



# The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the **Wasatch Audubon Society**

Volume 41, Number 1 January/February 2022

## WAS MEETINGS AND HAPPENINGS

Tuesday, January 18 - 7:00PM

Great Salt Lake Adventure and Awareness  
Scott Baxter is going to talk to us about his kayak circumnavigation of the Great Salt Lake. Join us on Zoom (\*see below).

Tuesday, February 15 - 7:00PM

All About Owls

Great-horned Owls are already nesting!  
WAS member and Ogden Nature Center teacher-naturalist, Susan Snyder, and a special guest will talk about owls in Utah. Join us on Zoom (\*see below).

SEE CALENDAR ON PG. 5 FOR MORE EVENTS!

### **\*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 or want a Zoom link, please send a message to Lynn at: [bradlync@comcast.net](mailto:bradlync@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](http://www.wasatchaudubon.org)).

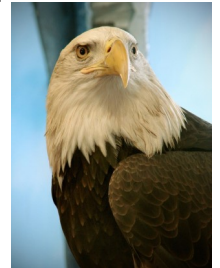
**WE ARE NOW ON INSTAGRAM!!** Search for Wasatch Audubon.

## **CELEBRATE EAGLES!**



This is the time of year to see lots of Eagles. Wasatch Audubon is devoting a Saturday field trip (February 19) to spotting

these magnificent birds. You will see both the Golden Eagle like the one pictured above, and Bald Eagle like the one pictured to the right. Trip leaders familiar with where to look will have scopes available for close up looks when possible.



Another opportunity to see Bald Eagles is during the field trip to Farmington Bay on January 22. Again, leaders will be available for expertise.

### **Christmas Bird Count News Flash!**



The Ogden and Morgan Counts are done, but Bear River was postponed due to fog. It, as well as Ogden Valley, and Antelope Island, will be done by January 1. Look for a summary of results in the next Chickadee edition.



**Look for accessibility information for each event**

**Wasatch Audubon Society**

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

**Officers**

President	Jay Stretch	801-721-9432
Vice President	John Bellmon	801-444-3704
Secretary	Sharen Perry	801-392-9554
Treasurer	Nancy Arnett	801-388-0637
Past President	Dan Johnston	801-645-8633

**Board**

2022/2023	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
2022/2023	Ben Johnson	801-231-7008
2022/2023	Dan Johnston	801-645-8633
2021/2022	Abigail Johnson	
2021/2022	Leah Johnson	
2021/2022	Mike Hearell	801-529-8693
2021/2022	Susan Snyder	801-388-4201

**Committee Chairpersons**

Conservation	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
Conservation	John Bellmon	801-444-3704
Education	Dennis Collins	801-393-1115
Feeder Projects	Laura Johnston	801-458-9558
Field Trips	Dan Johnston	801-645-8633
Bird Walks	Dan Johnston	801-645-8633
Historian	Ruth Davis	801-309-0425
Hospitality	Jeane Taylor	801-394-2813
Membership	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
Newsletter	Laura Johnston	801-458-9558
Programs	Susan Snyder	801-388-4201
Publicity	Arnold Smith	801-829-3383
Website	Patricia Allaire	801-597-1091
Information Mgr.	Connor Johnson	385-209-5396

**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**

**Mystery Solved and a Bit of Wisdom**

by Jay Stretch

**Mystery Solved!** *Which came first, the chicken or the egg?* We now know that birds are descended from dinosaurs. In fact, the chicken is the closest living relative to the Tyrannosaurus Rex. Fossil records indicate that feathers were a part of natural selection that evolved within some dinosaur species—to their benefit and our delight today. Then around 66 million years ago, the Cretaceous–Paleogene extinction occurred, leading to the extinction of non-avian dinosaurs. The survivors continued to lay eggs thousands of years before chickens evolved, but over time and somewhere along the line one (or more) of them laid an egg that was very close to, but not yet a chicken. That creature continued to diverge from its ancestors and before long the chicken had evolved, laying its own special eggs and establishing the jungle birds which eventually led to the chicken; hence *the egg came before the chicken!* Humans have continued to refine that bird's DNA to enhance its benefit to humans. Today, poultry of all types (not just the chicken) is the most common source of protein consumed by humans.

OK. Chickens are essential but not necessarily as a steady diet (sorry, bad pun) for the birder's delight. So, let's turn our focus from the barnyard to forest and tundra.

**Now, A Bit of Wisdom?** A bird's eyes take up about 50 percent of its *head* (not just face), if you include all the things that go along with making their eyes useful: the eyeballs themselves, as well as the things like nerves, the muscles needed to articulate the eyeball, the boney structure to protect them, and so on. (Eyes take up about 5 percent of the human head.)

*Continued on pg. 4*

**Conservation Corner**

**Water Is For Fighting**

by Lynn Carroll

Whether Mark Twain said it or not, in the West it's true, water is for fighting. As our population grows and the changing climate brings more drought to the Southwest, demand for water explodes. The fight to conserve water for functioning ecosystems is increasingly difficult.

Great Salt Lake (GSL) dropped to its lowest level in recorded history last October, drawing the attention of politicians and alarming students of lake ecology. The Lake needs more fresh water so that it won't become too salty for brine shrimp. Microbial mats atop mounds in GSL must stay wet and not too salty for the brine flies that pupate there. Without brine shrimp and brine flies, the birds that visit the lake won't have much to eat. More exposed lake bed means more toxic dust for all to breathe.

The Utah Division of Water Resources just released an updated water plan for the state. It discusses various ways to meet the projected increased water needs of the human population in the next decades, including conservation and water projects that would leave less water for wildlife. The most harmful to GSL is Bear River development (BRD).

BRD was mandated by the legislature in 1991. It is supposed to provide 220,000 acre-feet of water, an amount that Great Salt Lake can't spare. The current projection is that it won't be needed until after 2050, but planning continues. A feasibility study from 2019 envisions diverting water from the Bear River during winter and spring and storing it for use in the summer. Much of the water would be pumped uphill to a large new reservoir to be built in White's Valley, NE of Howell, then sent south via pipeline.

Another threat to GSL originates in Cedar City. The aquifer that supplies water to Cedar Valley is being overdrawn by about 7,000 acre-feet annually, resulting in subsidence. Rather than instituting serious conservation, the local water conservancy district obtained rights to groundwater in three valleys in neighboring Beaver County. Unfortunately, the awarded rights are in excess of the recharge rate

of the aquifers. Great Basin aquifers are interconnected, so draining the Beaver Co. aquifers will affect Fish Springs and eventually GSL. We'll comment to the BLM when the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is released.

We oppose the Lake Powell Pipeline that our legislature has supported. The Colorado River's flow has been shrinking, averaging 19% less in this century than the 20<sup>th</sup> century average. Birds that rely on the riparian habitats of the Colorado and its tributaries, such as Yellow Warbler, Bell's Vireo, and Summer Tanager, are in decline. The water level in Lake Powell may soon be too low anyway.

When the state legislative session begins this month, we'll keep an eye on the budget. Federal money for water-related infrastructure will be available, and it's important that the legislature directs funding to conservation projects and not to any of the water development projects above. We will be asking for your help to influence legislators.

We'll also be watching legislation regarding Utah Lake. Last year's HB 364 would have created a Utah Lake Authority with too much power, but it died in committee. Any new version must maintain the status of the lake as sovereign land.

**YOUR HELP IS NEEDED TO SAVE THE GSL!!**  
***During the 7-week legislative session, I'll be sending emails to everyone on my Mail Chimp list (the one used for zoom links, etc.) with weekly updates from our Policy Advocate, Steve Erickson. I will include information about how you can help. The situation tends to change rapidly, so please look for these, act promptly, and contact me if you want more information.***  
[bradlynn@comcast.net](mailto:bradlynn@comcast.net)

President's Corner

Continued from pg. 2

The 50% rule holds true for owls, too, with one big exception and that is why they look, and are, so large compared to other birds. That exception is that owls do not have the muscles and other facial features normally associated with bird anatomy, because owls do not have eyeballs! In owls, the shape of their face around the eyes is fully integrated with their ears and many of the features and feathers associated with hearing rather than sight, serving to focus faint sounds for sensation, perception, cognition, and reaction in this most often nocturnal avian.



How big are an owl's eyes? By comparison, clasp both hands together in one fist. That would be about the size of your eye, minus all its supporting elements. That's one of the reasons that owls do not have eyeballs. They have eye tubes. If they had to have the muscles necessary to move those huge eyes and attach them to bone, their faces would be too big and create so much drag that it is unlikely that they would be able to fly. An owl's eyes are so well-developed that they are not spheres, rather tubes that are held into place by a bony structure. This means owls can only look straight ahead. An owl must turn its entire head to look side to side. But, as always, "nature has found a way."

Some sites indicate that owls turn their heads 270 degrees, but this is questionable. They do have the ability to turn their heads enough to extend their vision to 180 degrees. This is a significant anatomical gift and is possible because they have 14 vertebrae compared to other birds who have 7.

*Good Birding, Jay*



### Wonder Where the Money Goes?

Wasatch Audubon Society receives funds from memberships, fund raising, and donations. After the housekeeping items like insurance and meeting place rental are taken care of, Wasatch loves giving back to our community. Bird feeding programs throughout the community are supplied with bird seed during the winter months. Throughout the year, Wasatch sponsors and staffs educational efforts in area schools. And during the holiday season, we provide basic supplies and environmentally focused gifts for students in need. And finally, Wasatch is part of a group that supports a lobbyist in the Utah State Legislature. Through the efforts of this lobbyist you can stay informed of bills relevant to bird habitat and other bills that affect wildlife. See page 3 for information on how to receive legislative updates.

**Visit Bear River  
Migratory Bird Refuge!  
Education Center Hours:  
Tuesday through Friday  
8:00am -4:00pm  
Saturday 10:00am - 4:00pm**





**CALENDAR**

*Please note: To accommodate the current Covid situation, social distancing and masking are encouraged. Carpooling for field trips will be your own decision.*

*Accessibility: Walks are no more than 1 1/2 miles. See box at end of calendar for explanation of accessibility codes.*

**JANUARY**

**1 Saturday Antelope Island Christmas Bird Count:** 8:00 am Antelope Island Christmas Bird Count: Meet in the parking lot at the entrance to the park. We will divide up into three teams to cover the areas. It is an all day trip so bring water and lunch. Accessibility: **Restroom available, minimal walking**

**5 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**Fort Buenaventura Park:** Located on A Avenue in Ogden. Meet at the entrance to the park. **P L B**

**12 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**Little Mountain Trail:** Meet at the trail head located at 2000 W on 4000 N (west from Smith & Edwards). **U L**

**18 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Meeting**  
Join us on Zoom. Great Salt Lake Adventure and Awareness. Scott Baxter is going to talk to us about his kayak circumnavigation of the Great Salt Lake. See page 1 for how to get Zoom contact.

**19 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**South Ogden Nature Park:** Located at 1175 E 5875 S. Meet at the trailhead for the Nature Walk. **P/U M B**

**22 Saturday 9:00 am field trip**  
**Farmington Bay:** Meet at parking lot outside of the Eccles Wildlife Education Center at Farmington Bay Wildlife Management Area (at approximately 1700 W Glovers Lane, Farmington, UT). We will explore the Bay and nearby ponds. Target birds are Bald Eagle, Bufflehead, Western Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull. Trip leader - Dan Johnston. **R P L B**

**26 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**Kay's Creek Parkway:** Located at 2370 Canyon View Dr., Layton. Meet at the parking lot which can be reached off Hwy. 193. **P L B**

**FEBRUARY**

**1 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Board Meeting.**  
Held remotely.

**2 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**Riverdale Trail (South):** Meet at the trailhead, off Riverdale Road at 700 W. **R P L B**

**9 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**West Haven Cemetery:** Go west on 1800 S off 1900 W. Make a right at 2350 W and proceed north into the cemetery. Park in the NW corner. **P L B**

**15 Tuesday 7:00 pm WAS Meeting**  
Join us for yet another online Zoom meeting: All About Owls. Great-horned Owls are already nesting! WAS member and Ogden Nature Center teacher-naturalist, Susan Snyder, and a special guest will talk about owls in Utah. See page 1 for how to get Zoom contact.

**16 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**Two Rivers Trail:** Meet at the parking lot on the west side of 21st Street Pond. **P L B**

**19 Saturday 8:30 am field trip**  
**Annual Morgan County Bald Eagle Trip:** Meet at DWR office (515 E 5300 S in South Ogden) at 8:30 am. We will caravan from there. This is an all day trip (until about 4 pm) so bring water and lunch. Target birds are Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Wild Turkey, American Dipper and Rough-legged Hawk. Trip leader - John Bellmon. **R P L B**

**23 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**Beus Pond:** Located at 1576 Country hills Drive. Meet in the parking area at the pond. To reach the pond, take Country Hills Dr. east off of Harrison Blvd. at 4200 S. **R P L B**

**MARCH**

**2 Wednesday 9:00 am bird walk**  
**Antelope Island Causeway and Fielding Garr Ranch:**  
Meet at the parking lot just before the toll booth. Remember this is a fee area. **R P/U L B**

*Continued on pg. 6*

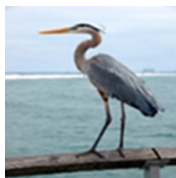
Calendar

continued from pg. 5

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

CONTACTS FOR WALKS AND TRIPS

Dan Johnston: 801-645-8633  
John Bellmon:



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!

East Canyon State Park  
Presents  
**WINTERFEST**  
Tubing, ice fishing, x country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, birding, and Dark Sky solar viewing party!  
**January 22 2022**  
**11AM to 2PM**  
[eastcanyonstatepark.utah.gov](http://eastcanyonstatepark.utah.gov)

**The Chickadee**  
**Wants You!**

 You have experiences and stories and pictures that we would love to share with our readers. Maybe you have a memorable birding experience, a recent special sighting, a funny backyard birding event, a birding trip that was a dream come true (or a catastrophe!), etc. It could be a picture of a favorite backyard bird or any bird special to you. Maybe you have a letter to the editor, either some praise or complaint about birding or our efforts. Email your offerings to: [lauraj51@comcast.net](mailto:lauraj51@comcast.net)

**Welcome New and Rejoined Members**

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Robert Barrett  | Kristi Lloyd     |
| Marty Chen      | Melba Lucas      |
| Nancy Corgiat   | Mary Mendez      |
| Fabian Curto    | Valerie Parsons  |
| Flora Degroshe  | James Patterson  |
| David Edwards   | Andrea C. Sawyer |
| Lisa Edwards    | James Thompson   |
| Richard Laramée |                  |

**MARKET HUNTERS**

by Jay Hudson

The dinner table and the fashion runway have historically been two of the biggest negative forces in the protection of wildlife. Mother Nature and the stock market can sometimes exacerbate the problem. When America suffered what we call the Great Depression, the population began a slide into hunger and loss of confidence. The rich suffered less than the masses, but birds also suffered at the hands of market hunters. All over the country men were forced to feed their families by breaking the laws that protected wildlife. In the case of birds, the rich would buy their bird kills and everyone turned a blind eye to the fact that nature was losing out. The under-manned budding Fish and Wildlife officers winked at the johnboats drifting out to the duck habitat bringing death to the black skies. On any given day ducks fell to the hunters bent on selling their products on the market.

“Thirty mallards in thirty minutes,” wrote market hunter Dale Hamm who was working the Illinois River delta. Thousands of ducks were felled in a year by one man who tied their necks

together, stuffed them in his pockets and took them to Chicago for the people who still had money.

Locals, surrounded by marshes and friends in need of a meal, killed thousands of ducks. One day in Illinois one man shot 867 ducks. The future of ducks was indeed grim. Some concerned about the future of ducks tried to develop a save-the-duck system and provide alternative meat for the hungry. Law makers finally put limits on the killing and game management became a profession.

I remember when I got to drive an airboat at the Bear River Refuge and thought how far we have come since the market hunters. I remember taking the train to North Dakota to see the ducks resting in the water filled potholes, thinking about the threat of farmers wanting to fill in the land. I have witnessed the mass of sandhill cranes rising in the early morning to fly to the fields of Nebraska to feed. The sight will remain with me. Then I imagine Lewis and Clark witnessing the skies of the 1800’s, black with noisy birds, sometimes dimming the sun. My hope is that future generations will have the same privileges.

Wasatch Audubon members can become aware of threats to our birds from developers, drought along the flyways, and apathy. The Chickadee is blessed with a Conservation Corner written by Lynn Carroll who can give you information about responding to these threats. And, be sure to go to your post office and purchase the Federal Duck Stamp. Buying Federal Duck Stamps is among the simplest ways that anyone can participate in wildlife and habitat conservation. A current Duck Stamp grants the bearer free entrance into any national wildlife refuge.



**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](http://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.

\_\_\_ 1-YEAR MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE SUBSCRIPTION: \$12.00

\_\_\_ MY CONTRIBUTION TO WASATCH AUDUBON: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**SEND YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO WASATCH AUDUBON TO:  
WASATCH AUDUBON SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 3211  
OGDEN, UT 84409**