

# The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the **Wasatch Audubon Society**

Vol 33, Number 2

Mar/Apr 2014



## WAS Meetings and Happenings

**Tuesday, March 18th**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**WAS Meeting**

**Tanzania Photographic Safari with Don Paul:** Don is a retired Utah Division of Wildlife Resources biologist, recently returned from Tanzania, Africa. He will share his experiences and photographs with us during our March meeting.

**Tuesday, April 15th**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**WAS Meeting**

**Birding Experiences and Photography with Paul Higgins:** For several years, we have looked forward to a visit in April from Paul Higgins. His outstanding bird photographs have been displayed at the Ogden Nature Center and showcased in books and publications such as "Utah's Featured Birds and Viewing Sites", Peterson's "Reference Guide to Seawatching – Eastern Waterbirds in Flight", and The Standard Examiner.

Both at Ogden Nature Center  
966 W. 12<sup>th</sup> Street - Come and  
bring a friend!

## GREAT SALT LAKE BIRD FESTIVAL 2014

Wasatch Audubon Society members are always excited for the Great Salt Lake Bird Festival. This will be the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Festival and will be held May 15<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> this year. The Festival offers a variety of activities and trips for all ages and skill levels. On-line registration will begin on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. More information is available at [www.GreatSaltLakeBirdFest.com](http://www.GreatSaltLakeBirdFest.com). Plan to register early, since many field trips fill very quickly. Please come out and join us for this fun and educational event. We hope to see you there.



The Long-billed Dowitcher is the featured bird of the 2014 GSL Bird Festival



**Wasatch Audubon Society**  
 Website: [wasatchaudubon.org](http://wasatchaudubon.org)

**Officers**

President	Katie McVey	715-216-2605
Vice President	Keith Evans	801-476-0232
Secretary	Sharen Perry	801-392-9554
Treasurer	Betty Evans	801-476-0232
Past President	Arnold Smith	801-829-3383

**Board of Directors**

2013/2014	Weston Smith	801-829-4183
2013/2014	John Bellmon	801-444-3704
2013/2014	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
2014/2015	Nancy Arnett	801-388-0637
2014/2015	Scott Baxter	801-540-9417
2014/2015	Dan Johnston	801-731-4573

**Committee Chairpersons**

Conservation	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
Education	Dennis Collins	801-393-1115
Field Trips	Les Talbot	801-589-2591
Wed. Bird Walks	Paul Lombardi	801-295-7738
Historian		
Hospitality	Joyce Overdiek	801-392-1908
Membership	Pat Bausman	801-476-4620
Newsletter	Melissa Hofer	801-544-1453
Programs	Jack Rensel	801-399-0240
Publicity	Arnold Smith	801-829-3383
Website	Patricia Allaire	801-597-1091

**PRESIDENT'S PIPELINE**

by Katie McVey

Watching winter melt into spring these last couple weeks reminds me that Utah is a fantastic place for birds. Where else can you see a huge variety of shorebirds at some of the best wetlands in the world and then drive less than two hours to observe alpine species like Cassin's Finches and Clark's Nutcrackers? We are so fortunate to have great birding places accessible by car, by bike and by foot.

I look forward to exploring many more places and meeting new people this year. As the new president of Wasatch Audubon, I am excited to help guide our chapter for the next two years and to continue our tradition of conservation. Wasatch Audubon is now offering more field trips than ever before so come on out and join the fun. Check out our Calendar on page 4 for all the details.

**INFLATION HITS THE MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE**

For many years, Wasatch Audubon Society has not changed the annual subscription rate for supporters who wish to receive The Mountain Chickadee without a membership in the National Audubon Society. However, since we had to discontinue our black oil sunflower seed fundraiser and postage rates have gone up, we regret to inform you that we must raise the cost of the annual newsletter subscription to help defray printing and mailing costs. The form on the last page of this newsletter reflects that change.

In addition, we have begun to place expiration dates above the names and addresses on the mailing label for the newsletter. If you have questions about the expiration date, please contact Patricia Bausman at 801-476-4620 or by email at [p.a.bausman@gmail.com](mailto:p.a.bausman@gmail.com). Your past support is much appreciated, and we hope you will continue to enjoy The Mountain Chickadee.



**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>

## CONSERVATION CORNER

### Insects and the Web of Life

by Lynn Carroll

A New York Times article posted on Facebook got me looking at the serious threats to insects and how major reductions in their numbers or diversity could be bad news for birds and mankind. The article, published Nov. 22, 2013, is called "The Year the Monarch Didn't Appear," and begins with the latest news about the beautiful and remarkable Monarch butterfly.

I'll assume you know the basic story of this species—larvae dependent on milkweed, migrates from the plains of the U.S. and Canada to winter in Mexico. (In the West they overwinter on the coast of California.) I remember that in the 1960s Monarch populations in California declined, probably because of growing suburbs where milkweed was not welcome in the landscaping. A couple of decades ago, concern centered on the unique forests high in Mexican mountains, where adult Monarch butterflies from the Midwest and East congregate by the millions on the trunks of pine and oyamel fir trees. Heavy logging was depleting these forests, and while much effort has gone into protecting them, smaller-scale logging continues. As a result the butterflies are not as well-sheltered during storms.

Recently, the numbers of Monarchs returning to these Mexican trees have dropped precipitously. Last year was a record low since censuses began in 1993. This year there were half as many as last year. Freakish weather contributed, but there are at least two big impacts in the U.S. where they go when the winter's over.

First, insecticides are still used liberally though probably less indiscriminately than during my

childhood. The neonicotinoid insecticides in use today are supposed to be environmentally superior but haven't proved to be.

Next is the great loss of native vegetation in the United States being accelerated by two recent developments. One is the spread of agriculture into marginal land and roadsides where milkweeds and other nectar-producing plants used to grow. The high price of corn that resulted from government subsidies of biofuels is more attractive than the payments farmers were getting to set that land aside for wildlife. Worst for the Monarchs is the use of herbicide right in the fields with the corn and soybean crops, made possible by growing genetically modified (GM) herbicide-resistant plants. When tilling was used to suppress weeds, common milkweed still popped up between rows at maybe 20-40 plants per acre. Now there are next to none to be found by a female Monarch looking to lay eggs in a field of GM crops.

Monarch butterflies are actually not close to extinction; there are healthier populations that don't migrate between the U.S. and Mexico. But the same factors stressing them are affecting untold other insects. As the diversity and quantity of plants decline, so do the insects they feed on. And so do the birds that feed on the insects.

### **OWL PELLETS WANTED**

If you happen to discover any owl pellets while out birding, please collect them for me or let me know the location and I will get them. I do a lesson in elementary schools on owls and the students enjoy dissecting the pellets.



Thanks for your help and happy birding.  
Dennis Collins (801) 393-1115



## CALENDAR March/April 2014

### March

**5 Wednesday 8:30/9:45 am** **Bird Walk**  
**North Arm Pineview Reservoir:** Meet at Dylan's (12<sup>th</sup> and Monroe) at 8:30 am for breakfast or at Smith's parking lot (12<sup>th</sup> and Harrison) at 9:45 to carpool. Depending on conditions in the area, we may alter the location.

**12 Wednesday 8:30/9:45 am** **Bird Walk**  
**Kay's Creek Parkway:** Meet at Denny's (5805 South Harrison) at 8:30 am for breakfast or at 9:45 am at the trail head.

**13 Thursday 5:30 pm** **Birdy Thursday Evening Walk**  
**Beus Pond:** Meet in the Beus Pond parking lot at 5:30 pm. The trail is flat and paved, but could be slushy or snow-packed and slippery. Wear proper foot gear and dress accordingly. The walk will last about an hour, with an opportunity to socialize afterward.

**15 Saturday 8:00 am** **Bird Walk**  
**Ogden Bay Wildlife Management Area North Entrance:** Meet at Denny's (1172 West 21<sup>st</sup> Street, in the Flying J Plaza) at 8:00 am. We will car pool from there. There will be a short walk inside the gate to view waterfowl and other early arrivals. Afterwards, we will continue on to other nearby marshes and fields in search of uncommon geese, such as Greater White-fronted, Cackling, Snow and Ross's. This trip will be quite easy and will last until approximately noon.

**15 Saturday 10:00 am to 3 pm** **Tundra Swan Day**  
**Salt Creek Waterfowl Management Area:** Located 4 miles west of Corinne on UT-83, to 6800 West, follow signs to the landfill. Wasatch Audubon has a long-standing tradition of providing interpretation at the Utah Division of Wildlife Resource's Tundra Swan Day. For many years, Wasatch Audubon members have volunteered at this event, providing scopes and talking to visitors about Tundra Swans, other local birds, and conservation. Call Les Talbot (801-731-4925) if you have questions.

**18 Tuesday 7:00 pm** **WAS Meeting**  
**Tanzania Safari with Don Paul:** Meet at the Ogden Nature Center (966 W 12<sup>th</sup> Street) at 7:00 pm. Don is a retired Utah Division of Wildlife Resources biologist, recently returned from a photographic safari to Tanzania, Africa. He will share his experiences and photographs with us during our March meeting. He has presented other programs numerous times

in the past. Come and bring a friend for an interesting and enjoyable evening.

**19 Wednesday 8:00/9:15 am** **Bird Walk**  
**Two Rivers Trail:** Meet at Denny's (1172 West 21st Street, in the Flying J Plaza) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 9:15 am at the trail head.

**22 Saturday 8:00 am** **Field Trip**  
**Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge:** Meet at Harmon's parking lot (145 North Harrisville Road, just north of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street) at 8:00 am for carpooling. Bring a lunch and water and dress for the weather. This trip is longer and will last into the afternoon.

**26 Wednesday 8:00/9:30 am** **Bird Walk**  
**Fort Buenaventura:** Meet at Moore's Family Restaurant (3558 South Wall Ave) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 9:30 am at the parking lot entrance to the Fort. Directions: Turn south off of 24<sup>th</sup> Street onto Avenue A. Keep to the left and head down towards the ball fields.

### April

**1 Tuesday 7:00 pm** **Board Meeting**  
**Ogden Nature Center:** All members welcome to attend. 966 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Ogden.

**2 Wednesday 8:00/8:45 am** **Bird Walk**  
**Riverdale Parkway, North:** Meet at McDonald's (900 West Riverdale Road) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at the trail head parking lot at 8:45 am. Directions: From Riverdale Road, go north on 900 West to 4400 South, then left onto Parker Drive. The lot is located on the right, just past Riverdale Storage.

**9 Wednesday 8:00/9:30 am** **Bird Walk**  
**West Haven Hiking and Biking Trail, West of I-15:** Meet at Denny's Restaurant (1172 West 21st Street, in the Flying J Plaza) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 9:30 at the frontage road in front of Stevens-Henegger College to start the walk.

**10 Thursday 5:30 pm** **Birdy Thursday Evening Walk**  
**Dale Young Nature Park in Perry:** Meet at the east side of the Wal-Mart parking lot in Brigham City at 5:30 pm. We will caravan to the park. Directions: From I-15 northbound, head east off Exit 362 (the 1100 South exit). Wal-Mart is just ahead on the south side of the road. The trail is flat but is not paved in all sections. The walk will last about an hour with an opportunity to socialize afterward.

**12-13 Sat/Sun Utah Audubon Council Meeting**  
**St George:** See page 7 for details.

**15 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Meeting**  
**Bird Photography with Paul Higgins:** Meet at the Ogden Nature Center (966 W 12<sup>th</sup> Street) at 7:00 pm. For several years, we have looked forward to a visit in April from Paul Higgins who will share some of his birding experiences and photographs from the previous year. His outstanding bird photographs have been displayed at the Ogden Nature Center and showcased in books and publications, such as "Utah's Featured Birds and Viewing Sites," Peterson's "Reference Guide to Seawatching – Eastern Waterbirds in Flight," and The Standard Examiner. Come and bring a friend for an interesting and enjoyable evening.

**16 Wednesday 8:00/9:30 am Bird Walk**  
**Bair Creek Trail:** Meet at Village Inn (1765 East Skyline Drive) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at the Castle Heights Playground parking lot (1200 Nicholls Road, Fruit Heights) at 9:30 am. Directions: Turn west off Hwy 89 on Nicholls Road for a block or so to the lot.

**19 Saturday 5:30 am Field Trip**  
**Leks and Loons by Les:** Meet at the Division of Wildlife Resources Office (515 East 5300 South, Ogden) at 5:30 am to carpool to Morgan. This is our annual trip to see the Greater Sage Grouse show dominance by strutting for a companion. When the Grouse stop showing off, we will visit East Canyon Reservoir to look for migrating loons. We will stop at Larry's Spring Chicken Inn for brunch. Bring water and dress for the weather.

**19 Saturday Noon-4:00 pm Earth Day**  
**Ogden Nature Center:** Fun activities sponsored by ONC. Wasatch Audubon will have a booth. Please visit us. Visit [www.ogdennaturecenter.org](http://www.ogdennaturecenter.org) for more information.

**23 Wednesday 8:00/9:15 am Bird Walk**  
**Ogden City Cemetery:** Meet at Dylan's (12<sup>th</sup> and Monroe) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at the northeast corner of the cemetery at 9:15 am.

**30 Wednesday 8:00/8:45 am Bird Walk**  
**Willard Bay:** Meet at McDonald's (1838 West 2700 North, just east of I-15 exit 349) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 8:45 am to carpool. We will bird the areas that are open. **This is a fee area.**

## May

**3 Saturday 7:30 am Bird Walk**  
**Antelope Island:** Meet at the parking area east of the entrance to Antelope Island Causeway at 7:30 am. We will,

hopefully, search through many different varieties of migrating shorebirds and waterfowl along the Causeway and then proceed to Garr Ranch in search of rare migrants. This trip is easy and will last until about 1:00 pm. Bring water, bug spray, and appropriate clothing. **This is a fee area.**

**7 Wednesday 8:00/8:45 am Bird Walk**  
**Canal Walk, North Mountain Road:** Meet at McDonald's (2600 North and Washington) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 8:45 to carpool. Directions: Take 2450 North off of Mountain Road, over the canal into the small parking lot. Depending on conditions, we may alter the location.

**8 Thursday 6:00 pm Birdy Thursday Evening Walk**  
**Ogden River Parkway:** Meet in the parking lot of the MTC Learning Park, located on the east side of Monroe Boulevard north of 20<sup>th</sup> Street at the bottom of the hill. The trail is flat and paved. We'll see who is cruising the flowers around the Botanical Center, then head east on the Ogden River Parkway. The walk will last about an hour, with an opportunity to socialize afterward

### More Fun Things to Do

The **Ogden Nature Center** presents its 21st Annual Birdhouse Competition and Exhibit. The competition encourages creative, functional, environmentally friendly & durable backyard habitats for birds. The Nature Center's famous Birdhouse Trail is lined with whimsical, classy, and creative birdhouses. This event is supported by Wasatch Audubon Society. Entries accepted March 24-29, 2014. See more at: <http://ogdennaturecenter.org>

The **Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge** is hosting the "Sense of Wonder Day", an Earth Day celebration on April 12<sup>th</sup>. The event will have interactive displays, crafts, activities and movies from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Check out the Refuge's website for more information. [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/bear\\_river\\_migratory\\_bird\\_refuge/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/bear_river_migratory_bird_refuge/)

The **Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Northern Utah** (WRCNU) will be hosting their Annual Baby Wildlife Shower/Open House Fundraiser on April 25th, 26th & 27th from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. There will be activities for all ages: silent auction items, games, crafts and much more fun. They will have their education birds on display with their team of knowledgeable handlers to teach and answer questions about Utah's native wildlife. Please visit their website at [www.wrcnu.org](http://www.wrcnu.org) for their Needs List of items to donate. Their address is 1490 Park Blvd (the mouth of Ogden Canyon) in Ogden.

## FIELD TRIP REPORT

### Utah Natural History Museum

January 18, 2014

by Les Talbot

Seven of us journeyed to the Utah Natural History Museum to see what they had in store for us. We were not disappointed.

They have a nice bird display that shows the evolutionary trends of their development. They also have a Northern Flicker, Yellow-shafted Flicker, and a hybrid flicker in a display that shows what cross-breeding produces.

The latest Utah dinosaur discovery is on display at the museum. It is in the same group as Tyrannosaurus Rex, but lived in the Late Cretaceous Period some 95-70 million years ago. It is considered a great-uncle to T-Rex, which existed about 15 million years after it did. It was about 24 feet long and weighed about 2.5 tons. Its scientific name is Lythronax argestes. The generic name (Lythronax) can be translated as the "king of gore" in reference to its large teeth and carnivorous lifestyle. The species name (argestes) comes from the poet Homer's southwest wind, in reference to the southwestern geographic location of the specimen. It was a two-legged carnivore and was the largest carnivore in its ecosystem. It was discovered in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in 2009.

The museum has made several changes since we visited it two years ago. It is well worth the time to put on your list of things to do.

## MORE NEW BIRD WALKS

Wasatch Audubon Society is happy to announce that Mike Hearrell and Taylor Abbott have volunteered to add to our activities calendar by leading bird walks on March 15<sup>th</sup> to Ogden Bay Wildlife Management Area and on May 3<sup>rd</sup> to Antelope Island. See the calendar inside for more details. Thanks, guys!

## WAS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

by John Bellmon

Our Christmas Bird Counts went off very well this year, in spite of a hard cold front came through in early December. All of the still water was frozen and waterfowl numbers were down a lot. A big **thank you** to all who participated and made this year's Christmas Bird Counts such a success. All of this information and data is very important for the study of population trends of wintering bird species.

On the **34<sup>th</sup> Ogden Christmas Bird Count** we all had a good time in the fog. Some of the highlights were Merlin and Peregrine Falcons. But the big surprise was a White-winged Dove at the Nosker's feeder. Our totals were 20,847 individuals counted and a total of 75 species.

On the **Bear River Refuge Christmas Bird Count** we had a foggy morning that was very cold. Waterfowl numbers were way down because of the frozen water. Some of the highlights were a lone Sandhill Crane in a corn field and a Barn Owl flying along on the D-Line on the refuge. Our totals were 2,921 individuals counted and a total of 49 species reported.

On the **Morgan Christmas Bird Count** we had a cloudy day, but no one complained after breakfast at Larry's Spring Chicken Inn. One of the highlights of the day was a Northern Goshawk. Several good species were seen during the count week but not on the count day, such as Hooded Merganser and Northern Shrike. Our totals were 7,168 individuals counted and a total of 47 species reported.

On the **Antelope Island Christmas Bird Count** we had a very foggy morning and then a clear afternoon with almost no wind. There was more ice on the edge of the north side of the causeway than anyone could remember. Most of the birds were normal ones for the winter, with a Northern Shrike and a very large flock of Yellow-headed Blackbirds as highlights. Our totals were 12,566 individuals counted and a total of 54 species reported.

**SEAHAWK**

by Jay Hudson

For those Seattle Seahawk fans, it may be interesting to know that the name "Seahawk" came from a public naming contest. Birders usually call this bird an Osprey, but another one of its names is Sea Hawk. The mascot of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Super Bowl Seahawks that flies out of the tunnel and leads the team onto the field is not even an American Osprey. It is a South African Augur Buzzard. The Europeans use the term buzzard, whereas we use the word hawk. The name "augur" comes from the Latin for soothsayer or priest who in ancient times foretold the future by watching the habits of birds. Perhaps the soothsayer could predict that an Augur Buzzard was about to drop out of the sky for a kill. The football soothsayers known as Seahawk fans were certainly right in their augury for the Super Bowl.

**UTAH AUDUBON COUNCIL  
SPRING RETREAT**

The Red Cliffs Audubon will host the Spring Retreat for the Utah Audubon Council April 12-13 at the Tonaquint Nature Center in St. George. The 12th is Red Cliffs monthly field trip to Lytle Ranch.

Those coming from northern Utah have the option of camping at Lytle Ranch or staying in a Motel in St. George. Lytle Ranch camping registration can be done over the Internet at <http://mlbean.byu.edu> then go to Lytle Preserve - reservations

We will meet Saturday at 7:00 a.m. at the BLM parking lot (345 East Riverside Dr.) and then drive to Lytle and meet the campers around 8:00 a.m. for birding. Bring lunches, snacks, sun screen, etc. There are good rest rooms at the ranch. We will return to St. George for an afternoon meeting at the Tonaquint Nature Center on Saturday. There will be meetings at Tonaquint all day Sunday. Contact John Bellmon 801-444-3704 for more information.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

by Pat Bausman

Please join us in welcoming those who recently joined National Audubon and our chapter:

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Morgan Mander    | Catherine Smith |
| Lloyd Thomas     | Giana Curtis    |
| Wallace Green    | Raymond McQuain |
| Sherrie Snell    | Phillip Coleman |
| Thomas Browning  | Cindy Bryden    |
| Renee Beard      | Debra Francis   |
| Jerome Luger     | Jay Stretch     |
| Diane Nelson     | Holidae Swan    |
| Mark Carling     | Julie Sabato    |
| Kimberly Morrill | Lynnette Penrod |
| A.S. Shole       | Jim Barney      |
| Drew Browning    |                 |

Hope to see you at our next meeting or field trip!

**Wild About Birds Nature Center is happy to facilitate and carry on the Wasatch Audubon Society winter bird feeding fundraiser.**



**Wild About Birds Nature Center**  
1986 N. Hill Field Rd, Ste 7B  
848 Field Rd & Northside Drive  
Layton, UT 84041

**BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED**  
**40 lb bag**  
**\$24.95**

Wild About Birds Nature Center will make a \$1.00 donation to Wasatch Audubon for each bag purchased. Expiration date: May 31, 2014. Call ahead if purchase is 5 bags or more.

Please call  
**Wild About Birds Nature Center**  
at **801-779-BIRD (2473)**  
to place your order.



**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 Audubon to:

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

Local Chapter: **Wasatch Audubon Society** C9ZW540Z



**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