

The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the **Wasatch Audubon Society**

Vol 36, Number 6

Nov/Dec 2017

WAS Meeting and Happenings

Tuesday, Nov. 21, 2017

WAS Meeting 7:00 PM

Marcelle Shoop, National Audubon Director of the Saline Lakes Program, will be discussing the recent report,

Water and Birds in the Arid West:

Habitats in Decline. Audubon is focused on saline (terminal) lakes in the Intermountain West and the water issues these habitats are facing that could have serious consequences for birds

Tuesday, Dec. 19, 2017

WAS Meeting 7:00 PM

Birding is a year around sport!

Join us for a program on Winter Wildlife by **Keith Evans**. Keith is currently the Vice President of WAS and will share images and stories about local birding trips, highlighting many species of wildlife and birds that winter in northern Utah. There are lots of opportunities to avoid “cabin fever” during the coldest months of the year.

**Meeting at the Ogden
Nature Center, 966 West
12th Street, Ogden**

Please join us and bring a friend!

The Christmas Bird Count!

by John Bellmon

Prior to the turn of the 20th century, hunters engaged in a holiday tradition known as the Christmas “Side Hunt.” They would choose sides and go afield with their guns and whoever brought in the biggest pile of feathered (and furred) quarry won.

Conservation was in its beginning stages in that era, and many observers and scientists were becoming concerned about declining bird populations. Beginning on Christmas Day 1900, ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, an early officer in the then new Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday tradition, a “Christmas Bird Census” that would count birds during the holidays rather than hunt them.

So began the Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Thanks to the inspiration of Chapman and the enthusiasm of 27 dedicated birders, 25 Christmas Bird Counts were held. The locations ranged from Toronto, Ontario, to Pacific Grove, California, with most counts in or near the population centers of northeastern North America. Those original 27 Christmas Bird Counters tallied around 90 species on all the counts combined.

Currently, from December 14 through January 5 each year tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas brave snow, wind, or rain, and take part in the effort. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this long-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations, and to help guide conservation action. The data collected by observers over the past century allow Audubon researchers, conservation biologists, wildlife agencies and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys, such as the Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent’s bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years. The long-term perspective is vital for conservationists. It helps form strategies to protect birds and their habitat, and helps identify environmental issues with implications for people as well.

This year will be the 118th Christmas Bird Count for Audubon and the 38rd Ogden CBC for Wasatch Audubon (this is how we got started). We will again be conducting four CBCs in our area. The first will be the Ogden CBC on Saturday the 16th of December, followed by a potluck dinner at 6:00 PM at the UCC Church at 3350 Harrison Blvd. The Bear River Refuge CBC will be on Wednesday the 20th of December.

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Wasatch Audubon Society

Website: wasatchaudubon.org

Officers

President	Dan Johnston	801-645-8633
Vice President	Keith Evans	801-476-0232
Secretary	Sharen Perry	801-392-9554
Treasurer	Betty Evans	801-476-0232
Past President	Katie McVey	715-216-2605

Board of Directors

2016/2017	Nancy Arnett	801-388-0637
2016/2017	Bruce Perry	801-726-9705
2016/2017	Jay Stretch	801-721-9432
2017/2018	Taylor Abbott	980-622-9889
2017/2018	Mike Hearell	801-529-8693
2017/2018	Susan Snyder	801-388-4201

Committee Chairpersons

Conservation	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
Conservation	John Bellmon	801-444-3704
Education	Dennis Collins	801-393-1115
Feeder Projects	Laura Johnston	801-645-8633
Field Trips		
Wed. Bird Walks	Paul Lombardi	801-678-8065
Historian		
Hospitality	Joyce Overdiek	801-392-1908
Membership	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
Newsletter	Barbara Perry	801-721-4709
Programs	Susan Snyder	801-388-4201
Publicity	Arnold Smith	801-829-3383
Website	Patricia Allaire	801-597-1091

About Us:

The **Wasatch Audubon Society** is an association of people who share an interest in birds, all natural things, and Utah's varied habitats. Our goals include: educating ourselves and others about wildlife and the natural environment; enjoying the out-of-doors in fellowship with others who share similar values; fostering an appreciation of wildlife and understanding of ecological principles; promoting opportunities for the public to see and appreciate birds and bird habitats; and influencing public policy toward a conservation ethic. You might also want to visit our website at:

<http://www.wasatchaudubon.org>

President's Pipeline

by Dan Johnston

In early October, I was able to spend two weeks in southeastern Arizona (Pima), caring for my 90-year old dad. During that time, either alone or with my dad, I spent many hours looking for the different species that live in this interesting part of our country. I identified 121 trip species, 32 year species and 1 lifer (Lucifer Hummingbird). The biggest surprise was on my early morning walk along the Gila River-each day I spotted a new trip bird species. So, I ended up walking with my binocs and taking longer than planned. On the next to last day, I finally spotted the target bird for our September meeting, a pair of Gilded Flickers.

A large and common woodpecker of the saguaro cactus forests of the Sonoran Desert, the Gilded Flicker has the gray face and red mustache of the "red-shafted" form of the Northern Flicker, but the yellow wings of the "yellow-shafted" form. The Gilded Flicker differs from Red-shafted Northern Flicker in having a yellowish crown and yellow markings under the wings; whereas, the Red-shafted displays red under the wings. The Gilded also possesses narrower black bars on its back.

The Gilded Flicker most frequently builds its nest hole in a majestic saguaro cactus, excavating a nest hole nearer the top than the ground. The pair will excavate the nest cavity together and defend the nest site aggressively by vocalizing and drumming in order to define the boundaries. The nest cavity is built early in the year, before the Northern Flicker prepares its nest, probably to avoid the summer heat. The cactus defends itself against water loss into the cavity of the nesting hole by secreting sap that hardens into a waterproof structure that is known as a saguaro boot. Northern Flickers, on the other hand, nest in riparian trees and very rarely inhabit saguaros.

The woodpecker for our October meeting was the Williamson's Sapsucker. The Williamson's can be found in the mountains around Ogden, notably Monte Cristo and Powder Mountain. Their nest sites have been found in both places. Due to loss of habitat and climate change, the trend is that in 30-40 years they will not be here.

Williamson's Sapsucker is a strikingly marked woodpecker of the western mountains. Male and female Williamson's Sapsuckers look so different that when John Cassin, an American ornithologist, first described the female in 1853 and the male in 1857, he classified them as separate species. It's an understandable mistake. The male is black and white with a yellow belly and red throat; the female has a brown head, black and white barred back and flanks, and a black band across a yellow belly. The sexes were not recognized as the same species until 20 years later, in 1873. This sapsucker is named after Robert Williamson, a topographical engineer who collected the first male. He was trying to identify the best route west for a railway to the Pacific Ocean .

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BIG SIT 2017

by John Bellmon



Photo by Keith Evans

This year, Wasatch Audubon's Big Sit this year was held at the Antelope Island State Park on Lady Finger Point. The weather was great and fun was had by everyone who came out and participated. We saw a total of 25 species for the day. A little over half of what we saw last year

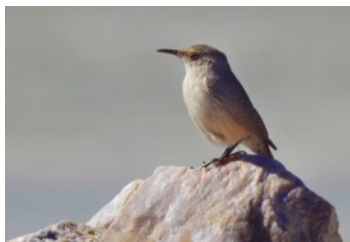
because the location had to be changed due to construction of the new Great Salt Lake Nature Center.

Species List: 1. Northern Shoveler, 2. Chukar, 3. Eared Grebe, 4. Northern Harrier, 5. American Avocet, 6. Long-billed Curlew, 7. Wilson's Phalarope, 8. Red-necked Phalarope, 9. Sabine's Gull, 10. Bonaparte's Gull, 11. Ring-billed Gull, 12. California Gull, 13. Eurasian Collared-Dove, 14. Loggerhead Shrike, 15. Black-billed Magpie, 16. Common Raven, 17. Barn Swallow, 18. Rock Wren, 19. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 20. European Starling, 21. American Pipit, 22. Yellow-rumped Warbler, 23. Vesper Sparrow, 24. White-crowned Sparrow, 25. Western Meadowlark

Those participating were:

Martha Ann Albretsen, Nancy Arnett, John Bellmon, Lynn Carroll, JoAnn Cole, Betty and Keith Evans, Billy Fenimore, Kathy and Ernie Gracia, Dan and Laura Johnston, Melba and Denis Kirby, Paul Lombardi, Brian and Jeannette Nosker, Jack Rensel, Arnold Smith, Jay and Lucy Stretch, and Les Talbot.

A very big thank you to Antelope Island State Park for allowing us to have the count at this location this year. Another big thank you to all who came out and participated and that made this happen. This is the big annual fund raiser for the chapter.



*Rock Wren
Photo by Keith Evans*

The Christmas Bird Count!

(Continued from page 1)

The Morgan CBC will be on Wednesday the 27th of December. Our last CBC will be the Antelope Island CBC on Monday, January 1st, New Years Day- a wonderful way to start the year.

Please come out to our Christmas Bird Counts and have fun birding during the winter season. This is the highlight for many birders in the area. Some winter birds are seen best during this time of the year. Check our calendar for meeting times and places for the beginning of each CBC count day. Hope to see you during our Christmas Bird Count time of fun!

President's Pipeline

(Continued from page 2)

The Williamson's Sapsucker is quiet and inconspicuous at most times, although its staccato drumming and nasal mewing calls may be noticeable in the spring. They will drill tiny holes in tree bark, usually in neatly spaced rows, and then return to the holes periodically to feed on the sap that oozes out. They also eat bits of cambium and other tree tissues, as well as insects that are attracted to the sap. Besides drilling sap wells, they also take insects gleaned elsewhere in trees, sometimes catch insects in the air or on the ground, and perch among twigs to eat berries.

Both parents feed young, carrying food in their bills and throat. The young are fed mostly ants. They leave the nest 3-4 weeks after hatching and may disperse from the territory very soon afterward. They apparently have one brood per year.

Williamson's Sapsuckers are the largest species of sapsucker and are partially migratory. More northerly populations migrate as far as southern Mexico, while others move from higher-elevation forests downslope to forests where more food is available during the winter.

Good Birding, Dan

WAS Supports Youth Impact

by Jay Stretch

Last spring, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology sponsored a ‘contest’ for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) projects aimed at lower income students. Jay Stretch drew up an application that was approved by the Wasatch Audubon Society (WAS) Board but did not receive a grant. However, the Board was so eager to get such an education program going, that they decided to fund it themselves, along with generous support from some individual Board members. The program embraces the goals of the WAS very well.

Youth Impact, located in the heart of downtown Ogden, prides itself on being “A Safe Place to be a Kid.” They engage underserved, inner-city youth in an after-school program focused on reading, tutoring, clubs, and activities, and provide a healthy evening meal. Google **Youth Impact Ogden**, or better yet, go to YouTube and view the series on the organization, its successes and stories over the past 25 years.

Now WAS sponsors classes and field trips for the Youth Impact Birders. With a late summer start, there have been only three field trips and three classes. Even at that it has been fun to watch the youth in their discoveries. Many of these young people have seldom ventured out to or been taken to ‘wild’ spots, not even the local park. Arm them each with a *Birds of Utah* field guide and a set of binoculars and watch what happens!

We haven’t piled up a large Club Year Bird list, but that is kind of beside the point. Getting them out and active in something so very foreign to many of them is reward enough. Especially in a moment like “I’m going to look in the trees with no leaves. It’s easier to see the birds”.

In addition to classes and field trips, we have helped them transform their garden into a friendlier inner-city bird space. Nine feeders of various types and various seeds led to a summer of hummers and finches up close and personal, to the delight of the kids.

Now that you have heard the story, see what you can do to get involved. With winter coming, there will not be too many field trips, but we plan on classes and activities on Tuesday afternoons twice a month. Your participation and ideas are most welcome, just call or text Jay Stretch or Dan Johnston at the numbers listed in the box on the second page of this issue.

It is important, too, to give special thanks to Billy Fenimore of **Wild About Birds Nature Center** for his enthusiastic support throughout this program. Whether helping procure equipment, feeders, and feed or organizing back gate access to the Nature Conservancy, he has been with us the entire way—Thanks Billy!



Photos by Billy Fenimore



CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

1 Wednesday 8:00/9:00am Bird Walk

South Ogden Nature Park: Meet at Denny's (5805 S Harrison Blvd, South Ogden) at 8:00am for breakfast or at the Nature Park at 9:00am.

4 Saturday 10:00am-6:00pm Anniversary Party

Wild About Birds Nature Center celebrates its 15th Anniversary. 1986 North Hill Field Road, Suite 7B, Layton (exit 332, Antelope Drive, off I-15). Live birds! See and learn about wild birds of prey. There will be refreshments, snacks, door prizes and drawings for a variety of prizes.

8 Wednesday 8:00/9:00am Bird Walk

Pineview Reservoir: Meet at Dylan's (12th and Monroe) for breakfast at 8:00am or at the Smith's parking lot (12th and Harrison) at 9:00am to carpool. Because of the closure of the North Arm trail, we'll try the parking lot on the West side of the reservoir. Take the gravel road a few hundred yards north of the Ogden Pineview Yacht Club. There is a parking lot with restroom.

15 Wednesday 8:00/9:00am Bird Walk

Riverdale Trail (South): Meet at Moore's Family Restaurant (3558 Wall Ave., Ogden) at 8:00am for breakfast or at the trailhead (from Riverdale Rd., south on 700 W for one block, then left on 4600 W to lot on right at the end of the road) at 9:00am.

21 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS meeting

Marcelle Shoop, Director of the National Audubon Society Saline Lakes Program, will be our speaker for November. She will be discussing the recent report, **Water and Birds in the Arid West: Habitats in Decline.**

22 Wednesday No Bird Walk Today

25 Saturday 7:30/8:00am Field Trip

East Canyon State Park and Reservoir: Meet at the Utah DWR (515 E 5300 S, South Ogden) at 7:30am to carpool for breakfast at Larry's Spring Chicken Inn (4 North State St., Morgan) at 8:00am. It is an all day trip. Bring water and lunch. Walkie talkies on frequency 11-22 will be used to communicate between cars. This is a fee area.

29 Wednesday 8:00/9:00am Bird Walk

Ogden Cemetery: Meet at Dylan's (12th and Monroe) for breakfast at 8:00am or at the NE corner of the Cemetery at 9:00am.

DECEMBER

5 Tuesday 7:00pm Board Meeting

Ogden Nature Center: All members are welcome to attend. 966 West 12th Street, Ogden.

6 Wednesday 8:00/9:00am Bird Walk

Dale Young Nature Park (formerly Perry Nature Park): Meet at the Rusted Spoon (2645 US 89, Perry) for breakfast at 8:00am or at the park (1200 W Davis Street, off US 89 on 2250 S., Perry) at 9:00am.

13 Wednesday No Bird Walk Today

16 Saturday 7:00am Christmas Bird Count

Ogden Christmas Bird Count: Meet at Denny's (take 21st St. to 1100 W, on the North side by Flying J Plaza, Ogden) for breakfast and to get your assignment. It is a all day trip. Bring water and lunch. Walkie talkies on frequency 11-22 will be used to communicate between cars. Potluck dinner at 6:00pm at UCC Church (3350 South Harrison Blvd.) for compilation of data. Bring table service and a dish to share.

19 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Meeting

Keith Evans, currently the Vice President of WAS, will share images and stories about local birding trips, highlighting many species of wildlife and birds that winter in northern Utah. There are lots of opportunities to avoid "cabin fever" during the coldest months of the year (e.g., WAS sponsors four Christmas Bird Counts).

20 Wednesday 8:00/8:30am Christmas Bird Count

Bear River Christmas Bird Count: Meet at McDonald's (1838 W 2700 N, Farr West – just east of 1-15 exit 349) at 8:00am for breakfast or at 8:30am to carpool. It is an all day trip. Bring water and lunch. Walkie talkies on frequency 11-22 will be used to communicate between cars.

DECEMBER (cont.)**27 Wednesday 7:30/8:00am Christmas Bird Count**

Morgan Christmas Bird Count: Meet at the Utah DWR (515 E. 5300 S., South Ogden) at 7:30am to carpool for breakfast at Larry's Spring Chicken Inn (4 North State St., Morgan) at 8:00am. It is an all day trip. Bring water and lunch. Walkie talkies on frequency 11-22 will be used to communicate between cars.

JANUARY**1 Monday 8:00am Christmas Bird Count**

Antelope Island Christmas Bird Count: Meet at the parking lot at Antelope Island State Park entrance kiosk at 8:00am. It is an all day trip. Bring water and lunch. Walkie talkies on frequency 11-22 will be used to communicate between cars.

10 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk

Fort Buenaventura Park: Meet at Moore's Family restaurant (3558 Wall Ave) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the entrance to the park at 9:30am.

Contact Persons for WAS Outings Wednesday

Walks - Paul Lombardi pslombard@gmail.com

Saturday Field Trips (the Saturday after the WAS Tuesday Meeting) - President Dan Johnston
801-645-8633

Other Field Trips - Mike Hearrell 801-529-8693

October Field Trip Report**by Dan Johnston**

It was a cold, crisp, clear Saturday morning, when five brave souls met to see what could be seen at the Bear River Migratory Wildlife Refuge. Joining trip leader Dan Johnston was Les Talbot, Marily Gren, Nancy Arnett, and a visitor from Wisconsin, Stuart Malcolm. A total of 50 species were sighted. The highlights were Tundra Swan, 12 Wilson's Snipe, Eastern Kingbird and Marsh Wren. Stuart and I extended the trip to include Mantua Reservoir, Perry Nature Park, and North Willard Bay Campground. We added another 17 species, with a White-throated Sparrow as the highlight.

Conservation Corner**Notes from the Audubon Convention**

by Lynn Carroll

I was able to attend part of the Audubon Convention in July by being a "room monitor" for one day to get in free on another, and here are some things I learned. One session I was assigned to, called "Expanding Your Flock," was focused on making connections with and including people who aren't like us. They pointed out that white folks tend to assume that "people of color" aren't going to be very interested in supporting environmental causes. Wrong. To be most effective, we need to reach out to a wider community and find out where our interests overlap.

I picked up a flier about Audubon's Climate Watch. This is "a new community science program that explores how North American birds are responding to climate change." Its specific protocol requires a group to choose 10 by 10 km squares within which volunteers will count birds at twelve points twice during the year—once in winter and again between May 15 and June 15. At each point a 5 minute count is taken of all birds seen or heard. So far the program is concentrating on two groups of species—bluebirds and nuthatches. The complicated part is choosing the squares to survey using a special mapping program, based on where the target species is found (or is expected to be found in 2020), then laying out the 12 points to be counted in each square. A coordinator must be chosen (volunteer) and trained. Wasatch Audubon leaders haven't yet discussed participating. Are you interested?

I chose a session about Audubon's Climate Change program to end my Convention exploration. We learned that its overall purpose is to build demand for nationwide climate solutions. Audubon has already sounded the alarm about how seriously birds are being affected. Now all efforts will focus on solutions. Plants for Birds plays a part in this by providing additional habitat in built environments.

Audubon membership includes a broad spectrum of political ideology. Encouraging climate advocates among Audubon members with progressive, moderate, and conservative views will bring more strength to the cause. Local action can demonstrate that strength, so another goal is to persuade cities and states to pass resolutions in favor of climate action or to develop plans for mitigating effects of climate change. We were introduced to an exciting new organization for young people called iMatter. They work to empower teens to be advocates for climate action. They start with a Climate Report Card for their city, then ask to speak at a city council meeting with a simple climate-related request. As the youth learn from the results and gain self-confidence, they develop into effective voices for action.

More information: works.audubon.org/groups/Audubon-convention; www.imatteryouth.org

**IMPORTANT
NOTICE**

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Members of Wasatch Audubon Society:

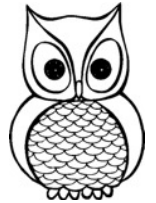
At its October 3, 2017 meeting, the Wasatch Audubon Society Board finalized a proposed revision of the Constitution and Bylaws for the organization. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. The proposed revision is available electronically at www.wasatchaudubon.org; or you may receive a hard copy by calling Lynn Carroll at 801-392-8216 or Barbara Perry at 801-721-1709. Please submit any comments/suggestions electronically by **November 20, 2017**, to Jay Stretch at JayStretch@comcast.net, or to any officer or Board member.

FIELD TRIP LEADER NEEDED

Our WAS meetings are scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month and field trips usually are scheduled for the Saturday following our meeting. Generally, the field trips cover a local area and last for one-half day. Occasionally, a trip can last all day. If you would like more information or are interested in volunteering to lead field trips, please contact Dan Johnston by email at danielj47@comcast.net or by phone at 801-645-8633.

OWL PELLETS

Thanks to all of you who collected owl pellets for me in the last school year. I was able to present my owl program in third, fourth, and fifth grade classes in three school districts. I never have enough owl pellets so keep them coming. The larger barn and great horned owl pellets are preferred. If you know of a good location to collect them, please give me a call. Thanks again and happy birding. Dennis Collins (801) 393-1115



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

by Lynn Carroll

Please join us in welcoming those who recently joined or rejoined National Audubon:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Ms. Arlene Andersen | Jan Leishman |
| Irma Ast | Ms. Ann Mathews |
| Richard Austin | Willard Maughan |
| Leslie J Boothe | Marilyn Mcquone |
| John Castro | Shelley Page |
| Robert Cochran | Linda Parke |
| Mr. Mark Elzey | Lynnette Paulson |
| Cyndie Gabardi | Jeanne C Perkins |
| Lorna Gehrig | Bruce & Barbara Perry |
| Boyd A Hirschi | Cynthia L Quinn |
| Connie Hunt | Carol Robins |
| Elaine Jensen | Mrs. Carolyn Somer |
| Cynthia Johnston | Jim & Margaret Suhr |
| Nancy Kemeny | Doug Woolf |
| Chris Kleinsmith | |





Wasatch Audubon Society

P.O. Box 3211
Ogden, Utah 84409



**Audubon
Membership Application**

Please enroll me as a member of **Audubon** and of my local chapter, **Wasatch Audubon**. Send my membership card, and my annual subscriptions to **Audubon** magazine (6 issues) and **The Mountain Chickadee** (6 issues) to the address below. My check for \$20 (Introductory rate only) is enclosed.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Send this and your check for \$20, payable to National Audubon to:

**National Audubon Society
P.O. Box 422250
Palm Coast, Florida 32142-2250**

Local Chapter: **Wasatch Audubon Society C7ZW5472Z**



**Wasatch Audubon Society
Mountain Chickadee Subscription**

You can receive **The Mountain Chickadee** (6 issues) for just \$12, without joining **National Audubon**. If you would like to support Wasatch Audubon's education and conservation efforts, please indicate the amount of your contribution and include it in your check. Thank you.

___ 1-year **Mountain Chickadee** subscription: **\$12.00**

___ My contribution to Wasatch Audubon: _____

Total enclosed: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Send your check, payable to **Wasatch Audubon** to:

**Wasatch Audubon Society
P.O. Box 3211
Ogden, Utah 84409**