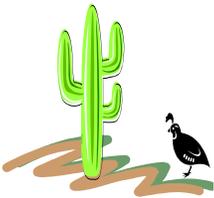
Those of you who haven't been to the Salton Sea will have a pleasant surprise. Thousands of water birds winter in Salton Sea plus there are many other birds in the surrounding area. More details later.

## 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.**

October 13, 2004	Randall Ortega Chaves, Certified Naturalist Guide: "Tales from a Costa Rican Birder"
November 10, 2004	David L. Pearson, Ph.D., Arizona State University: "Conservation of Tropical Rainforests: Why should Arizonans Care?"
December 8, 2004	Roger E. Joos, USDA: "The Beavers of Tres Rios"
January 12, 2005	Rich Galinski, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation: "Raptor Diversity of Arizona"
February 9, 2005	Caroll and Betty McCormick: "Peace Corps in Panama"
March 9, 2005	Kurt Radamaker: "Birding in Baja California"
April 13, 2005	Carol Beardmore, US Fish and Wildlife Service: "Sonoran Joint Venture"
May 11, 2005	Terry Stevens,: "Second Chance: Wildlife Rescue and Rehab"

**Other Dates of Interest:** October 6 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**