



The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the **Wasatch Audubon Society**



Vol 34, Number 3

May/June 2015

WAS Meetings and Happenings

Tuesday, May 19th
7:00 p.m.
WAS Meeting

Paul Lombardi has been leading our Wednesday Walks several years and has made a number of birding trips worldwide to gain a better understanding of birds and their habitats. At this month's meeting, Paul will share some of his adventures while "Birding Antarctica."

Tuesday, June 16th
7:00 p.m.
WAS Meeting

Paul Higgins is an outstanding wildlife photographer who has shared his adventures with us for many years. Once again, be prepared to enjoy his "Recent Bird Experiences." Our meetings are open to the public, so encourage others to come out and enjoy Paul's adventures and photography.

Come and bring a friend! Both are at Ogden Nature Center, 966 W. 12th Street, Ogden.

NORTHERN UTAH EAGLES

by Arnold Smith and Weston Smith

In recent years the numbers of Bald Eagles, our national symbol, have recovered from the small population that was listed on the endangered species list in 1973. It is estimated that somewhere between 1000 and 1500 Bald Eagles winter in Utah in an average year. Due to the mild weather in recent years, many Bald Eagles probably winter farther north than usual. At the beginning of this same time period, no breeding Bald Eagles were known to nest in Northern Utah, but one or two pairs were breeding in the extreme Southeast corner of Utah.

Everything changed in 1996 when a pair took up residence in a dead Cottonwood Tree on the Southeast shore of the Great Salt Lake. A few years later, another pair built a nest along the Weber River near Ogden Bay Waterfowl Management Area. Today at least a dozen pairs are known to be raising young in Northern Utah.



In 2013 Weston Smith, an avid birdwatcher who lives in Croydon, discovered a nest site of a pair of Bald Eagles in the Henefer, Utah area. When discovered, the nest had three young eaglets, but only two survived to fledgling age. In the spring of 2014, the pair laid eggs but the nest failed. The problem with the nest was realized when Robert Richins, a Henefer Valley landowner, escorted Weston onto a side-hill vantage point to evaluate the nest. It is suspected that a raccoon raided the nest by climbing the fifty-foot tall Cottonwood nest tree.

Continued on page 6

Bald Eagle. Photo by Weston Smith.



Wasatch Audubon Society
 Website: wasatchaudubon.org

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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 Katie McVey

Spring is in the Air, So Get Outside!

Springtime is a great time to be a birder. By now, you have cleaned out your nest boxes and made them fresh and inviting for another season. Maybe you have hung your hummingbird feeder in a prime location to await the frenetic beating of tiny wings. It is quite possible you have even put away your winter feeders until fall... WAIT!

About a month ago we ran out of nyjer seed, and I decided not to invest in another bag if I was only going to feed a couple weeks more. My husband had other ideas! He said, "Wait, let's keep feeding them; they are just starting to get their bright colors to photograph." Our nyjer feeder gets mostly Pine Siskins, and American and Lesser Goldfinches. And yes, the finches are molting into beautiful, lemony breeding plumages. There is no right or wrong time to stop feeding the birds. Your local flock will love it if you feed all summer, and there is nothing cuter than when the fledglings come to the feeder with their parents for the first time. And you never know, you might not be the only one in your house or neighborhood who enjoys the birds at your feeder.



Pine Siskin (left) and Lesser Goldfinch at Nyjer sock. Photo by Kyle Tumpene.

CONSERVATION CORNER

Don't Light Up the Night

by Lynn Carroll

In a recent column, I presented evidence that light pollution messes with nature. It may interfere with breeding of birds and with predator-prey relationships, for instance. So what can be done about it? I have summarized suggestions from the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) and other web sources.

Residential Outdoor Lighting

- 1) Always point your lighting down, toward whatever you need to see. (Some light will still be reflected back up from surfaces or snow.)
- 2) Save energy and the night sky by using an energy-efficient bulb, no brighter than necessary, in a well-designed fixture.
- 3) The fixture design should include shielding that keeps the light from shining up or to the side. The IDA website, www.darksky.org, shows examples of available fixtures that have their approval.
- 4) Understand that brighter and safer are not the same. It is harder to see someone hiding in the shadows if there is glare from bright, unshielded light, which temporarily disables our night vision.
- 5) Turn lights off when they aren't serving their purpose, either manually or with a timer.

Business Lighting

- 1) Follow the points listed above.
- 2) Be sure to check local ordinances.
- 3) Lighted signs can add to pollution; check online for suggested designs for various purposes, and follow local ordinances. A good resource is the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (iesna.org).

Holiday Lighting

- 1) Let moderation prevail.
- 2) Install lights under eaves to shield the sky.
- 3) Turn the lights off after bedtime (about 10 p.m.)

Communities

- 1) Pass dark-sky ordinances. See the IDA website for sample ordinances.

- 2) Avoid over-bright street lights, whose glare makes driving at night more difficult.

If you want to become more involved in this cause, contact the Ogden Valley chapter of the IDA, called Ogden Valley Starry Nights. According to their web site, "Weber County enacted a dark sky ordinance for Ogden Valley, the first in the state of Utah, several years ago, but compliance remains uneven." A few more activists could help build on that.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

Lee Kay Ponds and Decker Lake

March 21, 2015

by Les Talbot

When we first arrived at Lee Kay Ponds, the odor from the landfill was overwhelming. But either it dispersed or we got used to it by the time we had checked out the west end of the Ponds. Earlier in the month, large numbers of gulls had been reported there. Their numbers were way down the day we were there.

At Decker Lake, a gentleman was flying a remote-controlled airplane over the lake, which apparently caused the number of birds to be low. While at the lake, we decided to go to the mouth of City Creek Canyon for lunch. We planned to walk up the canyon to look for birds. The weather was really nice which brought a lot of visitors to the canyon. We didn't see any birds during lunch, so we agreed to end the trip there.

Altogether we saw 23 species. The highlight species were: American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Double-crested Cormorant, American Avocet, and Ruddy Duck.

The highlight of the trip was a Chuckar. It was sitting on the ramp that leads up to the gazebo at Lee Kay Ponds. When we approached, it walked up the ramp ahead of us, crossed to the other side of the gazebo and dropped down to the ground. It hung around for a little bit and then disappeared.



CALENDAR May/June 2015

May

6 Wednesday 8:00/8:30 am

Bird Walk

Canal Walk, North Mountain Road: Meet at McDonald's (2600 N Washington Blvd, North Ogden) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 8:30 am to carpool. Take 2450 N off Mountain Road, over the canal into the small parking lot. Depending on conditions, we may alter the location.

13 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am

Bird Walk

West Haven Hiking and Biking Trail, West of I-15: Meet at Denny's Restaurant (North on 1100 W from 21st Street in the Flying J Plaza on your left) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 9:00 am on the frontage road in front of Stevens-Henager College to start the walk.

14 Thursday 6:00 pm

Birdy Thursday Evening Walk

Beus Pond: Meet at Beus Pond (4240 Country Hills Drive, Ogden) at 6:00 pm. Parking space can be tight in the pond parking lot. You can also park on 4400 South, next to the big soccer field-type park and walk across to Beus Pond, but you will end up on the opposite side from the parking lot. Look for folks wearing binoculars to find our group. As always, we'll go somewhere afterward for food, if people are interested. For information, call Susan, 801-388-4201.

14-18 Thurs thru Mon

Bird Festival

Great Salt Lake Bird Festival: Various locations and times.

You must be registered for the activities and trips.

Information is available on their website at www.GreatSaltLakeBirdFest.com.

On Saturday, May 16th from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Wasatch Audubon will have an education booth. Please contact Arnold 801-829-3383 for more information.

19 Tuesday 7:00 pm

WAS Meeting

Ogden Nature Center: Meet at Ogden Nature Center (966 W 12th Street, Ogden) at 7:00 pm. Paul Lombardi has been leading our wednesday walks for several years and has made a number of birding trips worldwide to gain a better understanding of birds and their habitats. A recent trip took him to the southern tip of Argentina, across Drake Passage, Tierra del Fuego, and Antarctica. At this month's meeting, Paul will share some of his adventures while "Birding in Antarctica." Come and bring a friend!

20 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am

Bird Walk

North Arm, Pineview Reservoir: Meet at Dylan's (12th and Monroe) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 9:00 in the N end of Smith's parking lot (12th and Harrison) to carpool. Depending on conditions, we may alter the location.

23 Saturday

Field Trip

No Field Trip due to the Great Salt Lake Bird Festival. There will be two trips in June.

27 Wednesday 8:00/8:30 am

Bird Walk

Perry Nature Park: Meet at McDonald's (1938 W 2700 N, Farr West; just east of I-15, exit 349) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 8:30 am to carpool.

June

2 Tuesday 7:00 pm

Board Meeting

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

3 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am

Bird Walk

East Mountain Wilderness Park, Kaysville: Meet at Village Inn (1765 E Skyline Drive, South Ogden) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 9:00 am at the trailhead.

6 Saturday 7:00/7:20 am

Field Trip

Willow Pond and selected areas around Utah Lake: Meet in the southeast corner of the parking lot near Wendy's (1900 West 5600 South Roy) at 7:00 am to carpool. An alternate meeting place is in the parking lot by Bennion Crafts (Main Street and 300 W just south of the Kaysville Lindquist's Mortuary) at 7:20 am. We will visit Willow Pond in Lehi and then visit areas on the east or south side of Utah Lake. This pond is good for wildlife in the spring. It is an all day trip. We may visit Utah State Park (a Fee Area). Bring food and drinks.

10 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am

Bird Walk

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

11 Thursday 5:30 pm

No Birdy Thursday Evening Walk

No Thursday Walk: There is no evening walk in June.

16 Tuesday 7:00 pm

WAS Meeting

Ogden Nature Center: Meet at Ogden Nature Center (966 W 12th Street, Ogden) at 7:00 pm. Paul Higgins is an outstanding wildlife photographer who has shared his adventures with us for many years. Once again, be prepared to enjoy his **“Recent Birding Experiences.”** Our meetings are open to the public, so encourage others to come out and enjoy Paul’s adventures and photography.

17 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am

Bird Walk

Riverdale Trail, South: Meet at Moore’s Family Restaurant (3558 Wall Ave, Ogden) at 8:00 am for breakfast t or at 9:00 am at the trailhead parking lot (from Riverdale Road, south on 700 W for one block, then left on 4600 S to the lot on the right at the end of the road).

20 Saturday 7:00 am

Field Trip

Bluebird Nest Box Inspection: Meet at the N end of Smith’s parking lot (12th and Harrison, Ogden) at 7:00 am to carpool. Kris Purdy will make assignments and we will drive to our respective starting points. This trip is a great opportunity to see what the Bluebirds, Tree Swallows and House Wrens have produced this year. Wear good hiking shoes and bring water. We will have lunch at our normal meeting place on Highway 39.

24 Wednesday 8:00/8:30 am

Bird Walk

Kay’s Creek Parkway: Meet at McDonald’s (5745 S Harrison Blvd, South Ogden) at 8:00 for breakfast or at 8:30 am at the trailhead.

July

1 Wednesday 8:00/8:30 am

Bird Walk

Swanson Environmental Center: Meet at McDonald’s (Washington and 2600 N, North Ogden) at 8:00 am for breakfast or 8:30 am to carpool.

THANK YOU!

To everyone who participated and donated to **Love Utah, Give Utah** this year. We raised more than \$320 and many great organizations benefited from this state-wide day of giving.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you are a member of National Audubon Society, you automatically will receive the Mountain Chickadee. There is no additional cost for this bi-monthly newsletter. However, you may subscribe to the Mountain Chickadee without being a member of National Audubon. Forms for your use are found on the last page of the newsletter.

Please check the expiration date on the address label on this issue of the Mountain Chickadee. The expiration date on the newsletter will reflect the date even if your subscription comes as a result of your membership in National Audubon. If your subscription expires, your name will be removed from our mailing list.

If you have questions regarding your subscription to the newsletter, please contact either Betty Evans at bkevans4@comcast.net (801-476-0232) or Patricia Bausman at pabausman@yahoo.com (801-675-1642). We hope you find the newsletter interesting and informative and we look forward to seeing you at our field trips and meetings.

Contact Persons for WAS Outings

Wednesday Walks - Paul Lombardi 801-295-7738

Birdy Thursdays – Susan Snyder 801-388-4201

Saturday Field Trips (the Saturday after the WAS Tuesday Meeting) - Les Talbot 801-731-4925

Other Field Trips - Mike Hearell 801-529-8693

PLEASE RECYCLE

Ogden Nature Center has partnered with a local recycler and a large bin for newspaper recycling has been placed in the Newgate Mall parking lot west of the new Burlington store. Proceeds from this recycling effort will benefit the Nature Center.

Thank you

UTAH EAGLES

Continued from page 1

Raccoons are known to prey on nests which are placed in the very tip-top of Cottonwood trees.

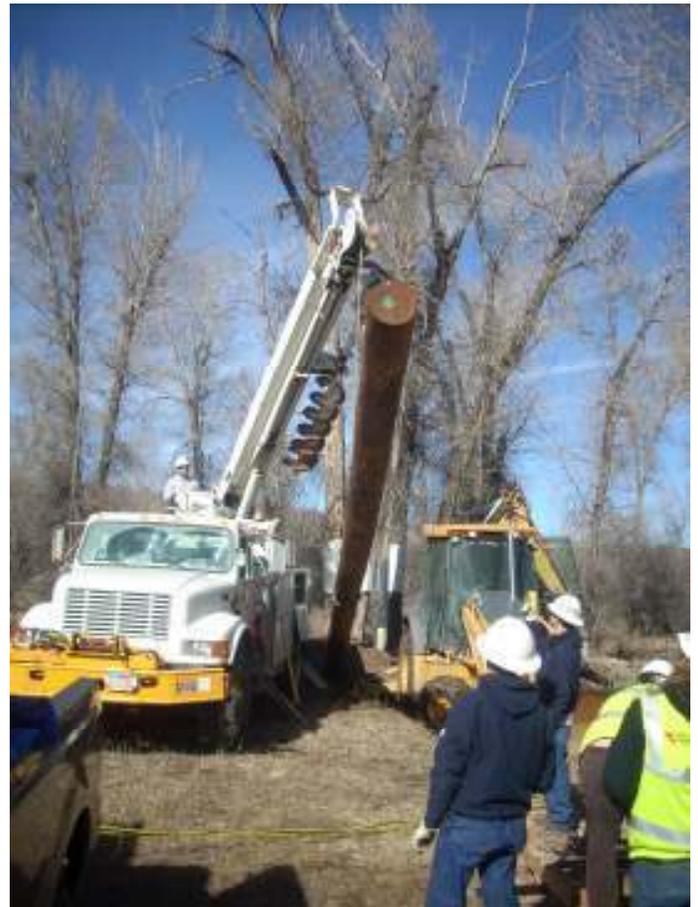
Weston reported this information to Robert Walters, who works for the Division of Wildlife Resources. On November 4, 2014, Walters led a work-party consisting of himself, Adam Brewerton (also from DWR), Weston Smith, Arnold Smith, Robert Richins and Bill White, land owners in the area. To help the success of the nest, this group placed predator guards on the multiple trunks of the nest tree.

Eagle pairs mate for life returning to the same site each and adding additional material which greatly increases the size of the nest. The extreme weight of the nest created by the rainy December probably caused the nest to collapse in a wind storm. Weston discovered this problem on December 22, 2014, and reported it to Robert and Adam at DWR. Robert contacted Rocky Mountain Power which agreed to set a pole-nest platform next to the nesting tree. On February 13, it all came together when all parties met in Robert Richins' garage at Henefer for a work-safety meeting. The group was a fairly large contingency of individuals including reporting/camera crews from television channels 2, 4, and 5. By 1 p.m. the pole with the nest platform was in place next to the original nesting tree.

Sometime around the first of March, the Bald Eagles nesting on a heron nest near Henefer abandoned that nest. They moved to a large Cottonwood tree just below Echo Dam a few miles south of the previous nest. Weston Smith, along with many others, traveled to this area to witness these stunning birds in courtship, nest building, changing sitting duties, protecting the nest, as well as just being their beautiful selves.

Around the third week in March, there was a small grass fire not more than a hundred yards from the nest tree. From that day on, only the eagle sitting on the nest could be seen. Weston checked on it several times a week never seeing two birds together again. As he watched, he could hear the eagle on the nest calling with no

responses. He felt sad because it sounded as if the eagle was crying, and he believed a lone eagle would not be able to eat, defend and feed young by itself. Weston thought the end was coming. Around the first of April, he received a call from a friend saying he didn't see the eagle on the nest or in the area. The next day he quickly traveled to the area to witness himself that, indeed, the nest had been abandoned. We hope that this is not the end for the Bald Eagles nesting in the Henefer/Echo area as they are such magnificent birds that one generally only sees in the winter months in Northern Utah.



Rocky Mountain Power, DWR and others erecting a nesting platform. Photo by Weston Smith.

NEW!!!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

by Pat Bausman

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

Clarence Aleshire
 Anndea Cheney
 Joseph M. Evensen
 Elaine Fluckiger
 Ronald W. Haag
 John E. Heisler
 Clifton Jenkins
 Nancy Kemeny
 Rebecca Lammert

Glen R. Loper
 Marilyn McQuone
 John Mijer
 Becky & Steve Palfreyman
 James Peters
 Betty Pettit
 Richard Pontius
 Dickson Smith

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

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



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DON'T FORGET: Wild About Birds Nature Center will make a \$1.50 donation to Wasatch Audubon for each 40lb bag of black oil sunflower seed purchased.



Wild About Birds Nature Center
 1986 N. Hill Field Rd, Ste 7B
 (Hill Field Rd & Antelope Drive)
 Layton, UT 84041



Wasatch Audubon Society

P.O. Box 3211
Ogden, Utah 84409



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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 _____

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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 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 _____

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