



The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the Wasatch Audubon Society

Vol. 38, Number 4 July/August 2019

WAS Meeting and Happenings

**THERE WILL BE NO WAS MEETING IN
JULY**
HAPPY SUMMER BIRDING!

Tuesday, August 20, 2019 - 7:00PM

It's time for our annual potluck!

Bring a dish to share, and your dishes and utensils. Drinks will be provided. The grill will be hot, so bring something to grill (if you choose). Folks will be responsible for grilling their own items.

The party starts at 7:00PM

Don't forget insect repellent!

After dinner there will be a time for socializing and sharing experiences.

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

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

THE EDITOR

by Jay Hudson

More often than I would like, the editorial mafia brings me up short. Boy, are they picky! Any error, be it large or inconsequential, is brought to my attention. They are always nice in their quest for excellence, as if they are aware that I played " Battleship " all through my senior year of high school English. I admit that my writing begs for help! I was baffled by all the rules of compound sentences, when to use a comma, when to capitalize and something called dangling participles. I can't say I depend on editors to make me look good, but between Microsoft Word, punctuation police and the comma " commies ", I should be able to produce a modicum of quality. Recently I failed to put a hyphen in the bird named the " Red breasted Nuthatch ". They caught me! Red-breasted Nuthatch is a good example of the hyphen and capitalization dilemma. So I " Googled " it!

" Generally, hyphenate two words when they come before a noun they modify and act as a single idea. " Well that clears it up! So (generally) if I want to be a high-tech writer, I will have to meet this issue head-on! This is an eye-opener, and I will follow-through for my own well-being. Of the 800+ birds in North America, 226 (I just had to count them) follow the hyphenate rule. That's over 25% of the listing. Red-necked Phalarope, Brown-crested Flycatcher, Long-billed Curlew, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-faced Cormorant and Short-tailed Shearwater all follow the rule.

This knowledge led me to wonder just how birds acquire their names. Google again came to the rescue! Generally, the bird's common name comes from who discovered it, like Steller's Jay; or from geography, such as eastern, surf, tropical, juniper, sandhill, sage or seaside. Then there is the reference to plumage such as green, spotted, harlequin, shiny or tufted. We use the bird's shape such as broad-winged, thick-billed, and short-eared. Sometimes we use the bird's behavior, as in Acorn Woodpecker or Black Skimmer. Finally, we use the bird's voice, as in Whistling Duck and Trumpeter Swan.

Having investigated the rules and boarder-line whims of punctuation, ways to name a bird and fitting in the concept of " generally ", I have come to the conclusion that the editor's job of keeping my writing clean, crisp and within the rules does not merit such colorful monikers as police, monitors, commies and regulators. Actually, I'm very glad they are my backup.



Wasatch Audubon Society

Website: <http://www.wasatchaudubon.org>

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President	Dan Johnston	801-645-8633
Vice President	Jay Stretch	801-721-9432
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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

The bird of the month for May was the **Clark's Nutcracker**. Clark's nutcracker, sometimes referred to as Clark's crow or woodpecker crow, is a passerine bird in the family Corvidae. It is ash-grey all over except for the black-and-white wings and central tail feathers (the outer ones are white). The bill, legs and feet are also black. It's has a long, straight, black bill that narrows into a sharp tip. This bird derives its name from the explorer William Clark.

It can be seen in western North America from British Columbia and western Alberta in the north to Baja California and central New Mexico in the south, including Utah. It is mainly found in mountains at altitudes of 3,000–12,900 ft. in conifer forest. This bird often lives in places remote from human contact, near tree line on windy western peaks. Where it does encounter people, however, it seems fearless, striding about in picnic grounds and scenic-view parking lots, looking for handouts.

All Clark's Nutcrackers have a sublingual pouch capable of holding around 50–150 seeds, depending on the size of the seeds; the pouch greatly enhances the birds' ability to transport and store seeds. Clark's Nutcrackers store seeds, usually in the ground for later consumption. Depending on the cone crop as well as the tree species, a single Clark's Nutcracker can cache as many as 98,000 seeds per season. The birds regularly store more than they actually need as an insurance against seed theft by other animals. Closely tied in with this storage behavior is the bird's remarkable long-term spatial memory; they are able to relocate caches of seeds with remarkable accuracy, even nine months later and even when the cache sites are buried under up to 3 feet of snow. Clark's Nutcrackers can also be opportunistic feeders in developed areas.

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President's Pipeline

The bird of the month for June is the **Canada Jay**. The Canada Jay, until recently known as the Gray Jay, is a passerine bird of the family Corvidae. It is found in boreal forests of North America north to the tree line, and in the Rocky Mountains subalpine zone south to New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah. Fossil evidence indicates the Gray Jay was found as far south as Tennessee during the last ice age. A fairly large songbird, it is more closely related to the magpie than to other birds known as jays.

Canada Jays form monogamous mating pairs, with pairs accompanied on their territories by a third juvenile from the previous season. Canada Jays adapt to human activity in their territories and are known to approach humans for food, inspiring a list of colloquial names including "lumberjack", "camp robber", and "venison-hawk".

The species is associated with mythological figures of several First Nations cultures, including Wisakedjak, a benevolent figure whose name was anglicized to Whisky Jack. In 2016, an online poll and expert panel conducted by *Canadian Geographic* magazine selected the Canada Jay as the national bird of Canada, although the designation is not formally recognized.

The Canada Jay is a relatively large songbird, though smaller than other jays. Adults have medium grey back feathers with a lighter grey underside. Its head is mostly white with a dark grey or black nape and hood, with a short black beak and dark eyes. The long tail is medium grey with lighter tips. The legs and feet are black. The plumage is thick, providing insulation in the bird's cold native habitat. Like most corvids, Canada Jays are not sexually dimorphic, but males are slightly larger than females. Juveniles are initially colored very dark grey all over, gaining adult plumage after a first molt in July or August. The average lifespan of territory-owning Canada Jays is eight years; the oldest known Canada Jay banded and recaptured in the wild was at least 17 years old.

A variety of vocalizations are used and, like other corvids, Canada Jays may mimic other bird species, especially predators. Calls include a whistled *quee-oo*, and various clicks and chuckles. When predators are spotted, the bird announces a

series of harsh clicks to signal a threat on the ground, or a series of repeated whistles to indicate a predator in the air.

The Canada Jay is a "scatter hoarder", [caching](#) thousands of food items during the summer for use the following winter, and enabling the species to remain in boreal and subalpine forests year round. Any food intended for storage is manipulated in the mouth and formed into a bolus that is coated with sticky saliva, adhering to anything it touches. The bolus is stored in bark crevices, under tufts of lichen, or among conifer needles. Cached items can be anything from carrion to bread crumbs. Cached food is sometimes used to feed nestlings and fledglings.

Laura and I went camping in southern Idaho in mid-June. We were hoping for the chance to spot one of these birds, but as often in birding, no such luck. I hope everyone will be able to get out this summer and enjoy nature. I am. John Bellmon, Paul Lombardi and I are headed the Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands for two weeks of intense birding. We will report back at some future meeting.

Happy Birding, Dan

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!!!

Field Trip Leader. Our WAS meetings are scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month and field trips are usually 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, please contact Dan Johnston by email at danielj47@comcast.net or by phone at 801-645-8633



CALENDAR

JULY

3 Wednesday 7:00/8:00am

Kays Creek Parkway: Meet at Village Inn (1765 E Skyline Drive, South Ogden) for breakfast at 7:00am, or at the trailhead at 8:00am.

10 Wednesday 7:00/8:00am

Ogden River Parkway: Meet at Dylan's (12th and Monroe) for breakfast at 7:00am, or at the Ogden Botanical Garden off Monroe at 8:00am.

13 2nd Saturday Bird Walk 8:00/8:30am

North Arm Natural Area, Huntsville: Meet at North Ogden McDonald's, 2605 N. Washington Blvd., for breakfast at 8:00am, or in the parking lot there to carpool at 8:30am. Contact info: Lynn Carroll 801-392-8216 or 801-391-9816.

17 Wednesday 7:00/8:00am

Maples Campground, Snowbasin: Meet at Dylan's (12th and Monroe) for breakfast at 7:00am, or at Smith's (12th and Harrison) parking lot north end to carpool at 8:00am.

20 Saturday 7:30am

Monte Cristo: Heading to higher elevations to beat the heat, we will search for high elevation species of birds along SR39 and other adjacent roads. This will be a fairly easy trip with little to no hiking. It may run into early afternoon, so

July (cont.)

bring a light lunch and plenty of fluids. Meet at Smith's at 12th and Harrison at 7:30am to carpool. Contact Lynn Carroll at bradlynn@comcast.net if you plan to attend OR if you have questions.

24 Wednesday Holiday No Bird Walk

31 Wednesday 7:00/8:00am

Ft. Buenaventura: Meet at Moore's family Restaurant (3558 Wall Ave.) for breakfast at 7:00am, or at the parking lot at the park entrance at 8:00am.

AUGUST

7 Wednesday 7:00/8:00am

Green Pond: Meet at Dylan's (12th and Monroe) for breakfast at 7:00am, or at the Smith's (12th & Harrison) parking lot north end to carpool at 8:00am.

10 2nd Saturday Bird Walk 7:00/8:00am

Green Pond, near Snowbasin: Meet at Dylan's (12th and Monroe) for breakfast at 7:00am, or at the Smith's (12th & Harrison) parking lot north end to carpool at 8:00am.

August (cont.)**14 Wednesday 7:00/8:00am**

Morgan's Mickelsen Mile: Meet at Village Inn (1765 E Skyline Drive, South Ogden) for breakfast at 7:00am, or in the parking lot there to carpool at 8:00am.

21 Wednesday 7:00/8:00am

Two Rivers Trail: Meet at Denny's (Flying J Plaza off 21st Street) for breakfast at 7:00am, or under the 21st Street overpass (south off 21st toward the Transfer Station) at 8:00am.

REPORT ON JUNE'S 2ND SATURDAY BIRD WALK

June 8 was a gorgeous early summer day at Beus Pond in Ogden. Our group of birders included some regulars joined by some students from a Weber State University birding class. Sightings included a pair of Wood Ducks, a Lazuli Bunting, and Warbling Vireos. We also saw one of the three Ospreys that have been hanging around the pond helping to manage the fish population.

The 2nd Saturday walks are an excellent way to enjoy a short birding experience. You may join us for breakfast or not, and the walk will take no longer than 2 hours. Upcoming are North Fork up Huntsville way and green Pond near Snowbasin. **See calendar for details.**

Happy birding, *Dan*



Thank you, Barb Perry!

Wasatch Audubon Society thanks Barb Perry for her excellent production of the Chickadee for the last 3 years! And also for her patience in training the interim editor! The Chickadee was always professional and ever full of the best information! We will miss you!

Member Bio President of WAS – Dan Johnston



Dan has lived in 3 of the Four Corners states. Born in Arizona, he attended school there, in Utah and in Colorado. He graduated from Fruita High School, Colorado. He attended both Snow College and Weber State University. He graduated from WSU in 1995.

Member Bio (cont. from page 5)

He worked as a lab technician at Chevron for 25 years, then taught 4th grade at Valley View Elementary for 15 years, retiring only to work just as hard at things he loves. Those include gardening, building, Audubon activities, and church callings. He has created a Certified Wildlife Habitat in his yard and continues to add to that. His family is spread from the east coast to Hawaii, so visiting is also a priority.

Dan has been a birder since January of 1981 when he went to Antelope Island with John Bellmon and Don Paul for an eagle count. He saw no eagles, but the Horned Lark and Snow Bunting hooked him. He still loves birding at Antelope Island, often accompanied by his wife, Laura, who helps with listening. He still wants to bird in Florida, Costa Rica, and along the California coast.

OWL PELLETS

As you participate in summer outdoor activities, keep your eye open for owl pellets. Any size is appreciated, but larger ones are easier for the students to work with. Call Dennis Collins (801-393-1115) if you have some or know of a location in which to find them.



**SAVE THE DATE
FOR
THE BIG SIT**

**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 12**

**IT'S LIKE A BIG DAY OR
A BIRD-A-THON. THE
OBJECT IS TO TALLY AS
MANY BIRD SPECIES AS
CAN BE SEEN OR
HEARD FROM THE 17
FOOT CIRCLE. ENJOY
THE COMPANY OF NEW
AND OLD BIRDERS!
MORE INFORMATION
IN THE NEXT
CHICKADEE**



MEET THE UTAH STATE FLOWER

by Betty Evans

This was a great year for wildflowers along the top of Utah. A special one is the Segoe Lily, the state flower. Sometimes called Nuttall’s mariposa lily, the Segoe Lily (Calochortus nuttallii) is a member of the mariposa lily group consisting of some 60 species found throughout the western United States. Mariposa is Spanish for butterfly and the name “sego” is a Shoshonean word for edible bulb. History shows that Native Americans ate the bulbous root of the Segoe Lily; and during hard times for the Mormon pioneers when their food was rationed, they relied on the Segoe Lily for sustenance. Our cool, wet spring was good for Utah’s state flower, as well as a profusion of other wild flowers. In dry years, the Segoe Lily bulbs remain dormant in the soil, so we don’t always

have the opportunity to see this remarkable flower in the lower elevations of northern Utah. The Segoe Lily normally blooms at higher elevations during July and August and I urge everyone to take advantage of the opportunity to get out and enjoy this special flower. While enjoying the flowers, you can also take the opportunity to enjoy hummingbirds, butterflies, and other wildlife of the mountain meadows.

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK. Go to www.wasatchaudubon.gov and click on the FACEBOOK logo.

Contacts for Field Trips:

Wednesday Walks – Paul Lombardi
pslombard@gmail.com

2nd Saturday Walks – Dan Johnston
801-645-8633

Field Trips on the Saturday after the WAS Tuesday meeting – Dan Johnston
801-645-8633



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 four 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:

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

(By using this special page, you give our chapter 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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Send your check payable to **Wasatch Audubon** to:
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