



Gambel's Tales

The Newsletter of the Sonoran Audubon Society

Volume 8 Issue 2

October, 2006

At our next meeting....

Wednesday, October 11, 2006 at 7 p.m.

Joe Yarchin of Arizona Game and Fish Department will present a program entitled "Living With Wild Neighbors in an Urban Setting"

Was that a coyote resting on your patio furniture? Did javelina tear up your landscaping? Are herons eating your pond fish? These are just some of the activities wildlife might do when living among humans in an urban setting. In this slide presentation Joe Yarchin will describe the whys, how's, and what to do's of wildlife in urban areas. The new Arizona Game and Fish Department **Watchable Wildlife Program** will also be introduced.



Foxes on a Fence

Joe Yarchin has been with the AZGFD over 18 years. He got his BS from UC Irvine and an MS from NAU. Joe started in the Game and Fish Research Branch where he worked on black bears in the White Mountains and mountain lions in Araviapa. He was the Urban Wildlife Specialist in the Mesa office for 12 years and this year started as the Urban and Watchable Wildlife Project manager. He is currently developing the program and defining the position.

What's Happening in our Chapter?

By Your Editor

The Sonoran Audubon Society board meeting convened at 7 p.m. on September 6, 2006. Here are some of the items discussed by board members Bob McCormick, Anne Durning, Suzanne Cash, Dick Fogle, Karen LaFrance, Andrée Tarby, and Alvin and Arlene Scheuer. Another present who had input were Chuck Kangas.

1. Committee Reports were made.

A. Membership: Chuck Kangas reported that over summer there were 118 new members and 136 memberships that had expired. Newsletters and welcome letters are sent to new members and postcards are sent to expired members asking them to renew. Currently there are 653 SAS members of which 163 are known viewers via the web and 36 pay to have newsletters sent to them.

B. Programs: Daniela Yellan is working on getting programs lined up. She is **seeking new ideas**. If you have any ideas, please contact her.

C. Conservation: Proposition 106 is under fire and needs our support. The Audubon Council will sign onto the lawsuit regarding Bald Eagle delisting.

D. Field Trips: Nothing new on field trips; however, each trip leader should follow up with any new persons on trips to encourage them to join SAS if they are not already members.

E. Hospitality: Chuck Kangas said he will pick up drinks once a year from Trader Joe's and pastries once a month from Karl's.

(Continued on Page 4)

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.

The bird walks are every Saturday starting at 7:00 a.m. You meet at visitors' plaza on the north bank at Central Ave. Everyone is welcome and no need to make reservations in advance. There are several resident birds like the Belted Kingfisher, Peregrine Falcon and Burrowing Owl among others.

Desert Botanical Garden

Each Monday morning from now through October there will be bird walks from 8 a.m. to approximately 10 a.m. There will be additional walks on the second Saturday of each month at the same time. They see as many as 40 birds during these walks.

Desert Botanical Garden entrance fees 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.

Hassayampa River Preserve

Hassayampa is having the 2nd of three sessions of Bird Banding Basics. On October 1, Sunday, and repeated on October 21, Saturday, 6:30-noon, you'll learn the mechanics of net placement and how to manage the nets.

Anne Leight-Watzek, a master bird bander, will be teaching this course designed to introduce bird lovers to the fascinating world of bird banding.

On October 28, Saturday, 8:30-10:00 a.m., you can see live owls, raptors and other rescued and rehabilitated birds when Jody Kieran of "Fallen Feathers" presents a program.

Reservations may be required for some events. Entrance fees are \$5, TNC members \$3 and children 12 and under are free. To make reservations call 928 684-2772 or e-mail: bmccollum@tnc.org

Normal visiting hours are Wednesday—Sunday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

Birders' Anonymous

Birders' Anonymous, a group of birdwatchers, has their monthly meeting 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 in King Hall.

The program for October 20, 2006, is entitled "Our Water and Our Environment." This will be presented by Robert Barrett of the Central Arizona Water Project.

Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Boyce Thompson Arboretum is now in their Fall/Winter schedule. Their hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. The price of admission is \$7.50 for adults and \$3 for children ages 5-12.

Guided bird walks with top-notch leaders are scheduled for October 7, 8, 21 and 22, 2006. They start at 8:30 a.m.

This is an ideal place to bird with two miles of trails. If you don't feel like birding, there are plenty of other things to do.

For driving directions or other details, call 520-689-2811 or visit their website at <http://arboretum.org> where you can see all their scheduled events.

Horseshoe Ranch

October 21, 2006, Antiquities Celebration - Agua Fria Festival. See page 6 for details.

North Mountain

Smithsonian Culture Fest, Saturday, November 4, 2006, 9.30-12:00 p.m. Enjoy a presentation entitled "Where the Chicks Hang Out" by author and naturalist Pinau Merlin.

Southern Arizona is one of the birding Meccas in the U.S., with over 15 species of hummingbirds, plus everything from Elf Owls to Elegant Trogons. Many species from Mexico reach their northern limit in southern Arizona and are not seen anywhere else in the United States. Discover why quail nest on the ground, why desert birds "unincubate" their eggs, how turkey vultures defend themselves, how cavity nesting birds keep the nest clean and much more. Join us for a look at the life histories and breeding biology of Crested Caracaras, Burrowing Owls, Gnatcatchers, Gila Woodpeckers, Gambel's Quail, Cactus Wrens, Roadrunners, Phainopepla and many other species. Cost: Free.

Meeting location: North Mountain Visitor Center, 12950 N. 7th St., Phoenix. (602) 495-5540

Advance registration required. <http://phoenix.gov/PARKS/index.html>

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. For Information or questions call 623-939-6181.

SAS Web Site: www.sonoranaudubon.org

Arizona Audubon Web Site: www.az.audubon.org

Friends of Audubon Arizona Web Site:

www.friendsofauudubonarizona.org



and

KARL'S BAKERY



Sonoran Audubon Society Officers, Board Members and Committee Contacts:

Officers

President: Robert McCormick 602-237-3951

mcbobaz@aol.com

Vice President: Karen LaFrance 602-788-9646

klaf@cox.net

Treasurer: Loretta Richards 623-594-6554

carichards@nowonline.net

Secretary: Anne Durning 602-237-9635

a.durning@earthlink.net

Board Members— Directors at Large

Suzanne Cash 602-942-0727 roxiep@msn.com

Dick Fogle 623-584-3922 rpfogle@yahoo.com

Chuck Richards 623-594-6554

carichards@nowonline.net

Alvin & Arlene Scheuer 602-938-4056

ahscheuer@earthlink.net

Andrée Tarby 480-948-1074 atarby@cox.net

George Wall 623-875-7057 gwall5@cox.net

Daniela Yellan 602-942-7791

danielay11@earthlink.net

Committees

Programs: Daniela Yellan 602-942-7791

danielay11@earthlink.net

Education:

Field Trips: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

rms15247@cox.net

Finance Treasurer: Loretta Richards 623-594-

6554 carichards@nowonline.net

Hospitality: Tom Lazzelle 602-843-8451

tlazzelle@cox.net and Charles Kangas 623-931-

6677 chuckkan@mindspring.com

Publicity: Karen LaFrance 602-788-9646

klaf@cox.net

Membership: Charles Kangas 623-931-6677

chuckkan@mindspring.com

Newsletter : George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

Conservation: Tom Lazzelle 602-843-8451

tlazzelle@cox.net & Karen LaFrance 602-788-9646

klaf@cox.net

BOOK REVIEW
By Nancy Kroening

“TIMOTHY; or, Notes of an Abject Reptile”
By Verlyn Klinkenborg (2006)

Timothy, a female tortoise transplanted from Turkey, entertains readers with her droll descriptions of humans in England in the 1700s. "Young of this village hang by the knees—that puzzling joint—from tree-limbs. I watch in amazement. Also horror. Blood rushes to the head."

Gilbert White, a naturalist/vicar describes the natural history of Selborne, England. His accounts of birds, farm animals, plants, seasons, and Timothy are written in language of the day. The story was imagined from White's papers housed in Houghton Library, Harvard University. Birders could go to Selborne today and see many of the same birds, homes, and garden plots. This book is pure delight, especially as many Arizona residents have desert tortoises as family members. [You can adopt a tortoise by going to www.azgfd.gov and clicking on the photo of the tortoise. Download the application. There is a waiting list.]

Question: What kind of "natural history" would your tortoise write about your family's comings and goings and the natural history of your neighborhood?

VOTE YES ON PROP 106

- Conserve and protect 694,000 acres of some of the most important natural areas surrounding Arizona's state and national parks, monuments, and preserves for future generations - places like the McDowell Mountains, Catalina State Park, Cave Creek, Saguaro National Park.
- Require the state land department to cooperate with local governments when planning on state trust lands and provide local authorities the power to limit and control development.
- Protect and guarantee essential classroom funding to ensure better schools for Arizona.

I took the above information from a flyer that was paid for by Conserving Arizona's Future in support of Prop 106 with major funding by the Arizona Conservation Campaign, Sonoran Institute, AEA Education Improvement Fund, and The Nature Conservancy in Arizona and National Education Association, two national out-of-state contributors with almost 60,000 Arizona members.

(Continued from Page 1)

What's Happening in our Chapter?

F. Finance: Karen LaFrance presented the new budget that she and Loretta Richards worked on.

G. Publicity: The group previously met and discussed redesigning our website with web designer Tracy Unmacht. The cost will be about \$500 for a preliminary redesign. The board approved a motion to go forward with the redesign.

2. The Members' Picnic was discussed. Flyers will be made available at the next membership meeting. Andrée Tarby is working on the food. The Ramada at Thunderbird Park where it will be held holds at least 50 people.

3. A Membership Survey is being prepared to send out in order to get a better idea of what members want.

4. Suzanne Cash reported that she got a few calls on our new telephone, but they were mostly sales calls. Andrée Tarby will check messages for the next two months.

5. Changes to Articles of Incorporation—for indemnification of officers—has to be made in the same manner as changes to the Bylaws. Anne Durning is working on this.

At the regular monthly membership meeting held on September 13, 2006, Jody Kieran gave a great program on "Fallen Feathers" which is a bird rehabilitation center. She was ably assisted by Dave McKelvey who provided plenty of laughter with his bird calls and antidotes. Everyone enjoyed the "live" birds that were brought.

Daniela Yellan gave us a bird trivia quiz consisting of four questions. This will be a regular part of our meetings in the future.

One of the other things that occurred at the meeting: Jerry and Doris Rankin received an "Above and Beyond" certificate for their attendance over the past few years.

It was announced that a Members Survey was available at the meeting, on the Internet and also sent via e-mail.

The picnic slated for Sunday, October 22, 2006, was touted. Flyers were available at the front table.

There were several guests in attendance. They were Beth Meyers, Anne Long, Susan Straubel, Frank Insana, Rosalyn Boxer and Jo Brookshire. We hope they'll attend future meetings.

THE FIRST ANNUAL MEMBERS' PICNIC
FOR THE



Will be held Sunday, October 22, 2006 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Thunderbird Park located just off of 59th Ave past Melinda Lane in Glendale. This is a free event and is open to all Sonoran Audubon Society members, Friends of the Sonoran Audubon Society and their guests.

The Sonoran Audubon Society will furnish the food—hot dogs, hamburgers, baked beans, sodas, etc.

To facilitate how much food is needed, you need to register for this event. Simply call George Wall at 623-875-7057 or e-mail him at gwall5@cox.net and let him know how many will be attending.

Antiquities Celebration - Agua Fria Festival
October 21, 2006 - Schedule of Events
Agua Fria National Monument - Horseshoe Ranch

9 a.m. Opening of Festival

Arizona Ranching stories - Alan Day

Yellow Bird Hoop Dancers / music

Stories of the Frontier West

11 a.m. Recognition Ceremony - Come and help us recognize all the wonderful sponsors and volunteers. Learn about the Antiquities Act and why it is important to you.

Songs and Stories of Arizona - Dolan Ellis and Marshall Trimble

Yellow Bird Hoop Dancers /music

Rock Art slide show

Discussion on current archaeological research

4 p.m. Festival Concludes

HIKES AND TOURS

8 A.M. - Birding hike along the Agua Fria River - meet at Horseshoe Ranch.

All Day - Badger Springs Hike - Self-led hike to Agua Fria River. Exit 256 Badger Springs Road.

The following tours may require reservations - Only High Clearance Vehicles Allowed

10 a.m. and 1 p.m. - Badger Ruin Hike, Ranger led. Reservations required. Call 623/580-5500.

10 a.m. and 2 p.m. - Tonto National Forest site tours. Meet at the Pueblo la Plata kiosk. Reservations required. Call 602/225-5231

All Day - Pueblo la Plata, Self-led tours of Pueblo la Plata. Go eight (8) miles east of I-17 on Bloody Basin Road. Archaeologists will be on site to answer questions.

10 a.m. and 1 p.m. - Presentations by archaeologists on current research at Pueblo la Plata.

Event Location: Hosted at the Horseshoe Ranch in the heart of BLM's Agua Fria National Monument 40 miles north of Phoenix.

Take I-17 to Bloody Basin Road (Exit 259), and travel 5 miles east to Horseshoe Ranch.

NEW BIRD SPECIES

A new bird species has been found in India the first time such a discovery has been made here in more than 50 years. The multicolored bird, Bugun Liocichla, was spotted in May in the remote Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in India's northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh near the border with China. Ramana Athreya who discovered the bird named it after the Bugun tribe, which lives in the area.



Bugun Liocichla – Photo by Ramana Athreya

The Bugun Liocichla is a small babbler (22 cm) with olive-grey plumage and a black cap. The face is marked with prominent orange-yellow lores, and the wings have yellow, red and white patches. The tail is black with a flame colored underside and red tips. The feet are pink and the bill is black at the face fading to pale white. A second duller individual was mist netted, which was probably the female. The voice is described as fluty and distinctive.

All sightings of the species are on disturbed hillsides with shrubs and small trees over 2,000 meters, with the exception of one sighting on the edge of primary forest.

Birdlife International, a global alliance of conservation organizations, described it on its Web site as "the most sensational ornithological discovery in India for more than half a century."

Athreya caught two of the species, but released them after making detailed notes and taking photographs and keeping feathers that had worked loose in his net. "We thought the bird was just too rare for one to be killed," Athreya said. "With today's modern technology, we could gather all the information we needed to confirm it as a new species. We took feathers and photographs and recorded the bird's songs," he said.

BIRDING SPOTS

By George Wall

I'm starting a new column this month that I hope will help some of you who haven't done a lot of birding because you just didn't know where to go or when to go. Back in 2002, Michael Rupp put out a great book called "The Birds-Eye Guide to 101 Birding Sites in and around Phoenix." This is almost a bible to many of us birders.

What I'm going to do is cover some of the same spots that Mike covered and a few others that I've found since his book came out. I'll have some pictures and bird counts at various times of the year. Since I moved here in 1999, I've kept meticulous records of where I went, what time of year and what I saw; so I have a pretty good data base from which to work.

TRES RIOS WETLANDS: To me, this is one of the best birding spots and not too far way for most of us.

In 2000 the Corps of Engineers received approval from Congress for the Tres Rios Ecosystem Restoration and Flood Control Project. This project will improve and enhance a 7-mile long, 1500 acre section of the Salt and Gila Rivers in southwestern Phoenix. The project consists of a flood protection levee, effluent pump station, emergent wetlands, and riparian corridors and open water marsh areas to replace existing non-native salt cedar in the river. Construction on the levee has now begun, with construction of the pump station, emergent wetlands, and river features that started in 2006. Currently only the Hayfield Site with its two ponds is open to the public, but work on the other areas is progressing. The hours are 6 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 6 a.m. – 11 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Closed on holidays.

In 14 trips that I have recorded counts, the lowest species count was 38 in September and the highest was 60 different species in February. It really didn't seem to matter what time of year I went, there were always a lot of birds. In the winter, there are a variety of ducks like the Common Goldeneye and Northern Shovelers. In times of migration, there are usually Yellow Warblers and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. There is always a variety of herons and egrets. Since they started letting water out into the area alongside the entrance road, more water birds like the Double-crested Cormorant can be found that can add to your totals.

(Continued on Page 8)

(Continued from Page 7)

BIRDING SPOTS



One of the Ponds



Tres Rios Wetlands are at the star by the Salt River

To get to Tres Rios, follow the instructions below or use the map above.

Take I-10 West (Pagago Freeway) to exit 134, turn left (south) onto N. 91st Avenue. Travel about five miles to the yellow pedestrian gate on the east side of the road; just past the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Drive east to the next set of yellow gates, park and walk through the gates heading down the wetland and riparian trail areas.

From Loop 101, get off at McDowell, turn right and then left at stoplight onto 99th Ave. Proceed down 99th, turn left onto Broadway Rd and then right onto 91st Ave. to the yellow gates mentioned above.



Yellow-headed Blackbird seen at Tres Rios on September 5, 2006. Photo by George Wall

Fall/Winter 2006 Field Trips

An * means a Birders' Anonymous sponsored trip

Monday, October 9, 2006

Rio Salado

Leader: Tom Gaskill

George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

Rio Salado is one of our newer birding areas and Tom Gaskill who knows where the birds are hiding. On a walk in 2003, we saw 33 species; so birds are there and there is plenty of water in the ponds and the river.

Difficulty 1: This is a morning walk only

Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave. in Sun City just S. of Peoria Ave. to leave at 6:30 a.m.

Wednesday, October 18, 2006

Dead Horse Ranch State Park (Verde Valley)

Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

rms15247@cox.net

Dead Horse Ranch State Park is located near Cottonwood in the Verde Valley. The Verde River runs through the park with trails along its course. Several ponds are good for waterfowl. This is where the Verde Valley bird festival is held.

Difficulty 1: Bring a lunch

We will meet at the Bell Recreation Ctr parking lot on Hutton near Boswell in Sun City to leave at 6 a.m.

***Friday, 27 October, 2006**

Hassayampa River Preserve

Leader: Carolyn Modeen 623-972-6273

ctmodeen@juno.com

(Continued on Page 9)

(Continued from Page 8)

Fall/Winter 2006 Field Trips

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.

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

Meet at the south east corner of the Bell Recreation Center Parking lot near corner of Boswell on Hutton in Sun City to leave at 7:00 a.m..

Also you can 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.

Saturday, November 4, 2006

McCormick Ranch Lakes

Leader: Dick Fogle 623-584-3922

rpfogle@yahoo.com

McCormick Ranch is in North Scottsdale. It has several lakes/ponds with grassy areas and trees to explore. There are always wintering ducks and Canada Geese and occasionally some rarities. We should see large flocks of American Wigeon. There is also the Pavilion Ponds near a shopping center that has plenty of waterfowl. Last year at this time we saw 45 species.

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.

Thursday, November 9, 2006

Arcosanti

Leaders: Chuck & Loretta Richards 623- 594-6554

carichards@nowonline.net

We will be birding in a riparian area on Arcosanti land adjacent to the artist studios. There will be the usual year around species found in the fall at this elevation. We should also encounter some of the fall/winter migration birds.

If the rains continue, there may be some water to be crossed but we should be able to keep our feet dry.

Arcosanti has a lunch buffet for \$7.95, all you can eat. Soup and sandwiches are available as well. There are picnic tables outside and dining tables inside. So if you want to stay for lunch, either bring it or buy it.

Morning only—Difficulty 1

We will meet at the parking lot on the West Side of Denny's which is on the Southwest corner of I-17 and Bell Rd to leave at 7:00 a.m.

Saturday, November 18, 2006

Gilbert Ponds

Leaders: Chuck & Loretta Richards 623- 594- 6554

carichards@nowonline.net

The Gilbert Water Ranch is one of the Valley's fine 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. 51 birds were seen or heard on last February's trip to this site. There are picnic areas for those who want to bring lunch.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Meet at Lowe's parking lot on Thunderbird just west of 83rd Ave. on the West Side of Burger King. There is lots of parking available. We plan to leave at 7:00 a.m..

Saturday, December 2, 2006

Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

rms15247@cox.net

Boyce Thompson is near Superior on Queen Creek. The variety of plants there attracts many birds, the Rufous-backed Robin may be found here in the winter. There is a fee to enter the gardens.

Difficulty 1: Bring a lunch

Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave. just S. of Peoria Ave. in Sun City to leave at 7:00 a.m.

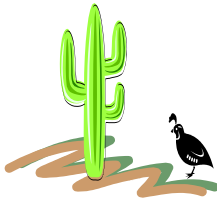
Calendar of Monthly Meetings...

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

October 11, 2006

Joe Yarchin of AZGF "Living with Urban Wildlife"

Other Dates of Interest: October 4, 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