



The Mountain Chickadee

Newsletter of the Wasatch Audubon Society

Volume 42, Number 1 January/February 2023

WAS MONTHLY MEETINGS AND HAPPENINGS

Tuesday January 17, 2023 7:00PM

New! *Members' Roundtable*: This is an opportunity for members to share ideas with our program director (Susan Snyder). She wants to know what subjects you are interested in learning more about at future meetings. No need to know a speaker or organization. Also guidelines for photos submitted for the annual slideshow will be discussed.

Tuesday February 21, 2023 7:00PM

As of publication, we are planning to have Paul Rogers from the Western Aspen Alliance at Utah State University talk to us about the state of Aspen Trees in the West—including Utah's Pando. What's the Pando? See page 3 for a short explanation.

Please note: *Monthly meetings will continue in a hybrid format until further notice. This means attendees can meet in person at the Ogden Nature Center Educational Building, or tune in via Zoom. (To get a link, see the box below.) This will allow more accessibility, as well as greatly increase the pool of speakers (especially from other locations), most of whom find it easier to present electronically.*

President's Corner

Everything You Wanted to Know About Bird Migration—Part 2

by Jay Stretch

Hummingbirds are the masters of food source mapping; they have to be. Each consumes massive amounts of energy, relatively speaking, and must replenish it frequently—not just daily and certainly for long periods during mating and raising young. They build incredible mental maps of food sources in their local areas. They cannot go long without feeding during the day and do not have time to revisit nectar sources where they have already taken that energy producing food. But where do they do it?



Birds build their maps in their hippocampus, which in birds is located on top of the brain (a phrenologist's delight if she had really sensitive fingers!) rather than internally in the medial lobe as in humans. It varies in size and research shows a direct connection between size and navigational needs and accuracy. It is largest in caching birds, for example a chickadee's hippocampus is twice the size of a sparrows. And the energy consuming, highly mapped, hummingbird has the largest, relative to brain size, hippocampus of all birds.

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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.

Wasatch Audubon Society

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

The President's Corner, cont. from pg. 1

Officers

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2022/2023	Dan Johnston	801-645-8633
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Conservation	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
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Education	Dennis Collins	801-393-1115
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Hospitality	Jeane Taylor	801-394-2813
Membership	Lynn Carroll	801-392-8216
Newsletter	Laura Johnston	801-458-9558
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Do birds really count celestial navigation amongst their many talents? Researchers have shown that birds do not really read the constellations, as many believe. However, the ability for them to see clearly at night is extremely important, not to see the rotating constellations, but rather to find the point around which those clusters rotate. For example, in the northern hemisphere birds use the rotation of the sky and earth around the North Star as the key to navigation. They point the beak or tailfeathers at it, depending on Spring or Fall migration— this is much simpler and still effective. Research shows that it takes a young bird only about two weeks to establish this part of their mental map.

How about sound? Very low frequency sounds are especially prevalent in bodies of water and particularly near shoreline. While they are inaudible to humans they may be audible to birds. Such sounds vary greatly, based upon the interaction of water and shoreline—gentle on beaches extreme against cliffs, and somewhere in between for rocky shores. Perhaps these cues aid in long overwater flight and those that follow the major coasts or waypoints along the way.

Perhaps some use olfactory cues, as well. This would be difficult to determine, and smells are probably used more in local navigation, as they get closer to their objectives. But reliability of smells would vary based on wind and season, so probably they need other building blocks for their integrated maps to be useful.

Scientists believe that birds are not born with these mental maps, rather with the tools to create and refine them. However, there is a great deal of confidence that the highly refined clock and navigational compass capabilities are innate, it is unlikely that the young of many species would have time to develop these gifts of nature in their relatively short lives before the migration season begins.

Cont. on pg. 3

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 cont. from pg. 2

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Well, that covers four of the five senses, and although I did not look for references, it would not surprise me at all to find that birds put pins in their mental maps to mark their tastiest favorites.

We humans are used to using two dimensions to create our maps, GPS, and such. Though we undoubtedly add in memories or reference to the sounds and smells of certain areas, we can only pinpoint a destination using those once in their general location. I would hazard to guess that bird navigation is really based on the many layers of sensation and perception discussed briefly above. It is a sort of five-dimensional map, which in modern humans is not necessary, and thus undeveloped. It is a truly wonderful talent of our amazing avian friends. And it is all tied together by the complex process of Cognitive Integration in which neurons from different regions are associated with sensation connected to processing areas. This integration produces the final determination of which way to head and for how long to fly, yet another gift for the birds. In most cases they go directly "as the crow flies" and do not use winding routes to travel.

Acknowledgement: Many of the thoughts, informative references, and information in this article came from *The Genius of Birds* by Jennifer Ackerman, Copyright 2016, published in US by Penguin Press, 2016

What's the Pando?



Pando is a giant aspen clone, and a clone is a genetically identical set of trees because the trees are connected underground by their root system," Paul Rogers told ABC4. Rogers is an adjunct professor in the environment and society department at the S.J. and Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources at Utah State University. Join WAS on February 21 to learn more!



John Nelson Award Presented to Dan Johnston

This award is given to a WAS member who has demonstrated lifetime dedication to the Audubon cause, a commitment to conservation, and volunteer service to the community.

Dan has served as president/acting president of the Wasatch chapter for a total of 7 years. He has volunteered in different capacities at the Ogden Nature Center for 35 years, including designing some of the trails there. He is also active in his church as a leader, choir member and in building maintenance.

Congratulations and sincere thanks to Dan!

Welcome New and Rejoined Members

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|------------------|----------------------|
| Walter B. Branch | Delbert Mansfield |
| Jay Christianson | Marlene Martin |
| Jonathan Creel | Bruce and Barb Perry |
| Kathleen Elken | Kathryn A. Philpot |
| Tanner Flinders | Newel D. Rigby |
| David Hadley | Mary Rioux-Forker |
| Leroy Harris | Kathy Rozanski |
| Ralph Heilesen | Lee W. Stone |
| Derek Jaco | John Warman |

CONSERVATION CORNER

My Hope for Ogden: 100% “Clean” Electricity by 2030

by Lynn Carroll

Climate change is threatening world biodiversity and the quality-of-life of all people, so rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions is necessary. The 2019 Utah law HB 411 allows cities or counties to contract with Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) to deliver net-100% renewably-generated electricity to their citizens and businesses by 2030. Net-100% means using renewables to generate enough electricity to supply all of the participants’ electrical needs annually. I joined a group of Ogdenites who successfully lobbied our city council to begin this process, called the Community Renewable Energy Program (CREP). SLC and Summit Co. initiated the program, which now includes 18 communities. Ogden will not be fully committed until an agreement with RMP is approved, initial rates are set by the Public Utilities Commission, and a city ordinance passes. Customers will be allowed to opt out during the first three months, because the rate might be higher than the standard rate.

Here are the points I made in a speech to the Ogden City Council, encouraging them to stay with the program. Only those of you who live within Ogden City limits are eligible to participate in the CREP, but I hope others will be interested.

It’s About the Threats to Our Communities From a Changing Climate

Climate change has ravaged the arctic, where ecosystems are crashing and communities are devastated. Utah is also warming more rapidly than average. Our gardens suffer from the heat and drought, flash floods take lives, we breathe smoke from raging wildfires, our drying Lake threatens our health, and it’s going to get worse.

We have a moral obligation to do all we can to reduce the harm in store for future generations. To end the accumulation of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere, the easiest first step is to stop burning fossil fuels to generate electricity.

Communities Banding Together Can Make a Difference

Now we have 18 communities working together to obtain renewably-sourced electricity for their residents and businesses. Currently about 70% of our electricity comes from burning fossil fuels. RMP plans to only be down to 42% in 2030 and to keep burning coal until 2042 and natural gas longer yet.

Few Ogden residents have the money and roof space for enough solar panels to supply all of their own electricity. The CREP Program gives everyone else the same access to clean energy. Currently on average, an Ogden household’s electricity use is responsible for roughly 7 tons of CO2 emissions every year. Multiply that by customers in 18 communities and compare it to zero in 2030. We will make a significant impact!

It’s a Comprehensive Program

The CREP is a comprehensive program that includes special considerations for low-income residents. We are grateful for the City’s investment so far, and know that it’s well worth doing and time well spent.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure bill and the Inflation Reduction Act recently passed Congress and will provide billions of dollars for new transmission infrastructure in our region, which can lower costs and increase reliability. Available grant money might be used to help more low-income residents participate in the program. With these tools, CREP can provide even more benefit to our community.

It’s About a Better Future

People living near the coal plants deserve relief from the health effects of polluted air – relief that the CREP will provide when less coal and gas are burned.

Reaching net-100% renewable electricity is just the beginning of a longer effort to achieve a more stable climate and brighter future. Clean electricity will make electric vehicles doubly attractive, reducing air pollution *and* our carbon footprint. Next we can heat with electricity, doing even more to clear our air and slow climate change.

Imagine clear views over all our national parks; imagine driving a car that never requires paying at the pump; imagine all *green* air days.

Ogden’s partnership with the other communities in CREP can lead the way to a clean energy future for all.

CALENDAR

Note: Arrangements for carpooling will be your own responsibility.
Accessibility: Walks are no more than 1 1/2 miles, unless otherwise noted. See end of calendar for explanation of accessibility codes located at the end of each event.

JANUARY

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

4 Wednesday 8:30 am bird walk Great Salt Lake Nature Center, Farmington: Meet in the parking lot. 1157 S. Waterfowl Way (1100 W Glovers Lane) Farmington. Accessibility: **R P/U L B** Leader-Colin/Ben

11 Wednesday 8:30am 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. Accessibility: **R P/U L B** Leader-Colin/Ben

17 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Meeting Ogden Nature Center or remote
 Members' Roundtable: Bring your ideas for upcoming programs! See pg. 1 for details.

18 Wednesday 8:30am bird walk Kay's Creek Trail: Located at 2370 Canyon View Dr., Layton. Meet at the parking lot which can be reached off Hwy. 193. Accessibility: **P B L** Leader-Ben

21 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. Accessibility: **R P L B** Trip leader - John Bellmon

25 Wednesday 8:30am bird walk South Ogden Nature Park. Meet at the trailhead for the nature walk. Parking for the trailhead is at 5981 Park Vista Dr., south of the Ogden Athletic Club. Accessibility: **B P/U M** Leader-Dan/John

FEBRUARY

1 Wednesday 8:30am bird walk Layton Commons Park: 437 North Wasatch Drive. Layton, UT 84041. Meet at the parking lot in the horseshoe by the outside playground northeast of Surf and Swim. Accessibility: **R P/U B L** Leader-Ben

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

8 Wednesday 8:30am bird walk Glasmann Pond in Ogden: Meet in the parking area by the bathrooms. The pond is adjacent to McKay Dee Hospital and is located off Oakcrest Dr. Turn left towards MKDH and then the first left as if continuing down towards the hospital's ER. The turn-off for the pond/parking is on the left. Accessibility: **U B M** Leader-Ben

15 Wednesday 8:30am bird walk Great Salt Lake Nature Center, Farmington: Meet in the parking lot. 1157 S. Waterfowl Way (1100 W Glovers Lane) Farmington. Accessibility: **R P/U L B** Leader-Colin/Ben

21 Tuesday 7:00pm WAS Meeting Ogden Nature Center or remote
 A representative of the Western Aspen Alliance at Utah State University talk to us about the state of Aspen Trees in the West. See details on pg. 1.

22 Wednesday 8:30am bird walk Riverdale Trail South: Meet at the trailhead off Riverdale Road at 700 W. Accessibility: **R P L B** Leader- Dan/John

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Calendar

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25 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 and Rough-legged Hawk. Trip leader - John Bellmon. Accessibility: **R P L B**

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	

MARCH

1 Wednesday 8:30am bird walk

Farmington Pond/Mouth of Farmington Canyon, Farmington: Meet in the lower parking lot at 750 N 75 W Farmington. Accessibility **R P L B** Leader-Colin/Ben

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

The Wonders of Winter Birding



Antelope Island Sunrise Caravan—Jay Hudson

This photo is a great reminder of why we like winter birding. It's beautiful, it's quiet, there are no crowds—AND there are still birds to find! They may be harder or easier to find. They may be species we don't see at other times of the year. Our bird lists may not be as long as in other seasons. But the winter birding experience is wonderful! Check out the photos and tidbits on the following page and see if you wouldn't like to join us on a winter bird walk or field trip.



Snowboots Required, Jay Hudson (Beus Pond)



Wet Seat Birding, Jay Hudson (Beus Pond)



A Happy Winter Birding Group, Lynn Carroll
Story below



Beus Pond, Jay Hudson

Wednesday Dec. 7 was not technically winter, but it was cold. Nonetheless, we had a very enjoyable walk. Cedar Waxwings entertained everyone gobbling berries from a tree by the parking lot, oblivious of us standing a few yards away. A Cooper's Hawk announced itself by flying along the river at about eye level, and Dan found us a dipper. Dan, Rebecca, John, Jen and I lasted the whole two hours.



Wasatch Audubon Society

P.O. Box 3211
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AUDUBON Membership Application

Membership in **Audubon** automatically enrolls you as a member of **Wasatch Audubon**. When you join, you will receive four issues of **Audubon** magazine and six issues of our chapter newsletter, **The Mountain Chickadee**, each year. To join as a new member with an introductory fee of **\$20**, please go to the following website:

<http://action.audubon.org/donate/chapter-membership?chapter=W54>

(By using this special page, you give our chapter credit toward a monetary reward)

Local Chapter: Wasatch Audubon Society – W54

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!

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



WASATCH AUDUBON SOCIETY MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE SUBSCRIPTION

You can receive the Mountain Chickadee (6 issues) for just \$12, without joining National Audubon. If you would like to support Wasatch Audubon's education and conservation efforts, please indicate the amount of your contribution and include it in your check. Thank you.

___ 1-YEAR MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE SUBSCRIPTION: \$12.00

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