

The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the **Wasatch Audubon Society**

Vol 33, Number 5

Sept/Oct 2014

WAS Meetings and Happenings

Tuesday, Sept 16th
7:00 p.m.

WAS Meeting

The status of The American White Pelican in Utah is the topic of this month's program. **Adam Brewerton** is the Sensitive Species Biologist for the Utah DWR. Utah pelicans breed on Gunnison Island in the northwest portion of the Great Salt Lake, while foraging in the fresh water marshes on the eastern shores.

Tuesday, October 21st
7:00 p.m.

WAS Meeting

Connecting with Owls will be presented by **Kathleen Cameron** at our October meeting. Kathleen's photography has been published extensively in Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game publications and websites. She is an editor for *North American Birds* and is a frequent speaker at Audubon chapters. Kathleen has led birding tours in Central and South America.

Both at Ogden Nature Center
966 W. 12th Street

1st Annual The Big Sit! Fundraiser

by Katie McVey

You are invited to Wasatch Audubon's 1st annual The Big Sit! fundraiser. The Big Sit! is an event held world-wide the second weekend in October. Participants sit in a 17-foot circle and record the number of bird species viewed in a 24-hour period. The Big Sit! is hailed as "birding's most sedentary event" and it is a whole lot of fun.

Our The Big Sit! will be held at The Nature Conservancy's Legacy Nature Preserve. It's an amazing piece of land between the Legacy Parkway and the Jordan River, and it is normally closed to the public. Directions: From I-15 take Exit 314 to Center Street and follow it west until it goes over Legacy Parkway. Take the immediate right and follow The Big Sit signs along the dirt road to the north.

Our event will be on Saturday October 11th from 4:00 am to 10:00 pm. All are welcome to participate - from fledgling to eagle-eye. People can be part of the circle for as little as 5 minutes or as much as the full 18 hours. Our The Big Sit! circle will be just west of the barn, where we will have a covered area with some tables, chairs, refreshments and restrooms a short walk from the circle. Participation is free, but the event is also our fall fundraiser.

Our The Big Sit! will raise money in two ways. People can pledge a flat fee (like \$30) or a per species donation (like \$0.50 per species). Per species donations are great because they encourage the participants to really identify every bird. We expect to see between 40 and 60 species, so a donation of \$0.50 per species equals \$20-\$30. As your sponsors make pledges, keep track of them on a Sponsor Pledge form, available on our website (below). After the event is over, contact your sponsors and let them know just how many species we saw. Donations can be made by sending a check to Wasatch Audubon, Attn: The Big Sit! P. O. Box 3211, Ogden, UT 84409.

It's easy to participate and easy to donate. Participants might consider making a fundraising goal. Do you want to raise \$100 or \$500? Talk with family, friends, neighbors and co-workers about sponsoring The Big Sit! Let folks know that their contributions support more than 60 free field trips, 4 special events and 10 community programs that Wasatch Audubon hosts each year. For more information, visit our website www.WasatchAudubon.org or call or email Katie McVey: 715-216-2605 mcveka01@gmail.com.

We hope to see you on October 11th.



Wasatch Audubon Society
 Website: wasatchaudubon.org

Officers

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Education	Dennis Collins	801-393-1115
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Newsletter	Melissa Hofer	801-544-1453
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Publicity	Arnold Smith	801-829-3383
Website	Patricia Allaire	801-597-1091

About Us:

The **Wasatch Audubon Society** is an association of people who share an interest in birds, all natural things, and Utah's varied habitats. Our goals include: educating ourselves and others about wildlife and the natural environment; enjoying the out-of-doors in fellowship with others who share similar values; fostering an appreciation of wildlife and understanding of ecological principles; promoting opportunities for the public to see and appreciate birds and bird habitats, and influencing public policy toward a conservation ethic. You might also want to visit our website at: <http://www.wasatchaudubon.org>

WEATHER WISDOM

by Jay Hudson
 with help from Albert Lee's book:
 "Weather Wisdom"

Mother Nature tells us much; if we pay attention! Birds do pay attention! They watch the weather, they know when to leave and when food will be available. Birds have sensitive ears and the lowering of air pressure before a storm causes discomfort, so they fly at the level where pressure is highest, close to the ground. When a swallow flies close to the ground before a storm, it is chasing insects kept there because of air pressure. Gulls, geese, crows and robins do not like to fly before a storm; this too, becomes a weather indicator. The thinning air which precedes a storm is harder to fly in, and you can verify this by asking any pilot. Robins stick close to the nest before a storm.

If the robin sings in the bush
 Then the weather will be coarse;
 If the robin sings on the barn,
 Then the weather will be warm.

How accurate are these bird predictions? Well, New England lobstermen who go out to sea in small boats are said to get up early to watch the gulls and geese. If these birds fly out to sea in the morning, the fisherman is confident that it is safe to go fishing.

Wild geese, wild geese going out to sea
 All fine weather it will be.

Wizened old-timers can watch the birds and gauge their days' work. Here are a few saying about birds and the weather:

Gull, gull, sit on the sand,
 It's never good weather while you're on the land.

When swans fly against the wind, rain is coming.

The goose and the gander
 Begin to meander;
 The matter is plain,
 They are dancing for rain.

Swallows fly high: clear blue sky
 Swallows fly low: rain we shall know.

Expect fair weather when cranes fly high and steady.

UTAH'S DUCK "SPECIAL"

by Keith Evans

Utah is often described as an "arid" state; however, there are many lakes and marshes where duck species concentrate and provide an opportunity for birders to enjoy this special group of unique birds. Duck viewing can be enjoyed anytime during the year, but winter weather concentrates some species and makes viewing these species easier.

I will begin with viewing the "diving" ducks during the fall and winter months along the Antelope Island Causeway. This distinctive habitat and setting offers unique opportunities for waterfowl viewing. One of my favorite late fall activities is anticipating the arrival of the scoters along the Causeway. Scoter numbers vary each year, but we can often see all three North American species – Black, Surf, and White-winged. Scoters are more common along the sea coast, so they seem out-of-place in Northern Utah. Other "divers" concentrating in large numbers throughout the inimitable habitat of the Great Salt Lake include Common Goldeneye, Redhead, Ruddy Duck, Bufflehead, and Lesser Scaup. While birding the Causeway, I always take special note of the rarer species like Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Long-tailed Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Harlequin Duck.

Except for the large numbers of Northern Shovelers concentrating on parts of the Great Salt Lake, most of the other "puddle" duck species prefer the fresh water marshes. Possibilities on Northern Utah wetlands include Mallard, Northern Pintail, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, and Cinnamon Teal. Additional rare possibilities include Blue-winged Teal and Eurasian Wigeon.

Another special place to enjoy ducks is Beus Pond, east of Harrison Boulevard on 40th Street in Ogden. Why is Beus Pond special? It is because of the large numbers of Wood Duck and the increasing numbers of Mandarin Duck. These are among the most colorfully "gaudy" of the duck species.

Cold temperatures cause the water to freeze in many wetlands which lead to concentrations on open water areas, like the Salt Creek, Ogden Bay, and Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Areas, Bear River Refuge, and East Canyon Reservoir that provide additional viewing opportunities for many duck species. I hope you will take some time this winter to visit a body of water or wetland area near you to enjoy the many duck species that visit the area during winter.



Surf Scoter
Photo by Keith Evans



CALENDAR Sept/Oct 2014

September

3 Wednesday 7:30/8:00 am

Bird Walk

Swanson Environmental Center: Meet at McDonald's (Washington and 2600 N, Ogden) at 7:30 am for breakfast or at 8:00 am to carpool.

6 Saturday 7:30am

Hearell Field Trip

Beus Canyon: Meet at the Smith's parking lot (42nd and Harrison, Ogden) at 7:30 am to carpool. This field trip will be a short hike up the well-groomed trail of Beus Canyon in search of migrating warblers, vireos, and empids. The trail isn't overly steep but has great habitat and a stream without having to travel too far. This trip will only last a couple of hours and is fairly easy. Bring water and dress accordingly. Contact Mike Hearell @ utmarshrat@yahoo.com or (801) 529-8693 if you plan on attending or with any questions.

10 Wednesday 7:30/8:00 am

Bird Walk

Little Mountain Railroad Trail: Meet at McDonald's (1838 W 2700 N, North Ogden) at 7:30 am for breakfast or at 8:00 am to carpool. We'll walk south along the railroad grading from the parking lot on 4000 N. (the road leading west from Smith & Edwards).

11 Thursday 6:00 pm

Birdy Thursday Evening Walk

Fort Buenaventura: Meet in the Fort Buenaventura parking lot at 6 pm. We'll walk the area around the pond, campgrounds and along the river. Bring \$1 per person for park admission fee. We'll listen and watch for Belted Kingfishers, Cooper's Hawks, Western Screech Owls and any Warblers or Bullock's Orioles that might still be hanging around. Directions: From I-15, take the 24th Street Exit. Drive east about one mile on 24th Street; turn south on A Street. Follow the signs to Fort Buenaventura; it's less than a block from 24th Street. **This is a fee area.**

16 Tuesday 7:00 pm

WAS Meeting

Ogden Nature Center: Meet at 966 West 12th Street, Ogden, at 7:00 pm. The status of The American White Pelican in Utah is the topic of this month's program. Adam Brewerton is the Sensitive Species Biologist for the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, covering the Northern portion of Utah. He has been working with the Great Salt Lake Biological Team

headquartered at Ogden Bay Wildlife Management Area. Utah pelicans breed on Gunnison Island in the Northwest portion of the Great Salt Lake, while foraging in the fresh water marshes on the eastern shores. Come and bring a friend!

17 Wednesday 7:45/8:45 am

Bird Walk

Two Rivers Trail: Meet at Denny's (North on 1100 W from 21st Street in the Flying J Plaza) at 7:45 am for breakfast or at 8:45 to carpool.

20 Saturday 8:00 am

Field Trip

Blue Bird Nest Box Cleanout: Meet at Smith's (12th Street and Harrison) at 8:00 a.m. to carpool. Bring a lunch and water. This is a service project to prepare the nest boxes for next year's Mountain Bluebirds, House Wrens, and Tree Swallows.

24 Wednesday 7:45/8:45 am

Bird Walk

Willard Bay State Park: Meet at Moore's Cafe (2645 U.S. 89, Perry) at 7:45 am for breakfast or at 8:45 am to carpool. **This is a fee area.**

October

1 Wednesday 7:45/8:45 am

Bird Walk

Fort Buenaventura: Meet at Moore's Family Restaurant (3558 Wall Ave., Ogden) at 7:45 am for breakfast, at 8:45 am to carpool, or at 9:00 am at the entrance to the Fort. **This is a fee area.**

7 Tuesday 7:00 pm

Board Meeting

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

8 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am

Bird Walk

Riverdale Trail South: Meet at the IHOP Restaurant (947 W Riverdale Road, Riverdale) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 9:00 am at the trailhead parking lot. Directions: From Riverdale Road, south on 700 W for one block, left on 4600 S to the lot on the right at the end of the road.

9 Thursday**No Birdy Thursday Evening Walk**

There will be no Birdy Thursday in October. We are asking instead that folks come out for our first annual Big Sit Bird-a-thon on Oct. 11!

11 Saturday 4:00 am to 10:00 pm**THE BIG SIT!**

Legacy Nature Preserve: The Big Sit! Fundraiser, details on the front page and the flyer below. Hope to see you there!

15 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am**Bird Walk**

Kay's Creek Parkway: Meet at Denny's Restaurant (5805 S. Harrison Blvd, South Ogden) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 9:00 am to carpool.

21 Tuesday 7:00 pm**WAS Meeting**

Ogden Nature Center: Meet at 966 W. 12th Street, Ogden at 7:00 pm. Connecting with Owls will be presented by Kathleen Cameron at our October meeting. Kathleen is a native Idahoan, photographer, filmmaker, and avid birder. Her photography has been published extensively in Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game publications and websites. She is a sub-regional editor for *North American Birds* and is a frequent speaker at Audubon chapters across Idaho and the Northwest. Kathleen has also been a leader for birding tours in Central and South America. Don't miss this meeting!

22 Wednesday 8:00/8:30 am**Bird Walk**

East Mountain Wilderness Park, Kaysville: Meet at McDonald's (5745 S. Harrison Blvd., Ogden) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at 8:30 am to carpool.

25 Saturday 8:00/8:30 am**Field Trip**

Antelope Island: Meet at 8:00 am in the large parking lot by the Wells Fargo Bank (5600 S. and 1900 W., Roy). We will park near the West side of Wendy's. Alternatively, meet at 8:30 am at the parking lot at the entrance to the Antelope Causeway. Bring a lunch and water. Migration will be going on, so we will be able to see what birds are passing through on their way south.

29 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am**Bird Walk**

Ogden Nature Center: Meet at Village Inn (32 W. 12th Street, Ogden) at 8:00 am for breakfast, at 9:00 am to carpool, or at 9:15 am at the Nature Center (322 W. 12th Street, Ogden).

November

5 Wednesday 8:00/9:00 am**Bird Walk**

North Arm Pineview Reservoir: Meet at Dylan's Restaurant (12th Street and Monroe, Ogden) at 8:00 am for breakfast or at the Smith's parking lot (12th Street and Harrison, Ogden) at 9:00 am to carpool.



Wasatch
Audubon Society
is proud to present its 1st
Big Sit! Fundraiser!



Join the fun!

October 11th 4:00am to 10:00pm
at TNC's Legacy Nature Preserve

All are welcome! From fledging to eagle-eye.
For any length of time, 5 minutes to 18 hours.

This will be a potluck.

Restrooms near our The Big Sit! Circle.

How to participate: Let us know you are coming or just show up. Call or email Katie 715-216-2605 mcveka01@gmail.com

How to obtain sponsors: Folks can make a flat donation or a pledge per species to Wasatch Audubon

For more information and to donate:
www.WasatchAudubon.org

For more information about The Big Sit!
<http://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/>

FIELD TRIP REPORT

Willard Basin

June 14, 2014

by Taylor Abbott

This trip, led by Mike Hearell, was scheduled to go to Willard Basin with lots of birding along the dirt road leading to the basin. We met half of our group at Smith & Edwards and continued onward to Mantua to meet the other birders. We totaled 13 people, including many young aspiring birders, as we began the ascent. The bottom of the road begins at around 4500 feet elevation and culminates at the Basin with an elevation near 9500 feet. This large elevation change provides ample opportunities for a wide variety of birds and other animals, as well. One of the problems with this area, along with needing a vehicle with good ground clearance to climb the entire road, is it is a very popular road for ATV enthusiasts. They were everywhere along the bottom of the road, but decreased in number as the elevation of the road increased.

As the trip began upward, one of the first and most surprising birds we saw was a White-throated Swift. We stopped for the swift and also had good looks at a male Western Tanager, a few Dark-eyed Juncos (dark-headed), a Turkey Vulture, Green-tailed Towhees, and a Chipping Sparrow. Our first scheduled stop along the road added a Northern Flicker, Pine Siskins, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, Mountain Chickadees, MacGillivray's Warblers, and Cassin's Finches to our list. Our next stop supplied one of our target birds, the Red-naped Sapsucker. The known nesting cavity allowed great views of both the male and female. In that area we added Yellow-rumped Warbler (on a nest), Steller's Jay, Western Wood-Pewee, House Wrens (in a nesting cavity), and Dusky Flycatcher. Our last scheduled stop before reaching Willard Basin was just under 9000 feet of elevation. We added Clark's Nutcracker, Lazuli Bunting, American Kestrel, Rock Wren, and Hairy Woodpecker.

As we continued, we realized that the road was blocked by snow and we would have to walk several hundred yards on foot. Our next target bird, the American Three-toed Woodpecker, should be found in Willard Basin as it's been seen there in years past, but it was not found today. We added several more birds to our trip list including Mountain Bluebird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Olive-Sided Flycatcher, and a few of us heard a Northern Saw-whet Owl briefly call.

As dusk approached, the next portion of the trip began, calling for owls. First we tried for Common Poorwills and

were quite successful, hearing many. Most people were able to get good looks at a few. A Common Nighthawk gave a few vocals on a quick flyby as we began to call for Flammulated Owls. Our first attempt only gave a few distant Flammulated calls, but did provide the second Northern Saw-whet call of the day. Our second owl spot yielded a calling Flammulated before we were even out of our cars. It was close, but it took a few minutes to locate the owl. A few people were able to view the owl, but it left the area before everyone was able to see it. Our third owl stop provided our last new bird of the day, a calling Northern Pygmy Owl.

The tally for the trip was 39 species of birds, and although we missed a few birds we expected to see, there were, as usual, a few surprises along the way.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

Silver Lake Flower Trip

July 19, 2014

by Les Talbot

Even though we were at an elevation of 8,719 feet, it was still a warm day. When we were having lunch, it was 80 degrees. The area was inundated with people, but we were still able to enjoy the area.

Seven of us: Richard Johnson, Lynn Carroll, Carol and John Bellmon, Cheryl Connors, Roseann Boettcher, and I visited the area to see what flowers and birds were there.

We did see eight flowers which were not on the previous list for the area. They were: Rocky Mountain Iris, Clover, Pink Pyrola, a Daisy sp., Hellebore (also known as skunk cabbage), American Bistort, Red Osier Dogwood, and two unidentified flowers.

Bird life was sparse, probably due to the heat and the large number of people. We did see several Song Sparrows, a Gray Jay, White-crowned Sparrows, Marsh Wrens, Broad-tailed Hummingbirds, and Mallards. A female Mallard and her three chicks climbed up on a rock and went to sleep. We were close enough to pet them. They didn't seem bothered by our presence. Lynn said she heard a Chickadee, however we didn't know if it was a Black-capped or a Mountain Chickadee.

The visitor center has a field guide for the native flowers that are found in the Silver Lake area. The flowers are arranged by color. It is a nice guide to have.

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

by Pat Bausman

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

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Larry Bennington | Joan Niernberger |
| Judy Elsley | Robert Olds |
| Tessa A. Hill | Lillian K Page |
| Mike Isakson | Lori Schroeder |
| Marie L. Kase | Leo Schroeder |
| Marilyn Lindstrom | Roger Smith |

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

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

HELP SAVE A TREE!!


Do you prefer reading electronically or hard copy?

This newsletter is available electronically at www.wasatchaudubon.org. If you would rather not receive a hard copy every other month, please send an email message to that effect to bkevans4@comcast.net or call 801-476-0232 and we will remove your name from our hard-copy mailing list.

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





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 _____

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