



The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the Wasatch Audubon Society

Volume 40, Number 2 March/April 2021

WAS MEETINGS AND HAPPENINGS

Tuesday, March 16 - 7:00pm

Join us on *Zoom for a presentation by Nate Staker. Nate is the new manager of the Ogden Botanical Garden. He will talk to us about the recent Garden update and about landscaping for birds. Also, he will be asking us for suggestions to make the garden more bird friendly. **See below on how to get on the email list for the Zoom link.*

Tuesday, April 20 - *6:45pm

We're getting real this month to celebrate Earth Day (barring unforeseen circumstances). We'll take a leisurely bird walk around 21st St. Pond and do some cleanup along the way. Bring your own gloves; we will have trash bags and picker-upper wands. Meet in the pond parking lot located on the right just after the 20th St. overpass (going west).

**(Note earlier time due to light that time of year)*

Keep in Touch With Us!

Do we have your email address? We often want to communicate with our members in between newsletters about Zoom links, changes in plans, new opportunities, or conservation action. If you want to know what's up and haven't been getting emails from WAS, please send a message to Lynn at bradlynnc@comcast.net.

For timely information, you can also go to our Facebook page by searching for Wasatch Audubon Society or clicking on the Facebook logo on our website (www.wasatchaudubon.org).

Final Christmas Bird Count Report

by John Bellmon, Mike Hearell and
Weston Smith

The big story this year is the new Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in Ogden Valley established by Mike Hearell and Taylor Abbott. It was a great success! Another factor that sets this year's count apart is that it was conducted with Covid restrictions. That posed some challenges, but the dedicated counters persisted. The weather was not ideal either; but, again, our counters toughed it out. Thanks to all who participated! The data gathered is reported to The Audubon Society and used to study population trends of wintering bird species. Wasatch Audubon now hosts five counts as reported below.

Ogden - Though it was snowy and cold, 33 individuals came out to help count. We counted 101 species, second highest Ogden CBC in its 41 years. Some unusual sightings were a Gyrfalcon, Juniper Titmouse, and Thick-billed (McCowan's) Longspur. The total number of birds counted was 29,435.

Bear River Refuge - On a clear and cold day, 8 counters covered the auto tour loop, a smaller area than usual because of the circumstances. Waterfowl numbers were low because the water was frozen. But we saw the normal winter birds like the Rough-legged Hawk and American Tree Sparrow. We counted 51 species for a total of 7122 birds.

Antelope Island - On a cold, foggy day when a storm was forecast, 21 individuals came out to count. We saw the normal winter birds, but also a few unusual birds were sighted - Long-tailed Ducks, Harris's Sparrow and Sagebrush Sparrow. Our totals were 62 species and 8256 birds.

Ogden Valley - The inaugural Ogden Valley CBC included 15 areas with 47 participants counting birds. There were many young birders which is a great way to start this new CBC. The overall species count was 76, with a total of 4632 birds counted. Some highlight birds included Sharp-tailed Grouse, Gray Partridge, Blue Jay, Lewis's Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch and Rosy-Finches.

Continued on pg. 6

Wasatch Audubon Society

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

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| Secretary | Sharen Perry | 801-392-9554 |
| Treasurer | Nancy Arnett | 801-388-0637 |
| Past President | Dan Johnston | 801-645-8633 |

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| 2021/2022 | Vacant | |
| 2021/2022 | Mike Hearell | 801-529-8693 |
| 2021/2022 | Susan Snyder | 801-388-4201 |

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| Conservation | John Bellmon | 801-444-3704 |
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| Bird Walks | Paul Lombardi | 801-678-8065 |
| Historian | Ruth Davis | 801-309-0425 |
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| Newsletter | Laura Johnston | 801-458-9558 |
| Programs | Susan Snyder | 801-388-4201 |
| Publicity | Arnold Smith | 801-829-3383 |
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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>.

Prevent Salmonella at Your Feeders

by Kris Purdy

Hosting Cassin's Finches at my feeders this winter has been a delight since we don't see them every year. But when I saw the second puffy lethargic Cassin's Finch perching in an unnatural way on one of my feeders, I had to take action to disperse my feeder birds for a couple weeks, clean up spilled seed areas and disinfect my feeders. My feeders were probably supporting an outbreak of Salmonella.

Salmonella has been widely reported at feeder stations this year and the disease particularly affects finches. In addition to diseased birds looking puffy and lethargic, they may be very tame and hang around food and water sources when other birds flush.

The disease spreads through saliva and droppings and therefore, to prevent the disease, backyard bird-watchers should prevent the conditions that support the spread including:

1. Remove your bird feeders and water baths for several weeks and clean up spilled seed areas where droppings might have accumulated.
2. Offer seed only in tube or other type feeders that reduce birds congregating and seed spillage, and also make it easy on you to clean and disinfect regularly.
3. Clean/disinfect feeders by scrubbing with warm soapy water and then with a dilute bleach/water solution of 1:9. Plastic tube feeders might be the easiest to clean because you can immerse them in a bucket and let them soak for a few minutes.

You should also protect yourself by wearing disposable gloves when handling feeders as Salmonella can be transmitted to humans. Assume any dead bird you find was infected and dispose of it, too.

Salmonella can be transmitted up the food chain to predators. It's particularly important to me to protect the Western Screech-owls that nest in my yard and could become infected by taking a lethargic, diseased finch; and so I'm removing all my seed feeders for a couple weeks.

Continued on pg. 6

Welcome New and Rejoined Members!

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Gayle Allred | Janice Lasalle |
| Ms. Arlene Anderson | Ms. Mona Maggio |
| Elise Boeke | Linda Major |
| Ms. Mary Jane Catlen | Stephen Messer |
| Gayle Crook | Shirley Nielsen |
| Alessandro Curtessi | Deborah Perry |
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| Aiden Eyre | Stanley Swallow |
| Jan Hamer | Susan Vanderpool |
| Kyle Hansen | David Webb |
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| Sat Khalsa | Janet Winniford |

**Conservation Corner
Climate Change Thoughts**

by Lynn Carroll

As I write, Northern Utah is finally experiencing winter after weeks of bare lawns, while everyone east of the Rockies is in a deep freeze. No wonder “climate change” resonates with people better than “global warming!” The large deflection of the polar vortex that sent polar air to Texas may not be related, but Utah’s warmth is part of a trend that has me thinking about battling climate change.

For four years, a climate-denying president interfered with policies that should have helped. Over the past year, we’ve been more interested in surviving a pandemic than reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It was hard to condemn the organizers of covid-testing sites for the lines of idling cars or the drive-by parades of people showing love to teachers.

Now is a good time to make more rapid progress against climate change. There are myriad actions that will help, but the overall strategy is to reduce the release of greenhouse gases by humanity to near zero while promoting natural and artificial processes that take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere, something like this:

- 1) Switch generation of electricity away from fossil fuels to renewables.
- 2) Change land transportation to electric vehicles and look for affordable ways to power planes and ships without fossil fuels.
- 3) Use new building construction techniques to conserve energy and stop using fossil fuels for heat, first in new buildings and eventually all buildings.
- 4) Meanwhile reverse the loss of carbon sinks like forests and restore others like soil, peat bogs, and mangroves.
- 5) Find other practicable ways to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
- 6) Recover and destroy refrigerants from all old refrigerators. These are extremely potent greenhouse gases.

Few of the Utah legislators seem to be looking very far into the future as they legislate. Item 3) above will be one of the most difficult to achieve, so I was dismayed when HB 17 passed. A city or county will not be able, sometime in the future, to require that new buildings must be “all electric.”

State leaders give lip service to American ingenuity; but instead of embracing new sustainable industries, they concentrate on finding new markets for fossil

Continued on pg. 6

President’s Corner

by Jay Stretch

“Ogden’s Crow Population a Result of Murder at Ogden Cemetery”

That headline is strange, but true. Most of Ogden’s crow population originated in a ‘breeding colony’ encamped at the Ogden Cemetery. And a group, flock, collective or ‘buncha crows is called a Murder. A group of cowbirds is a ‘Corral’ or ‘Herd.’ There are a lot of fun names for species. Listed below on the left are some of our local bird species. On the right are the names of a group of them. Decide what group name goes with which species and write it on the line. Then check your answers on pg. 7. (*The information used in this article came from “iBird Pro, Copyright 2006-2021, Mitch White Group.*)

- American Bittern _____
- Brewer’s Blackbird _____
- Other Blackbirds _____
- Bluebirds _____
- Buntings _____
- Catbirds _____
- Chickadees _____
- Coots _____
- Cormorants _____
- Cranes _____
- Creepers _____
- Crossbills _____
- Cuckoos _____
- Curlews _____
- Dippers _____
- Doves _____
- Ducks _____
- Dunlins _____
- Eagles _____
- Egrets _____
- Falcons _____
- House Finches _____
- Other Finches _____
- Flickers _____
- Flycatchers _____
- Godwits _____
- Goldfinches _____
- Geese _____

- A Brace or Paddling
- A Codgery or Commotion
- A Charm or Trembling
- A Pretense
- An Omniscience or Prayer
- A Bevy or Cote
- A Blizzard or String
- A Siege or Swoop
- A Cloud
- A Convocation, Soar, or Jubilee
- A Bazaar or Ringing Up
- A Hermitage or Mutation
- A Curfew or Skein
- A Fling or Trip
- A Guttering, Menorah or Peterson
- A Crookedness or Warp
- A Banditry
- An Asylum
- A Development
- A Decoration or Mural
- An Outfield or Swatting
- A Keg
- A Sleeze or Spiral
- A Skewer or RSVP
- A Ladle
- A Mewing or (in the...) Seat
- A 007, Rush or Vein
- A Gulp or Sunning

Answers on pg. 7

CALENDAR

Please note: We are hoping to resume Wednesday bird walks on March 31. Look for a confirmation of this on our website, Facebook page, or in your email. At all events, we will observe social distancing, wear face masks and drive separate cars. Bird-themed masks will be available for \$5.00.

MARCH**16 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Meeting**

Join us on *Zoom for a presentation by Nate Staker. Nate is the new manager of the Ogden Botanical Garden. He will talk to us about the recent garden update and about landscaping for birds. Also, he will be asking us for suggestions to make the garden more bird friendly. A zoom link will be emailed out for this meeting. (See page one for how to get on the email list.)

20 Saturday 6:00 am field trip

Greater Sage Grouse Trip: Meet at DWR office, 515 E 5300 S (Adams Ave.) in South Ogden at 6:00 am. We will caravan to the lek south of Henefer to observe the grouse from inside our vehicles. Target birds: Greater Sage Grouse, Bald Eagle, Common Loon, American Dipper and Northern Shrike.

31 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk

Riverdale Trail (South): Meet at the trailhead off Riverdale Road at 700 W.

APRIL

6 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Board Meeting.
Held remotely.

7 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk

West Haven Hiking and Biking Trail, west of I-15: Meet in front of Stevens-Henager College north of 21st Street.

14 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk

Two Rivers Trail: Meet at the parking area under the 21st Street overpass, east of the Flying J Plaza.

20 Tuesday 6:45 pm WAS Meeting

We're getting real this month to celebrate Earth Day (barring unforeseen circumstances). We'll take a leisurely bird walk around 21st St. Pond and do some cleanup along the way. Bring your own gloves; we will have trash bags and picker-upper wands. Meet in the pond parking lot located on the right just after the 20th St. overpass (going west).

**(Note earlier time due to light that time of year)*

21 Wednesday 9:00am bird walk

Beus Pond: Meet at the parking area at the pond. To get there, take Country Hills Dr. east off Harrison Blvd. at 4200 S.

24 Saturday 8:00 am field trip

County Hot Spots: Meet at the Pilot gas station on 12th St. just west of I-15 to caravan to the hot spots. We will visit Ogden Bay North and then proceed to various hot spots in Weber, Davis and Box Elder Counties. Target birds are raptors, shorebirds, and waterfowl. This may go through lunchtime, so bring water and lunch.

28 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk

Antelope Island Causeway and Fielding Garr Ranch: Meet at parking area just prior to the toll booth. This is a fee area.

MAY**28 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**

South Ogden Nature Park bird walk: Meet at the trailhead for the Nature Walk.

CONTACTS FOR WALKS AND TRIPS

Wednesday walks - Paul Lombardi:

pslombard@gmail.com

Saturday field trips - Dan Johnston:

danielj47@comcast.net

Conservation Corner Continued from pg. 3

fuels. They wanted to ship coal to China or Japan from Oakland, and after that plan collapsed, they turned to the port in Ensenada, Mexico. Of course they oppose President Biden’s moratorium on new leases for oil and gas drilling on public lands.

Of course, they oppose President Biden’s moratorium on new leases for oil and gas drilling on public lands.

Policies that will have a major impact need to come from the federal government. I favor the carbon fee and dividend legislation that has been introduced in the past. Ideally all of the money collected would be returned to households, so that they won’t be hit hard by the increased prices that would result; but the tax would encourage consumers and industries to choose “lower carbon” processes and products. The fee would start low but increase yearly.

CBC Report Continued from pg. 1

Morgan - On a day that became windy and snowy, 12 participants covered 274 miles by car and 2 miles on foot. We saw 54 species and 4011 individuals on count day, with 5 count week species. We added one species new to the Morgan count - Brown-headed Cowbird. We also had new high counts of Downy Woodpecker, Mountain Chickadee, and Brewer’s Blackbird.

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR EFFORTS IN THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS!

SMILE AND SUPPORT WASATCH AUDUBON

When you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon will donate 0.5% of eligible purchases to Wasatch Audubon Society.

Just sign in to <https://smile.amazon.com> and select Wasatch Audubon Society as the organization you wish to support, or go directly to <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/87-0411832>.

Thank you for your support!

Prevent Salmonella at your feeders Continued from pg. 2

Following these guidelines means I’m taking actions purposely to make most of my yard birds go away for awhile. It seems unnatural! I’m continuing to stock suet baskets for woodpeckers and nuthatches because they don’t concentrate birds either on the feeders or the ground. Peanut feeders for jays and magpies may be OK as well.

Yes, it’s hard purposely to take actions to disperse the birds we love so much, and cleaning feeders in the winter is particularly difficult. But taking actions to reduce the spread of disease may be the best way to support the birds this winter by practicing a “do no harm” philosophy.

Something to Watch



About 10 months ago National Audubon began presenting videos called “I Saw A Bird.” There are 18 of them now and they are excellent, with beautiful photography. You can access them at www.youtube.com/user/NationalAudubon. Click on the “I Saw A Bird” video and you will get the most current video and access to the other videos. Enjoy!

SAVE THE DATE! May 13-16, 2021

The Great Salt Lake Bird Festival will be held this year at the George S. and Dolores Dore Eccles Wildlife Education Center. The format will be different because of coronavirus restrictions. The Keynote Speaker, Rob P. Clay, will address us virtually from Paraguay, and the workshops will be presented virtually. Twenty-seven field trips will be offered to a variety of locations. They will have smaller attendee capacities and are “drive your own vehicle” events (there will be no bus transportation). Registration begins on Monday, March 15, 2021 at 9am MT. Information can be found at the website: gslbirdfest@daviscountyutah.gov.



CRANE LORE

by Jay Hudson

In the wide open fields north of Brigham City, Utah, you may find the stately Sandhill Crane, unafraid and sure of its safety. When they call, they can be heard for miles. The Chippewa Indians call cranes the “Echo Maker.” To witness one of America’s most thrilling avian spectacles, visit Kearney, Nebraska, in the spring to hear 500,000 migrating cranes call as they take off in the early morning mist of the Platte River. When the Cheyenne warriors went into battle, they used the hollow leg bones of the crane as their bugle. It is much simpler than the Scottish bagpipes and just as effective. There are stories about the 14 crane species of the world in every society told around the campfire for inspiration, humor and understanding of nature around them.

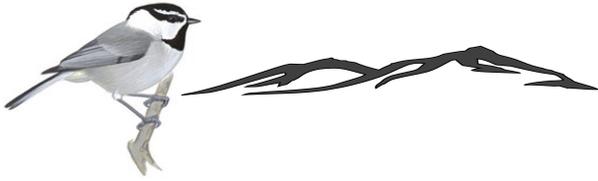
Here is my story! The Sergeant put a rifle in my right hand and a softball-sized rock in my left hand. I had been in the Army for three days and my duty was to stand guard from 10 p.m. to midnight in the rain. I knew the reason for the rifle but the rock baffled me. Fast backward to Plutarch, that ancient Greek, who tells this story: “Amongst each flock of roosting cranes, there is one individual charged with the safety of the others. The sentinel stands on one foot in shallow water. The elevated foot holds a stone as a safeguard against falling asleep. If the sentinel happens to fall asleep, his relaxation causes him to lose his grip on the stone. The stone then falls into the water causing a splash that awakens the malingering watchman.” The stone was my assurance that I would not fall asleep on duty.

In another crane story, Aesop’s “Wolf and the Crane,” a wolf got a bone stuck in his throat while eating his dinner. No matter what he did, he could not dislodge the bone. A crane walked by and said he could retrieve the bone. The wolf said he would reward the crane if he got the bone out. The crane put his head in the wolf’s mouth and with his long beak, withdrew the offending bone. The crane then asked for his reward and the wolf said, “Be happy that you are still alive after sticking your head in my mouth. That should be reward enough for your silliness!” The moral of the story is: “A villain will never reward you for a job well done; a safe escape is your reward for having the bad judgment to consort with the wicked.”

President’s Corner Continued from pg. 4 (Answers)

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|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| American Bittern - A Pretense | Creepers - A Sleeze or Spiral | Egrets - A Skewer or RSVP |
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| Other Blackbirds - A Cloud | Cuckoos - An Asylum | House Finches - A Development |
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| Cormorants - A Gulp or Sunning | Eagles - A Convocation, Soar or Jubilee | Geese - Blizzard or String |
| Cranes - A Siege or Swoop | | |

Watch for more of these in coming editions!



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

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!

Go to www.wasatchaudubon.org and click on the FACEBOOK logo on the webpage.



**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.

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