



The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the Wasatch Audubon Society



Vol 38, Number 1

Jan/Feb 2019

WAS Meeting and Happenings

**SPEAKERS WILL START AT
7:00PM, WITH MEETING AND
SOCIAL TO FOLLOW**

Tuesday, January 15, 2019-7:00PM

WAS board members Taylor Abbott and Mike Hearrell will regale us with tales from their recent birding trip to Ecuador. Their presentations are always a lot of fun. You won't want to miss this one.

Tuesday, February 19, 2019-7:00PM

Rachel Love and Grace Johnson, juniors at DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts, will talk about their experience with a group of conservation-minded individuals who are working with officials to encourage the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration to make sustainability a priority in land deals that raise money for public schools.

**Meet at the Ogden Nature
Center,**

966 West 12th Street, Ogden

**PLEASE JOIN US
AND
BRING A FRIEND!**



Ogden Christmas Bird Count

by John Bellmon

The Ogden Christmas Bird Count this year was on a bright, clear, mild winter day with temperatures going up to 45 degrees. This year we again had 10 different teams that covered all the sections of the count circle. We had a very successful count this year. With the preliminary results from the reports that I have received, we had 89 different species sighted. This number will very likely go up after I receive all the team bird checklist reports. A full report of all the Christmas Bird Counts will be in the next newsletter. I would like to thank all of those that came out and participated. The Ogden CBC is one of the birding highlights of the year for many. This also celebrates the starting heritage of our Wasatch Audubon Chapter - this is how we got started 39 years ago. The other three CBCs will be held after the newsletter is printed and sent out to be mailed. A good time and great food were enjoyed by those who attended the potluck on Saturday evening. Again, a big thank you to all that came out in the balmy weather to help make this 39th CBC such a success.





Wasatch Audubon Society

Website: wasatchaudubon.org

Officers

| | | |
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| Vice President | Jay Stretch | 801-721-9432 |
| Secretary | Sharen Perry | 801-392-9554 |
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| 2019/2020 | Taylor Abbott | 980-622-9889 |
| 2019/2020 | Mike Hearell | 801-529-8693 |
| 2017/2018 | Daniel Brown | 801-896-8002 |
| 2018/2019 | Lynn Carroll | 801-392-8216 |
| 2018/2019 | Billy Fenimore | 801-301-3756 |
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| | | |
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| Wed. Bird Walks | Paul Lombardi | 801-678-8065 |
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| Newsletter | Barbara Perry | 801-721-4709 |
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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

A new year and having featured all the ABA woodpeckers, I need to come up with a new Family to feature. After looking at a number of Families and taking suggestions from others, I decided to study the Corvid Family: Crows and Jays. There are 20 ABA members of this Family, and 8 are residents of Utah. I hope I can give you some new facts on these amazingly intelligent birds.

The Common Raven (*Corvus corax*), is a large, all-black passerine bird. Found across the northern hemisphere, including Europe and Asia, it is the most widely distributed of all corvids. It is possibly the heaviest passerine bird. Young birds may travel in flocks, but later mate for life, with each mated pair defending a territory.

Apart from its greater size, the Common Raven differs from its cousins, the crows, by having a larger and heavier beak, a shaggy throat, and a wedge-shaped tail. The species has a distinctive, deep, resonant pruk-pruk-pruk call, which to experienced listeners is unlike that of any other corvid.

Common Ravens can be very long-lived, especially in captive or protected conditions; individuals at the Tower of London have lived for more than 40 years. The Ogden Nature Center's Raven, Cronk, is over 30 years old. Lifespans in the wild are considerably shorter, typically only 10 to 15 years. The longest known lifespan of a banded wild Common Raven was 13 years.

Common Ravens have coexisted with humans for thousands of years and in some areas have been so numerous that people have regarded them as pests. Part of their success as a species is due to their omnivorous diet. They are extremely versatile and opportunistic in finding sources of nutrition, feeding on carrion, insects, cereal grains, berries, fruit, small animals, and food waste.

In many cultures, including the indigenous cultures of Scandinavia, ancient Ireland and Wales, Bhutan, the northwest coast of North America, and Siberia and northeast Asia, the common raven has been revered as a spiritual figure or godlike creature.

The brains of common ravens count among the largest of any bird species. They display ability in problem-solving, as well as other cognitive processes such as imitation and insight.

Wish the best for everyone in the new year.

Happy Birding, Dan

Conservation Corner:

What Is Coal Ash, and Why Should We Care?

by Lynn Carroll

Coal ash is the residue left after coal is burned, also called CCR (coal combustion residuals). Most of it currently comes from coal-fired power plants, amounting to roughly 110 million tons per year in the U.S. Some of the ash is light and powdery (fly ash) and is captured by pollution-control devices before it can escape into the air. Coarse, heavier bits fall to the bottom of the furnace (bottom ash). CCR also includes chemicals formed in processes that reduce sulfur dioxide emissions.

These tons of CCR are mostly handled one of three ways: placed dry in a landfill or old mine, wet as a slurry or sludge in large “ponds” bounded by earthen dikes, or “recycled” in various ways. Coal ash is used for embankments and fill in road construction; fly ash can replace cement in concrete; etc.

The composition of coal ash depends on the source of the coal, and burning concentrates the remaining minerals by about ten times. Coal ash usually contains trace amounts of some very toxic substances: arsenic and heavy metals like mercury, lead, cadmium, and chromium. These substances cause cancers and neurological disorders. Yet coal ash isn't regulated as hazardous waste by the EPA, partly because the levels of the toxic minerals in the ash are often similar to those in local soils, and partly because there is just so much of the stuff.

Human health is endangered by chronic exposure to coal ash when it is inhaled or swallowed repeatedly and when its toxicants migrate into drinking water. Contamination of drinking water has resulted when toxicants leaked from old unlined ponds, and during catastrophic floods when ponds storing ash overflowed or their dikes broke, dumping it into nearby streams. A report on KUER made me aware of the effects of chronic exposure to coal ash. After a large spill near Kingston, TN, in 2008, about 900 workers were hired to clean up the sludge covering 300 acres. They worked for months or years with little or no protective gear, a bucket of water for decontamination, and assurances by the company that this was safe.

At least 30 of the workers have died, and an additional 200+ suffer, from illnesses blamed on excessive arsenic and radium in the ash sludge.

Now we have an inland port that's supposed to be developed in Salt Lake City, and its opponents are concerned that it will bring more bad things than good. For instance, truck traffic will add to the air pollution in the basin, unless there is some way to ordain that all will have electric engines. Lots of loading and unloading will surely be involved; won't that introduce more particulates into our air? What if coal ash is handled?

Leia Larson reported in the Standard-Examiner in March that there is reason to believe that Promontory Point Resources (PPR), which is constructing a landfill at the end of the Promontory Peninsula, may store coal ash there. The landfill has a Class I permit. Since CCR is not considered “hazardous waste,” it is not prohibited in a Class I landfill. The Class I permit does limit the landfill to accepting waste only under contract with a local government for waste generated within the entity's boundaries. The Inland Port Authority is a local government entity. Larson points out that the Port Authority bill states “the transporting, unloading, loading, transfer, or temporary storage of natural resources may not be prohibited” at the port site.

PPR's web site states, “Due to the reduction of the number of coal fired electric plants, the total volume of fly ash production drops every year making it potentially more valuable in the future. ... If PPR constructed storage capacity for this material, it would ... be kept separate from other wastes for future recovery.”

I suspect that heavy metals are as toxic to birds as to humans. If coal ash is ever stored near Great Salt Lake, we had better make sure that it couldn't end up in the air or water of the lake.



INDOOR BOOKS FOR OUTDOOR PEOPLE

by Kristin Purdy

Winter World: The Ingenuity of Animal Survival, by Bernd Heinrich

Renowned naturalist Heinrich explores the remarkable ways mammals, birds, insects and reptiles survive winter. Somewhat science-y, but a great way to appreciate a warm house in January.

The Mushroom Hunters: On the Trail of an Underground America, by Langdon Cook

Follow a culinary adventurer through Pacific Northwest forests as he tries to access the hidden world of commercial mushroom hunting that supplies restaurateurs at the top of their art. Eye-opening and may produce hunger pains.

The Feather Thief: Beauty, Obsession, and the Natural History Heist of the Century, by Kirk Wallace Johnson

A modern crime story layered with the histories of the 19th century natural history expeditions, the art of Victorian fly-tying and the bird conservation movement. A fascinating tale that proves humans are not yet beyond plundering the natural world without regard for the consequences.

The Emerald Mile: The Epic Story of the Fastest Ride in History Through the Heart of the Grand Canyon, by Kevin Fedarko

A 1983 unprecedented water release from Glen Canyon Dam to avoid catastrophic dam failure sparked an illegal historical whitewater trip down the Colorado River. Author sets the stage with the histories of the white man's Colorado River exploration, the West's hydroelectric power development, particularly Glen Canyon Dam, and the whitewater rafting industry. A rollicking ride; no lifejacket required!

Tip of the Iceberg: My 3,000-Mile Journey Around Wild Alaska, the Last Great American Frontier, by Mark Adams

A modern re-tracing of the 1899 Harriman natural history expedition that included naturalist John Muir, nature writer John Burroughs, and many natural history luminaries of the day. Chock-full of glaciers, bears, totem poles and the quirky characters that gravitate to the 59th state.

Moonbird: A Year on the Wind with the Great Survivor B95, by Phillip Hoose

Learn about the plight of the Red Knot, subspecies rufa, classified as threatened by the USFWS on August 22, 2018. Moonbird was so named because he flew the distance to the moon and halfway back in his twice-annual migrations during his nearly 20-year lifetime. Makes a birder thoughtful when seeing Red Knots on Antelope Island Causeway in the spring.

All of these books are available at the Weber County Library.



Wasatch Audubon Society is looking for a volunteer editor for The Mountain Chickadee beginning in May.

The editor is responsible for putting the newsletter together and emailing it to the printer. The newsletter is published six times per year. If interested in this volunteer position, please contact Barbara Perry 801-721-4709 or any WAS Board Member!



CALENDER

January

1 Tuesday 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.

2 Wednesday No Bird Walk today

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

Riverdale Trail (South): Meet at Moore's Family Restaurant (3448 Wall Ave) at 8:30am for breakfast or at the trailhead parking lot (from Riverdale Rd., south on 700 W for one block, then left on 4600 S to lot on right at end of road) at 9:30am.

12 Saturday 8:00am/9:00am Bird Walk

West extension (West of 1900 W) of West Haven Hiking Trail: Meet at Denny's (North on 1100 W from 21st Street in the Flying J Plaza) at 8:00am for breakfast. Or at the West Haven Cemetery (West on 1800 S off 1900 W. Make a right at 2350 W and proceed north into the Cemetery) at 9:00am. Park in the NW corner of the Cemetery.

15 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Meeting

Taylor Abbott and Mike Hearrell tell us about their recent birding trip to Ecuador. You won't want to miss this one.

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

Beus Pond and Glasmann Pond: Meet at Village Inn (1765 E Skyline Drive, South Ogden) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the Beus Pond parking lot at 9:30am.

19 Saturday 10:30/11:00am Field Trip

In Search of Gulls: We will search for unusual and rare gulls where they are congregating at the time. This may include Farmington Bay, Bountiful Pond, and Lee Kay Ponds. Meet at 10:30am at the South Weber Park-n-ride or at Farmington Bay by the operations buildings at 11. This trip will last most of the afternoon and will require little to no walking as most viewing will be done from just outside our vehicles. Contact Mike Hearrell if you plan on attending: utmshrat@yahoo.com or 801-529-8693

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

Little Mountain Railroad Trail: Meet at McDonald's (1838 W 2700 N, Farr West just east of I-15, exit 349) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the trailhead (west on 4000 N from Smith and Edward's) at 9:00am.

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

Kay's Creek Parkway: Meet at Village Inn (1765 E Skyline Drive, South Ogden) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the parking lot at 9:30am.

February

5 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Board Meeting

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

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

Robert N. Hasenyager Great Salt Lake Nature Center at Farmington Bay (1700 W Glover's Lane): meet at Dylan's (185 Main Street, Kaysville) at 8:30am for breakfast, then drive to Center. Gate opens at 9:30am.

9 Saturday 9:00am/2:00pm DWR Eagle Day

Eagle Day at Salt Creek Waterfowl Management Area: The Area is located 4 miles west of Corinne on UT-83. Take 6800 West and follow signs to the landfill. Wasatch Audubon members will provide scopes and talk to visitors about eagles, other local birds, and conservation.

CALENDER continued:

February

13 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk
South Ogden Nature Park: Meet at Village Inn (1765 E Skyline Drive, South Ogden) at 8:30am for breakfast or at the parking lot for the Nature Park at 9:30am.

19 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Meeting
 Two juniors from DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts, will share their experience working with the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration to make sustainability a priority in land deals that raise money for public schools.

20 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk
Antelope Island: Meet at Warren's (1778 S 1000 W, Syracuse) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the entrance lot to State Park at 9:30am. Remember, this a fee area.

23 Saturday 8:00am Field Trip
Annual Morgan County Bald Eagle Trip: Meet at the DWR office (515 E. 5300 S. in South Ogden) at 7:30am. We'll carpool from there. We will have breakfast at Larry's Spring Chicken Inn in Morgan. This is an all day trip. We usually don't finish until 4:00pm, so bring a lunch and drinks.

27 Wednesday 8:30/9:00am Bird Walk
Fort Buenaventura Park: Meet at Moore's Family Restaurant (3448 Wall Ave) for breakfast at 8:30 or at the entrance to the park at 9:30am.

March

6 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk
Jefferson Hunt Campground Trail (note: trail starts on the west side of the campground): Meet at Dylan's for breakfast at 8:30am or at 9:30am at the Smith's parking lot (12th and Harrison) to carpool.

Note: Depending on conditions on the Ogden Canyon road or around the reservoir, we may change the birding location.

Contact Persons for WAS Outings

Wednesday/Saturday Walks - Paul Lombardi
pslombard@gmail.com

Saturday Field Trips (the Saturday after the WAS Tuesday Meeting) Mike Hearell 801-529-8693

Second Saturday Bird Walks

by Dan Johnston

The November Bird Walk was to Willard Bay State Park. Tom, Paul and I birded around the outer edges of the campground. It was closed in preparation for Fantasy at the Bay. We spotted 39 species. Birds of the Day were Hooded Merganser and Bonaparte's Gull.

Our December Walk was to Weber River south of 21st street. We had 8 birders, with 4 who were 1st time birders. We were able to identify 19 species. BOD were Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Belted Kingfisher.

Come join us on our January and February walks. It is a great way to enjoy winter in Northern Utah.

Member Spotlight



John Bellmon is a founding member of the Wasatch Audubon Society. He has a BS in Zoology and Botany from Weber State University. John is a retired federal employee. Most of his career was as an Air

Traffic Controller (FAA and USAF), with some time as a Human Resources Specialist and he retired Chief Master Sargent (USAF and UTANG).

John and his wife Carol and have been married 50 years with two daughters, Lesa and Kerry, and three grandchildren Erin, Yenni and Fela. They enjoy traveling with the grandchildren and showing them our National Parks and other wild places. His favorite pastime is birdwatching, but also enjoys fly fishing, hiking and history travel.

Starting at about 5 or 6 years of age, John has been a life long birder. Cuba, Costa Rica, the South Pacific and South Africa in Kruger National Park are among his favorite birding places. John would like to spend more time in Alaska, Canada, Australia and South America.



Wasatch Audubon Events

February 9, Saturday - 9:00am to 2:00pm
Bald Eagle Day - Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area and the Salt Creek Waterfowl Management Area, viewing will run from 9am to 2 pm at both locations.

March 9, Saturday - 9:00am to 2:00pm
Wild Swan Day - Salt Creek WMA, viewing will run from 9am to 2 pm.

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge Events

January 12, Saturday-11:00am to 3:00pm Owl Day

February 9, Saturday-11:00am to 3:00pm Eagle Day

March 9, Saturday-11:00am to 3:00pm Swan Day

Great Salt Lake Audubon Events

May 30 Thursday 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Great Salt Lake Audubon is hosting an exhibit of the **2018 Audubon Photography Awards Winners** this coming spring. Please put the date of the opening reception on your calendar. In conjunction with the opening, they have invited noted artist **Jane Kim** to talk about the creation of her amazing wall of birds at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. At the City Library, first floor and main floor auditorium (210 East 400 South, Salt Lake City)

June 7-9

Great Salt Lake Audubon is hosting the annual **Basin & Range Weekend Seminar** at Cathedral Rocks State Park in Almo, Idaho this coming year. They are working with Superintendent Wallace Keck to host this year's event and have a great line-up of classes and instructors, so you won't want to miss this one.

In addition, Wallace is inviting us to a friendly birding competition. This is an optional event that runs on Saturday, June 8 from 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. If you are interested in learning more about establishing a birding contest team, contact Jeanne Le Ber (jeanne.leber@utah.edu).

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

by Lynn Carroll

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

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Karla M. Bugnet | Nelda Price |
| Michelle Fatovic | Justin Santos |
| Karen S. Floyd Hough | Debra Siegel |
| Grant Keeler | Karlene Sleeman |
| Tyler Lewis | Richard Smyka |
| Erika MacArthur | Jerry Stickney |

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



Wasatch Audubon Society

P.O. Box 3211
Ogden, Utah 84409



**Audubon
Membership Application**

Membership in Audubon automatically enrolls you as a member of Wasatch Audubon. When you join, you will receive six issues of Audubon magazine and six issues of our chapter newsletter - **The Mountain Chickadee** - each year. To join as a new member with an introductory fee of **\$20**, please go to the following website:

<https://action.audubon.org/donate/chapter-membership?chapter=W54>

(By using this special page, you give us credit toward a monetary reward.)

Local Chapter: Wasatch Audubon Society - W54



**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: _____

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