



The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the **Wasatch Audubon Society**

Vol 37, Number 1

Jan/Feb 2018

WAS Meeting and Happenings

Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2018 - 7:00 PM

Dr. John Mull, Weber State University's "Ant Man," says his interest in ants was sparked by, "the range of ecological effects they have." Ants "are involved in a whole slew of interactions with other species, from bacteria and fungi, to plants, to larger animals that eat them," he says. Mull researched birds when he earned a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Pittsburgh. He earned his doctorate's degree in biology/ecology from Utah State University, where he turned his interest to ants, because his adviser "wasn't interested in having a student work on birds." Mull's three options were *spiders, grasshoppers or ants.*

Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018 - 7:00 PM

Representatives from Breathe Utah, the Salt Lake City-based nonprofit organization, work to improve Utah's air quality through education, collaboration, and policy. The group uses scientific, medical, legal, and communication expertise and experience to help craft real and practical solutions to Utah's air quality problem. The organization works to increase air quality awareness and engagement among youth and adults, create projects to directly improve air quality, and promote sound policies.

**Meeting at the Ogden Nature
Center, 966 West 12th Street,
Ogden**

Please join us and bring a friend!

Birdlime

by Jay Hudson

The wonderful view from Upper Mesa Falls State Park, Idaho, is capped by the tall dead tree across the river where Ospreys nest. You can pick out the nest with its white "birdlime", or Osprey poop sticking to the lower branches. You can also see birdlime on the rock cliffs where falcons nest in the Snake River Canyon and the 3,000 vertical feet Vermillion Cliffs in Arizona, where the California Condors are raised. The word "birdlime" is synonymous with bird poop and "whitewash". In days gone by, birdlime had another meaning and practical use.

After the Moslems took the Christian city of Constantinople 40 years before Columbus bumped into Cuba, Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent's son caught small birds in the gardens of Topkapi Palace in newly named Istanbul with birdlime. This was a time-honored method of obtaining food for the table; and, although outlawed most places today, it still prevails worldwide. The earliest use of the word "birdlime" goes back to 1440. "Lime" comes from the Latin "limus" or slime. The verb is to ensnare and the noun is something that ensnares. It's a simple formula using the bark of many different trees and works as glue against bird's weak muscles when it tries to release its grip on a branch.

Here is the formula! Take the bark of the holly or mistletoe or Syrian plum-tree, boil for 12 hours, gather the green coating and keep moist for two weeks. Pound into a paste, wash out the fibers, ferment, add some nut oil and find yourself a branch. Rub the birdlime paste on the branch and wait until a bird lands. Birdlime is like glue and when the bird tries to release its claws from its grip on the branch, the glue holds the bird's feet to the branch. Many parts of the world had their own formula and Spain's formula was said to be one of the best for capturing the thrush, whose breast was a dinner delicacy.

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Wasatch Audubon Society

Website: wasatchaudubon.org

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Treasurer	Betty Evans	801-476-0232
Past President	Dan Johnston	801-645-8633

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Programs	Susan Snyder	801-388-4201
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>

President's Pipeline

by Dan Johnston

As 2017 ends, I look back on the great birding trips I've been on this year. Besides a trip to Europe, I have gone to three birding festivals: San Diego, Great Salt Lake, and Rio Grande Valley. In early November, Paul Lombardi and I flew to Harlingen, Texas, to the Rio Grande Valley Bird Festival for five and a half days of all-day birding. We had a great time and saw a lot of birds.

One of my main goals of the trip was to complete my list of all 22 woodpeckers listed by ABA for North America. I had seen all but the Golden-fronted Woodpecker. On day one, one of the first birds I saw at Laguna Atascosa NWR was my bird, the Golden-fronted Woodpecker on a power pole.

The WAS bird for the month of November was, of course, the Golden-fronted Woodpecker. The Golden-fronted Woodpecker is a North American woodpecker, a golden fronted, golden-naped, wide-bar-backed bird. Its preferred habitat is mesquite and riparian woodlands. This woodpecker is distributed from Texas, Oklahoma, eastern Mexico and northern Central America. Cooke listed this species as an abundant resident of the lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas, in 1884. It was once persecuted as a pest because of its excavations in telegraph poles. Many were shot in Texas in the early part of the 20th century. The current population apparently is stable.

The Golden-fronted Woodpecker consumes about as much fruit and nuts as it does insects. It searches for insects on tree trunks and limbs, gleaning them from bark or probing below the surface. It clammers about in branches of trees or shrubs to pick nuts, berries, or fruits; may forage on the ground; and sometimes catches insects in flight. It cracks open mesquite pods to eat the seeds. In summer in Texas, the faces of some woodpeckers become stained purple from eating the fruit of the prickly pear cactus.



It advertises nesting territory with loud calls, sometimes with drumming. The nest site is a cavity in the trunk of a tree (live or dead), such as mesquite or oak, or in telephone poles or fence posts. Cavities are usually fairly low, typically less than 20' above ground. Both sexes help excavate the cavity, which may be used for more than one season. Both parents feed nestlings. Young leave the nest about 30 days after hatching and may associate with the parents for some time thereafter. It has 1-2 broods per year, rarely 3.

For the December woodpecker, we look in California's oak woodlands for the small black-and-white striped Nuttall's Woodpecker, hitching up branches and twigs of oaks, willows, and cottonwoods. It circles around branches in search of food and sometimes perches crosswise on a twig, much like a sparrow. This year-round resident gives a metallic rattle and high-pitched *pit* most of the year.

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President's Pipeline

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It's closely related and looks very similar to the Ladder-backed Woodpecker, but there's almost no range overlap. The horizontal stripes across its back set it apart from Downy and Hairy Woodpecker.



In 1843, William Gambel named the small black-and-white woodpecker after Thomas Nuttall, an English botanist and ornithologist. Thomas Nuttall was perhaps better known as a botanist, but he also published a pioneering book on birds, *A Manual of the Ornithology of the United States and Canada*. In 1873, his book and passion for nature also inspired the formation of the first organization in North America dedicated to birds, the Nuttall Ornithological Club.

Although Nuttall's Woodpeckers spend most of their time in oak woodlands, they do not eat acorns. They eat insects, such as beetles, beetle larvae, ants, termites, and millipedes found on oaks, cottonwoods, and willows. They probe into tree bark to reach insects or pick them off bark or vegetation. They also occasionally eat fruit, including elderberries, poison oak, and blackberries.

The male chips away at trunks and limbs, with little help from the female, to create a hole with an entrance that is about 2 inches wide. The inside of the cavity is about 11 inches deep with a layer of wood chips at the bottom, which provides cushioning for the eggs. They excavate a new cavity each year. Nuttall's Woodpeckers excavate nest holes in dead trunks or limbs of willows, cottonwoods, sycamores, oaks, or alders. Nuttall's Woodpeckers behave like other woodpeckers, clinging vertically to trees and hitching up and down trunks and branches in search of food. More often than other woodpeckers, they circle around branches or perch sideways across a branch. They also forage on small twigs where they flutter their wings for balance instead of using their tails. These woodpeckers form monogamous pairs that establish and maintain year-round territories, but they usually only interact with each other during the breeding season. Pairs defend their territory from other Nuttall's Woodpeckers, meeting intruders with crests and bills held high while spreading their tails or flicking their wings. Despite their restricted range, Nuttall's Woodpeckers are fairly common. Populations were stable between 1966 and 2015.

Here's hoping for a great year in 2018.
Good birding to all! Dan

Birdlime

(Continued from page 2)

National Geographic magazine recently wrote about the mass slaughter of bird migrants in the Mediterranean for sport and table. In this "sport", birdlime was not used. The tool was the gun. The problem is the killing of migrants is becoming felt on both ends of the migration routes. Albania is killing birds at an unsustainable rate and Egypt isn't far behind. It is time for governments to help the bird watcher. Thank goodness that America saw the threat from market hunters and changed its hunting rules.

There are reports that the French Voyagers who crossed Canada used this dinner-gathering method; and it is probable that Miles Goodyear used it when he made the first white man's camp in Utah at Fort Buenaventura, here in Ogden. If we scraped a few of the trees in the Fort, is it possible that we might find some old birdlime?

The Greeks also used birdlime to fireproof wood.

Jay Hudson had inspiration from Harold Lamb's "Suleiman the Magnificent"



Conservation Corner

by Lynn Carroll

Educating Our Legislators

Utah's legislature will begin its 2018 session on January 22. As in past years, Steve Erickson will be on Capitol Hill, coordinating with other conservation groups, speaking on our behalf in legislative committee meetings and to individual legislators, and sending us weekly summaries. I plan to forward each of those "Legislative Updates" to all members for whom I have a current e-mail address. You can add your e-mail to my list with a message to bradlynncc@comcast.net. Use the same method to say "no leg update". The updates are several pages long; concentrate on the first two pages.

While we won't know about many of the bills to be considered this year until well after the session starts, I can give you a taste of what's to come. There will be another attempt to pass a resolution in which the legislature commits to work constructively to address the causes and effects of climate change. Steve told us at the fall Utah Audubon Council meeting that he expects to be dealing with water legislation and funding for conservation and planning projects. HEAL Utah is working on ways to improve air quality. They'll try again to have the legislature require Utah County to do diesel emissions testing, as other Wasatch Front counties are doing voluntarily. Some issues may not directly affect birds, but adding our voices to those of other groups will help us all.

Utah representatives and senators from the Wasatch Front are becoming more receptive to the idea that they can and should work on air quality improvement and energy efficiency. When you learn about legislation that moves the state in the right direction, it **will** help if you let them know it's important to you and why, especially if others are doing the same. I will try to provide some background when we send out "action alerts," but it will help if you have been paying attention to your e-mail and news. So please take time now to make sure you know who your representative and senator are. Take a look at le.ut.gov, where you can find contact information for your legislators; read the text of a bill; learn what committee will consider the bill before it can go to the full house; find out when the bill is amended and what changed; listen live or later to committees discussing bills; see what votes have been taken and how each member voted; and so on. If your legislator votes as you ask, it's a good idea to send them a quick "thank you."

If you've been frustrated by what's happening in the national government, try educating your state legislators. At least your voice is more likely to be heard.

Ogden Christmas Bird Count

by John Bellmon

The Ogden Christmas Bird Count this year was on a snowy day that was cool, but many showed up and participated. There were 10 different teams that spread out to cover the count area, even with the cold and snow. We had a very successful count this year. With the preliminary results from the reports that I have received (I have not received all of them yet), we had 86 different species. It is almost a record (88 species in 2013) and still may be after four more bird checklist come in. I am sending this preliminary information on to our newsletter editor just before the newsletter goes to be printed. A full report of all of the Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) will be in the next newsletter. I would like to thank all of those that came out and participated. For many of us, CBCs are one of the birding highlights of the year. The other three CBCs will be after the newsletter is printed and sent out to be mailed, but a full report of all of the CBCs will be following. Again a big thank you to all that came out in the snow and cold to help make this 38th CBC a success. We hope you will plan to join us next year.





CALENDAR

JANUARY

10 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk

Fort Buenaventura Park: Meet at Moore's Family Restaurant (3558 Wall Ave) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the entrance to the park at 9:30am.

16 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Meeting

Dr. John Mull, Weber State University's "Ant Man": Western Harvester Ant and its effects on the ecosystem. He researched birds when he earned a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Pittsburgh. He earned his doctorate's degree in biology/ecology from Utah State University, where he turned his interest to ants, because his adviser "wasn't interested in having a student work on birds." Mull's three options were spiders, grasshoppers or ants.

17 Wednesday 8:30/9:00am Bird Walk

Little Mountain Railroad Trail: Meet at McDonald's (1838 W 2700 N, Farr West just east of I-15, exit 349) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the trailhead (west on 4000 N from Smith and Edward's) at 9:00am.

20 Saturday 10:00am Field Trip

Gull Identification Field Trip: Grab your scopes and join WAS as we visit some of Northern Utah's best gull destinations. We will depart from Denny's (1172 W 21st St) at 10:00 am and be gone until late afternoon. Bring a snack, drink, and warm clothes. Location of trip will depend on the gulls and is TBD. Contact Mike Hearrell @ utmarshrat@yahoo.com or (801) 529-8693, if you have questions.

24 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk

Kays Creek Parkway: Meet at Village Inn (1765 Skyline Drive, South Ogden) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the Parkway parking lot at 9:30am.

31 Wednesday 8:30/9:00am Bird Walk

Riverdale Trail (south): Meet at McDonald's (900 W Riverdale Rd) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the trailhead parking lot (from Riverdale Rd., south on 700 W for one block, then left on 4600 S to lot on right at end of the road) at 9:00am.

January/February 2018

FEBRUARY

6 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Board Meeting

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

7 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk

Beus Pond and Glasmann Pond: Meet at Village Inn (1765 E Skyline Drive, South Ogden) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the Beus parking lot at 9:30am.

10 Saturday 10:00am/3:00pm DWR Eagle Day

Eagle Day at Salt Creek Waterfowl Management Area: This is a **TENTATIVE** date. We were unable to confirm the date prior to publication. The Area is located 4 miles west of Corinne on UT-83. Take 6800 West and follow signs to the landfill. Wasatch Audubon members will provide scopes and talk to visitors about eagles, other local birds, and conservation. Check our Facebook page or website for details as we receive more information. Just go to <http://wasatchaudubon.org/> and click on: Find us on Facebook. You can also call Keith Evans at 801-476-0232 for information.

14 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk

Antelope Island: Meet at Warren's (1778 S 1000 W, Syracuse) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the entrance lot to Antelope Island SP at 9:30am. Remember this is a fee area.

20 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Meeting

Breathe Utah: The non-profit organization works to increase air quality awareness and engagement among youth and adults, creates projects to directly improve air quality, and promotes sound policies. Learn more about how we all are affected by, and can help improve, the quality of the air we breathe along the Wasatch Front.

21 Wednesday 8:30/9:45am Bird Walk

Mantua Reservoir Area: Meet at Rusted Spoon (2645 US 89, Perry) for breakfast at 8:30am or at 9:45am at the parking lot on the east side of Mantua Reservoir.

FEBRUARY (cont.)

24 Saturday 7:30am Field Trip

Annual Morgan County Bald Eagle Trip: Meet at the DWR office (515 E. 5300 S. in South Ogden) at 7:30am. We'll carpool from there. We will have breakfast at Larry's Spring Chicken Inn in Morgan. This is an all day trip. We usually don't finish until 4:00pm, so bring a lunch and drinks.

28 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk

South Ogden Nature Park: Meet at Village Inn (1765 E Skyline Drive, South Ogden) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the parking lot for the Nature Park at 9:30am.

MARCH

7 Wednesday 8:30/9:30am Bird Walk

Jefferson Hunt Campground Trail (note: trail starts on the West side of the campground): Meet at Dylan's (981 12th St) for breakfast at 8:30am or at the Smith's Parking lot (12th and Harrison) to carpool at 9:30am.

Contact Persons for WAS Outings Wednesday

Walks - Paul Lombardi pslombard@gmail.com

Saturday Field Trips (the Saturday after the WAS Tuesday Meeting) Mike Hearrell 801-529-8693

Upcoming events at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

January 13, 2018 Owl Day
February 10, 2018 Eagle Day
March 10, 2018 Swan Day

Check out the Refuge's website for more info: http://fws.gov/refuge/bear_river_migratory_bird_refuge/

November Field Trip Report

by Dan Johnston

What a great way to start our Saturday Field Trip to East Canyon: breakfast at Larry's Spring Chicken Inn. Eight birders ate breakfast and started out looking for the birds. Our group that Saturday was Nancy Arnett, Lynn Carroll, Dan and Laura Johnston, Paul Lombardi, George Muller, Sharen Perry and Les Talbot. We traveled up East Canyon to the State Park and on up the canyon to Large Springs, stopping many times along the way to check out the birds and scenery. We spotted 31 species. The highlights were White-winged Scoter, Pacific Loon, American Dipper, Townsend's Solitaire, Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Wild Turkey, and Pine Grosbeak.

Nest Box Cleanout

by Nancy Arnett

A small group of Wasatch Audubon members met on the morning of Saturday, Sept 23rd, for the annual nest box cleanout. We split into groups and set out on the routes on the Monte Cristo highway. Most of the approximately 100-120 boxes were still in place. A few had fallen down so we hung them up again on trees or fence posts. Several boxes needed minor repairs and some were simply missing altogether.

Most boxes had been used, with the majority by house wrens. Bluebirds and tree swallows had used fewer boxes and some boxes were empty. Each species has its own unique style of nest building, material and design.

One special experience Lynn Carroll, John Bellmon and I had, while walking along a fence line, was coming upon a flock of two-three dozen bluebirds. There were adults and juveniles congregating to get ready to head south for the winter. They were very vocal. We like to think they were saying "thank you" and "see you again next year." The beautiful experience validated the whole purpose of cleaning and maintaining the boxes to support such a population and future generations.

Thank you to all of those who helped including Brian Nosker. Also, thank you to Arnold and Weston Smith who helped on an earlier date on a different route.

Views and Concerns

by V. Arnold Smith

In December, I sat in the Wasatch Audubon Society (WAS) board meeting and listened to concerns expressed by those in attendance. A big worry of the group was the future ability of WAS to continue to function and work for the betterment of our natural environment. As a human society we are slowly breaking the backbone of our natural world. It is becoming like a swayed-back horse and soon may not be able to carry all of its riders.

We need people to work to mediate the pressures being applied to our planet. The hope is that we will see the younger generation take an interest in our environment. With human populations so much greater than they were 50 years ago one would think there would be a proportionately larger number of people interested in our natural environment. However, that does not seem to be the case — at least not for WAS — its membership is actually decreasing. The answer to this is education and first hand experiences in the outdoors, although it is difficult to compete with the virtual world that kids live in today.

When you look at the 37 years that WAS has existed (founded in 1981), there has been a nucleus of about 50-60 people that have kept the organization functional. Many of these people have passed on or moved away. Today there are maybe 25 people who work diligently to keep the Ogden Chapter (WAS) going. However of those, there are a few people who deserve all the praise and admiration that the people of the Ogden area could give them. I have been involved with WAS since 1987 and during those 30 years I have truly been impressed with 5 individuals. Everyone who has an interest in our natural world knows John Bellmon, Jack Rensel, Lynn Carol, Keith Evans and Betty Evans.

These 5 people have been instrumental in creating and keeping WAS functional through thick and thin. They have also been involved in many other ways to preserve and protect Utah's beautiful natural environment for future generations to enjoy.

Without question there are also others who deserve credit for making WAS a viable conservation group. This includes the current officers, board and committees, but you can't help but be awed with the long tenure and impeccable dedication of the above 5 individuals.

You might be our next monthly meeting speaker!

Have you taken an interesting birding trip? Have you conducted conservation research or worked on projects that have to do with birds, wildlife, or other ecological topics? Your fellow Wasatch Audubon Society members might enjoy hearing about it from you! We are always looking for new and interesting speakers for our monthly meetings, and we suspect there are more than a few among our own members. So, speak up! Contact WAS program director Susan Snyder if you have an idea. You can e-mail her at naturescall@gmail.com or call, 801-388-4201. If she doesn't answer, leave a message, and she will call you back!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

by Lynn Carroll

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

*Evan Alleman
Jan Carlsen
Patricia Uhl
Yaeko Bryner*

*Joan Diamond
Judith James
Marie Kotter
Jay Stretch*

OWL PELLETS

Thanks to all of you who collected owl pellets for me in the last school year. I was able to present my owl program in third, fourth, and fifth grade classes in three school districts. I never have enough owl pellets, so keep them coming. The larger barn and great horned owl pellets are preferred. If you know of a good location to collect them, please give me a call.



Thanks again and happy birding.
Dennis Collins (801) 393-1115

Follow Wasatch Audubon Society on Facebook!

Our Facebook page has upcoming field trip information and the "B3B" — the best three birds viewed on each field trip. You can view this information without joining Facebook, but you won't be able to participate in games and posts. Just go to the WAS website (<http://wasatchaudubon.org/>) and click on:





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 National Audubon to:

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

Local Chapter: **Wasatch Audubon Society C8ZW5472Z**



**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: _____

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