



The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the Wasatch Audubon Society

Volume 41, Number 5 September/October 2022

WAS MONTHLY MEETINGS AND HAPPENINGS

Tuesday Sept. 20, 2022 7:00 PM

Maya Pendleton, Staff Ecologist at Ogden nature Center, is beginning a new program to manage the beavers at ONC. She will describe innovations and changes in beaver management tactics in Utah.

Saturday, October 10 8:00AM-4:00PM

THE BIG SIT

For details see next column.

Tuesday, October 18 7:00 PM

Daly Edmunds, of Audubon Rockies, is going to talk about her group's Sage Grouse Initiative.

As of now, the Tuesday meetings will be on Zoom, with a possibility of in-person or hybrid determined at a later date. You will receive a link for Zoom if you are on our email list; if you are not, contact Lynn (email below). You can also check our Facebook page (link on our website wasatchaudubon.org).

Keep in Touch With Us!

Do we have your email address? We occasionally 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). Also, sign up on Instagram (search for Wasatch Audubon) to get reminders of walks, etc.

*Join us Saturday, October 8 at
Wasatch Audubon's 9th
Annual "The Big Sit!"*

The Big Sit! is held all over the country, so join in the fun right in your own backyard! From within a 17-foot circle between 8AM and 4PM, we identify as many species of birds as we can. An added aspect of The Big Sit! is that it is an important fundraiser for Wasatch Audubon Society. Participants get sponsors to donate a certain amount per species seen. We usually see 40-45 species, so a donation of \$.50 per species would equal \$20 to \$22.50. Of course, a flat amount can be donated as well. (Donations can be made by sending a check to the PO box on the last page of this newsletter or by bringing it to the "Sit.")

This will be held at the Robert N. Hasenyager Great Salt Lake Nature Reserve at Farmington Bay (the west end of Glover Lane in Farmington).

Bring a chair. Restrooms are available.

Call For Photos!!

Susan Snyder needs photos of Audubon activities and birds for our December meeting. Please email those to her at naturescall@gmail.com



*Welcome to John Creel,
the new director of the
Ogden Nature Center!*

Wasatch Audubon Society

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

Officers

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President’s Corner - Lights Out For Birds!

by Jay Stretch

As birders, we usually look forward to spring migration—fall migration, not so much. After all birds that are not here are hard for us to see and hear. At the same time, we want them all to come back next spring and there are things that we can do to help that happen.

A significant problem for migrating birds that is getting greater attention now days is night lighting. It not only interferes with migration patterns, it also leads to increases in bird-building collisions. Migrating off course leads not just to confusion, but to starvation and increased predation. The photographs below give you an idea of the significance of that interference (and please note the location of the photo on the left!).



Light pollution significantly reduces the visibility in the night sky. The left image is from a dark sky area and the right image is from Orem, UT.

Just like humans, birds cannot see the stars when looking through light pollution. In the same way, they cannot see what is on the other side of a bright light source. So how much of a problem is this? On-going research has shown that a single building in Chicago has resulted in the death of more than 1,000 migrating birds a year! Granted Utah does not have the high-rise structure of Chicago, but sometime take a look at a night-time photo of the Wasatch Front from space—it occupies as much highly lit area as many major cities.

But we are just on the fringe of a major flyway,” my kids used to say. “Yeah, but . . .” do you realize the size of that

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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.

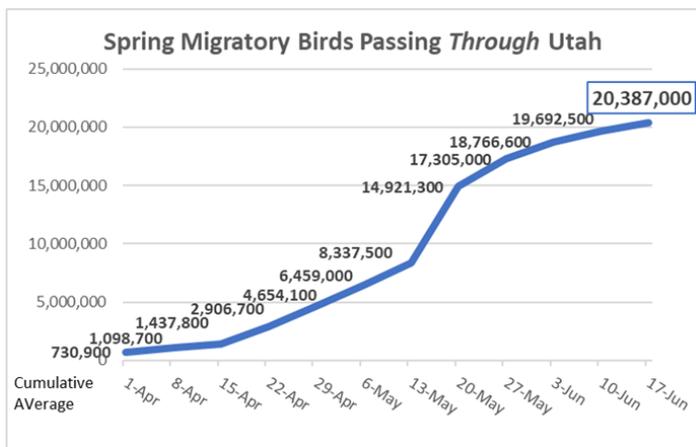
You might also want to visit our website at

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

President’s Corner

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fringe migration? On May 15th of this year 1,151,500 birds crossed Cache County alone—in one night. And nearly 500,000 Wilson’s Phalaropes and Eared Grebes stop at the Great Salt Lake during their fall migration. We all hope that most of the birds migrating north a couple of months ago, all 20 million of them, return to pass through in the fall. Yet how many of us know that in the 100-degree August heat fall migration has already begun? Below are two charts of bird migration which illustrate these facts.



Peak Fall Migration	
Wilson's Warbler	Mid-Late Sep
Western Kingbird	Jul-Aug
Black-headed Grosbeak	Jul-Aug
Lazuli Bunting	Aug-Sep
Nashville Warbler	Late Aug-Sep
Townsend's Warbler	Sep-Oct
Bullock's Oriole	Aug
Forster's Tern	Aug-Sep
MacGillivray's Warbler	Aug-Sep
Baird's Sandpiper	Aug-Sep
Virginia's Warbler	Aug-Sep
Eastern Kingbird	Aug-Early Sep
Western Sandpiper	Aug-Mid-Oct
Common Poorwill	Aug-Sep

Back to ‘Lights Out.’ An excellent source of information, including how many birds pass through a given area each night is <https://birdcast.info/science>,

whence came much of this information. Take a look, it’s fun. But some of the information is not: It is estimated that somewhere between 400 and 990 MILLION birds die in collision with buildings *each* year. Not all of those occur at night, of course, as anyone with birdfeeders near large windows can attest. But more than half of the collisions do come at night, and the birds don’t usually recover from them as do many of those in daytime collisions.

So, what can you do? Well, sometimes it’s as easy as turning off a light. Sometimes it takes the courage to point out to your boss or the leaders of your church or local government what you know and show them, and sometimes it’s just taking care of the things you can control. *Birdcast*, along with several other agencies, including the National Audubon Society, recommend the following, though perhaps in different wording:

- ⇒ Turn off non-essential lights from **11 PM until 6 AM** during critical migration periods.
- ⇒ Turn off or dim lobby and atrium lights.
- ⇒ Turn off or dim interior home lighting, or draw blinds to prevent light escaping.
- ⇒ Turn off decorative landscape lighting.
- ⇒ Turn off lights before leaving the home or office.
- ⇒ Be sure outside lights are aimed down and well shielded.
- ⇒ Install motion sensors on outside lights to minimize use.
- ⇒ When possible, turn off business parking lot and perimeter lights, or as a minimum ensure that they are facing downward, not shining up into the sky (often lighting more sky than building or structure).

In closing, you can see from the numbers presented here, this is not a minor problem. Many of the migrating birds are of diminishing species and deserve all of the help we can give them to survive.

Flip The Switch For Birds!

*Photo by Jeremy Stanley, CC BY 2.0. Source: [http://Lights Out for Birds – Connecting People, Birds and Land for a Healthy World \(birdconservancy.org\)](http://Lights Out for Birds – Connecting People, Birds and Land for a Healthy World (birdconservancy.org))



Bird Word Wisdom—Jay Hudson
 Addled: Describing an egg that is empty or rotten.
 Much like the brain of my cousin, Cletus!

Conservation Corner: Climate News

by Lynn Carroll

News about the climate over the last couple of years has ranged from unsettling to downright depressing. In the Arctic, melting of sea ice is accelerating, so more of the sun’s energy is absorbed by the ocean each summer instead of being reflected. That warms the water, which further speeds the melting. This positive feedback loop is one reason that the Arctic has warmed at least twice as fast as the global average, or perhaps four times as fast (as reported recently).

In 2021 NASA completed a study of the glaciers flowing from the Greenland ice sheet to the ocean. It found that warmer ocean water undercutting the deepest glaciers is contributing as much or more to their melting as warm air above. Since models used to predict global sea level rise haven’t taken this into account in the past, they have underestimated the degree of sea level rise in coming decades.

We’ve seen climate change harming wildlife and people through prolonged drought, more widespread heatwaves, and more violent storms, while the attention of governments turned to fighting a pandemic and a war in Ukraine. When will we have any good climate news? Well as it turns out, now!

Actually the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, passed last fall, was a good start. It includes money for reforestation and weatherization, and \$billions for mass transit, electric vehicle chargers, and electrical grid upgrades, over five years. All of these will contribute to the transition to a clean energy economy.

A hydrogen production and storage facility is set to be built in Millard Co., UT. A federal loan guarantee was granted for the Advanced Clean Energy Storage project, energy storage without a battery. “Excess” solar and wind energy will power the electrolysis of water into oxygen and hydrogen. The hydrogen will be stored in a nearby salt dome. This is “green” hydrogen, since it is produced with clean energy. Meanwhile, the Intermountain Power Agency is replacing its coal-fired power plant with two units designed to use natural gas and hydrogen. The hydrogen will be used in a 30/70 mix with gas to start. It’s meant to be 100% hydrogen by 2045.

The best news is passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), a compromise that is much better than nothing when it comes to climate action. \$369 billion will be available over ten years for measures to incentivize a shift away from fossil fuels. For example (source NY Times):

- \$62.7 B in new tax credits for clean electricity sources (wind, solar, geothermal, advanced nuclear, etc.)
- \$51.1 B extending existing credits for wind and solar
- \$9 B rebates and grants for residential retrofitting and heat pump installation
- \$37.4 B incentives to manufacture clean energy tech in the U.S.
- \$14.2 B tax credits for new and used electric cars and installing alternative fuel equipment
- 16.7 B agricultural practices that increase soil carbon, decrease nitrogen loss, decrease emissions

The bill also sets limits on methane leaks and charges up to \$1500/ton for exceeding them.

President Biden’s stated goal is to achieve a reduction of emissions by 50% below 2005 levels (the highest ever?) by 2030. Current policies were projected to get emissions down 27%. The IRA is projected to achieve a 42% reduction from 2005. A Princeton climate modeler said, “and by driving down the cost of clean energy, it can make it easier for states or cities or companies to take further climate actions.”

Watch for the incentives for individuals to be announced, and take advantage of any that you can to reduce your use of fossil fuels!

Welcome New and Rejoined Members

Glenn Barlow	Eric Miller
Glen Bowen	Sheila Osman
April Combe	David Price
Rae Costa	Charliene Reed
Pat Gunter	Leland Speelmon
Joan Heninger	Kerry Watts
Vicky Lowder	Frank Welde
Arvey McFarland	Linda Wysocki

CALENDAR

Please note: Arrangements for carpooling will be your own responsibility.

Accessibility: Walks are no more than 1 1/2 miles, unless otherwise noted. See page 7 for explanation of accessibility codes located at the end of each event.

SEPTEMBER**7 Wednesday 8:00 am bird walk**

Buffalo Ranches Trail in Farmington: Meet at the corner of Ranch Rd. and Prairie View Dr. (residential neighborhood—park on street). We will cross the Legacy Highway dirt road construction and walk to the Buffalo Ranches ponds on the west side of the new highway. Leader-Ben/Colin **U—rough surface**

14 Wednesday 8:00 am bird walk

Ogden Bay Wildfowl Management Area: Take 12th St. west to 7500 W. Turn south and go to the parking lot at end of road. Leader-Dan/John **U M**

20 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Meeting

Maya Pendleton, Staff Ecologist at Ogden Nature Center, will discuss her plan to improve the ONC habitat while keeping the beaver activity under control. She will describe beaver management innovations in use across Utah.

21 Wednesday 6:30-6:45 am bird walk

Bountiful Pond: Take the 500 South exit off Legacy Highway, turn west; then follow the frontage road around and back to the north. A pre-bird walk species search will be held. Meet in the parking lot. Leader-Colin/Ben **R P/U L B**

24 Saturday 8:00 am field trip

Blue Bird Nest Box Cleanout: It's time to clean out the nest boxes so they will be ready for the Blue Birds next spring. This is very important as the birds will not use old nests. We will meet at Smith's (12th and Harrison Blvd., Ogden) at 8:00am. We will divide into teams, if needed, and then head up to Monte Cristo. You need no skills, just enthusiasm! Wear hiking shoes and bring lunch and a drink, if wanted, for a picnic afterwards. Leader-John
This is an off trail hike with some elevation.

28 Wednesday 6:30-6:45 am bird walk

Bountiful Pond: Yes! A repeat of last Wednesday to compare sightings during this migratory season. Take the 500 South exit off Legacy Highway, turn west; then follow the frontage road around and back to the north. Again, a pre-bird walk species search will be held. Meet in the parking lot. Leader-Colin/Ben **R P/U L B**

OCTOBER**4 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Board Meeting.**

Held remotely.

5 Wednesday 8:00 am bird walk

Little Mountain Railway Trail: Meet at 2000 W 4000 N, Plain City. Additional opportunity: If roads are dry we will drive on a rough dirt road to the Willard Spur to check out the shore birds. Leader-John/Dan **P L**

8 Saturday 4:00 am to 8:00 pm special event,

The Big Sit!: Robert N. Hasenyager Nature Reserve at Farmington Bay, just south off the western end of Glover Lane (in the parking lot of the Eccles Wildlife Education Center). Bring a chair, lunch, water and your binoculars. See more details on Page 1. **R P L**

12 Wednesday 8:00 am bird walk

Kaysville Ponds: 920S 50 W Kaysville. Turn south on 50 W off Main Street in Kaysville. Leader-Ben/Colin **R P L B**

18 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Meeting**Ogden Nature Center:**

Daly Edmunds, of Audubon Rockies, will talk about her group's Sage Grouse initiative.

19 Wednesday 8:00 am bird walk

Two Rivers Trail: Meet at 21st St. Pond parking lot, located at 650 West 21st Street. **P L B**

22 Saturday 8:00 am field trip

Antelope Island: Meet at the parking lot before the gate. This is a fee area. Mostly done in vehicles. Leader-Dan/John **R**

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CONTACTS FOR WALKS AND TRIPS: Dan Johnston 801-645-8633, John Bellmon 801-444-3704, Ben Johnson 801-231-7008

Calendar

continued from pg. 5

LearnID by Connor Johnson

Pewee VS Olive-Sided

26 Wednesday 8:00 am bird walk
Willard Bay Nature Trail: Meet at Flying J located at the State Route 350 exit off I-15 North. Leader-Ben **R P L B**

NOVEMBER

2 Wednesday 7:00 am bird walk
Farmington Bay: Meet on 1325 W (entrance to Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area), **not** at GSL Nature Center. A pre-bird walk species search will be held. Leader-Ben **R U L**

UNIQUE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

Gillmor Sanctuary Work Days
Oct. 15, 21, or 22, 9am—1pm

Located in West Valley City, Gillmor Audubon Sanctuary is part of the Great Salt Lake wetland ecosystem. It's an internationally recognized site in the Western Hemisphere shorebird Reserve Network, and a vital pathway for millions of and migrating birds. Help is needed with yard work type tasks. We will meet at the International Center Subway parking lot, 5480 W. Amelia Earhart Dr., SLC UT 84116. Registration is required and available at rockies.audubon.org/events then search for Gillmor. For more information contact heidi.hoven@audubon.org.



We Remember
 by Sharen Perry

Shirley Lee, a long time Wasatch Audubon member and contributor, passed away on August 2. Shirley enjoyed WAS Wednesday walks, Saturday field trips, and Tuesday night general meetings for. For years, you received your newsletter because she mailed it to you. She fed birds at the Ogden Nature Center and cleaned Blue Bird boxes at Monte Cristo. She enjoyed the Great Salt Lake Bird Festivals. She even climbed the mountains to participate in Hawk Watch one year. There will be a memorial service at Leavitt's in Ogden on September 24 at 3:00 pm. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to Wasatch Audubon or National Indigenous Women's Resource Center.

Here in Utah we get two species in the genus *Contopus*:
 Western Wood-Pewee (WEWP) and Olive-Sided Flycatcher (OSFL)

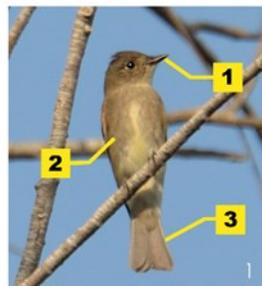
When they're not singing (especially during fall migration), it can be tricky to tell them apart. Here are some tips to help!

WEWP is somewhat of a habitat generalist, and is more likely to pop up away from the mountains, while OSFL is more associated with montane habitat. OSFL also typically perches very conspicuously at the top of trees and high bare branches. Of course, both species can pop up anywhere during migration, and WEWP do hang out in conspicuous places. Just use these features to get a first impression.

To learn how to tell *Contopus* flycatchers from *Empidonax* Flycatchers, check out the July/August edition of LearnID.

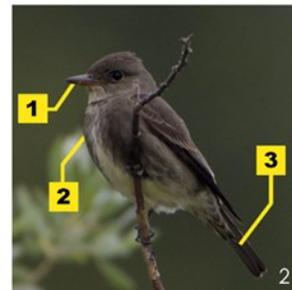
Western Wood-Pewee

- GISS*
 -Smaller, round, "cute" face.
- Field Marks*
 -Small bill [1]
 -Smudgy flanks and breast [2]
 -Proportionally longer tail [3]
 -Typically rounder head shape
 -Typically shows stronger wingbars



Olive-Sided Flycatcher

- GISS*
 -Larger, clunky, "serious" face
- Field Marks*
 -Large, thick bill [1]
 -Contrasting flanks and throat [2]
 -Shorter, stubby tail [3]
 -Sometimes shows white patches on rump which are distinct



Field View



-Small bill, smudgy vest, long tail stronger wingbars,

-Large thick bill, throat stark white, short stubby tail, white rump patch

Have an ID problem? Send your suggestions to: johnson.connor.pro@gmail.com

Read the newsletter online for color photos!

All photos used are in the public domain.
 Pulled from inaturalist.org
 Photo ID is next to name.
 1. Dario Taraborelli 122408579
 2. Aaron Polichar 152362931

Parasitic Duck? The Strange Egg-Laying Habits of the Redhead

by Ben Johnson



(Photo by the author at Kaysville Ponds in March 2021)

In terms of waterfowl and perhaps among all American bird species, few are as odd as the unimaginatively-named Redhead (*Aythya americana*). A native duck, the Redhead is also found in Utah waters on a year-round basis.¹ It can be seen at all times of the year in Davis and Weber counties.² It is common to see the species in small to large numbers gathering on small ponds or marshy areas in our community.

So, what makes the Redhead so strange? Its unique egg-laying habits! Although ducks will often lay eggs in nests of the same or other duck species, the Redhead takes this to the extreme. The females lay 9 to 11 eggs per season and usually choose sites of dense marsh surrounded by bulrushes or other aquatic vegetation. Redhead females have been recorded laying eggs in the nests of at least 10 other duck species.³ Indeed, they may lay up to 75% of their eggs in the nests of other species!⁴ Frequent victims of Redhead parasitism include Canvasback, Gadwall, American Coot, Mallard or Scaups. In many cases, this has resulted in the host laying fewer eggs of their own.⁵

Often, the Redhead female will wait for the host to leave their nest, and will then lay in their nest. However, they have sometimes been observed pushing other birds out of their nests to lay, or even burrowing under active nests to lay eggs in them! Most confoundingly

of all, Redheads have even been observed laying eggs in the nests of American Bitterns and even the predatorial Northern Harrier!⁵

Redhead females may lay eggs only in the nests of other Redheads; or they may be semi-parasitic, laying eggs in the nests of other birds, and then raising their own brood in their own nest. Such birds might also be called 'dual-nesters.' Kenn Kaufman recorded that sometimes female Redheads will designate a nesting site for laying. These "dump nests" have been found with up to 87 Redhead eggs, with such nests never having a female to sit on them.⁶ David Joyner even studied [parasitic egg-laying by Redheads and Ruddy Ducks at Farmington Bay WMA](#) in 1972-1974.⁷ He found the amount of parasitism among the two species varied in different areas of the marsh and was dependent on many factors.

The Redhead is not alone in this parasitic egg-laying behavior. Ruddy Ducks and Wood Ducks often do the same thing. In fact, the Black-headed duck, a South American species, is in fact a strict brood parasite just like the cowbirds!

When we think of brood parasitism in North America, we probably tend to think of cowbirds or maybe even cuckoos, but we probably don't think of ducks! Perhaps it's time we should.

If you are out near a lake or marsh and see a Redhead laying in the nest of another species, give us a shout over here at Wasatch Audubon.

References

- 1- eBird data <https://ebird.org/barchart?r=US-UT&yr=all&m=>
- 2- eBird data <https://ebird.org/barchart?r=US-UT-011&yr=all&m=> and <https://ebird.org/barchart?r=US-UT-057&yr=all&m=>
- 3- Audubon birds app and Kaufman, Kenn (2001). *Lives of North American Birds*, pp. 92-93.
- 4- Sorenson, Michael D. (1991). *Animal Behaviour*. 42 (5) p.771-796.
- 5- Sugden, Lawson (1980). *Journal of Field Ornithology*, 51(4)361-364.
- 6- Audubon birds app and Kaufman, Kenn (2001). *Lives of North American Birds*, pp. 92-93.
- 7- Joyner, David (1983). *The Auk Ornithological Advances*, 100(3) pp. 717-725.

Accessibility Codes for walks and trips

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| R - Restroom available | | P/U Combination | |
| P - Paved trail | | L - Level trail | |
| U - Unpaved trail | | M - Moderately level trail | |
| B - Benches available | | | |



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

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



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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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