



SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2013

Calendar

All monthly meetings begin at 7:00 pm at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers. Fieldtrip times and meeting places vary; see below or please check the website. You may call 367-2462 for more information.

September 4th – Monthly meeting presentation by Joe and Marta Peddie on the Eagle Nest Watch Program.

September 14th- Field trip to Ft. Apache. Birding and guided tour of fort and museum, \$5/person. Meet at Pinetop McDonald's at 7 am.

October 2nd – Monthly meeting with Deb Brewster, USFS, giving a program on Goshawk research.

October 12th – Field trip to Concho Lake. Meet at Show Low McDonald's at 7 am.

Your Officers

President: Mary Ellen Bittorf 367-2462

Vice-Pres.: Tom Jernigan 532-1510

Secretary: Liz Jernigan 532-1510

Treasurer: Chuck Bittorf 367-2462

Programs: Loretta Pena 368-3380

Field Trips: Kent Schipper 537-7569

Editor: Jody Inman 369-3240

Membership: Position open

Website Manager: Richard Inman 369-3240

Board Members: Kent Schipper, Jody Inman
Richard Inman

Reach us at: www.whitemountainaudubon.org

Out on a Limb with your President...

September is almost upon us, and there is already a hint of fall in the air. One of the great things about bird watching is the chance to see something special, like the other day when a Lazuli Bunting landed on one of our busy feeders. These little birds are very pretty, and they aren't seen here very often. Chuck and I both saw it, and it made our day. I hope you all have similar experiences.

I want to tell you that the field trip for September 14 will be to Fort Apache. We will meet at McDonald's in Pinetop and travel to Fort Apache. There will be a cost of \$5.00 per person. We will bird for about an hour and a half, then we will have a tour of the museum. This should be an interesting and informative trip, and I hope a lot of you will be able to attend. Please let me know if you will be going because they would like to have a head count.

The July 13th field trip to Show Low Bluff was attended by Liz and Tom Jernigan, Chuck and Mary Ellen Bittorf, and Patricia Warszawski. The day was beautiful, and we saw quite a lot of birds. They included: Say's Phoebe, Black Phoebe, Meadowlark, Mountain and Western Bluebird, Western Kingbird, Steller's Jay, Barn, Violet-green, Tree, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows, Bullock's Oriole, and Audubon Warbler. It was a great day for birding.

Please don't forget the September 4th meeting when Joe and Martha Peddie will talk about the Bald Eagle Watch Program they do for AZ Game and Fish.

I hope to see you all at the meeting and the field trip, and in the meantime...enjoy birding!

~Mary Ellen



With beautiful fall weather and hundreds of Greater Sandhill Cranes staging in the Yampa Valley before migrating south, September is a perfect time for a visit to Northwest Colorado. The **2nd Annual Yampa Valley Crane Festival** will take place Sept. 6 – 9, 2013 in Steamboat Springs and Hayden, Colorado. It will feature four days of free events including daily crane viewings, nature and bird walks, expert speakers, films, a month-long art show, workshops, children's and family activities, and more. Internationally renowned wildlife photographer and author of *On Ancient Wings The Sandhill Cranes of North America*, Michael Forsberg, will be the keynote speaker. Please **visit** www.coloradocranes.org for a complete festival schedule or our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/YampaValleyCraneFestival> Questions? Email coloradocranes@gmail.com

Newsletter Changes

Jody Inman has kindly agreed to take over being editor of *The Osprey Overlook* for one year. She is learning the process now and has helped a lot on this issue. If any of you have interesting birding reports, sightings or articles that you think would be good for the newsletter, please let Jody know. Her phone number appears on the first page of this issue.

Thanks very much Jody for taking on this job for White Mountain Audubon Society.

~Loretta Pena



Steven D'Amato

"I have had many troubles in my life, but the worst of them never came."
James Garfield

SIGHTINGS

The July 10th sightings that were reported are: Barb Davis saw a **Western Tanager** at her home in Lakeside. At Rainbow Lake, she sighted **Cooper's Hawk, Bald Eagle** and **Green Heron**. Nesting in Sue Sitko's yard at her Lakeside home were the following: **Western Bluebird, White-breasted Nuthatch, Violet-green Swallow** and **Dark-eyed Junco**. Again in Lakeside, Warren Goff reported **Great Blue Heron, Say's Phoebe** and **Dark-eyed Junco**. Liz Jernigan had **Bullock's Orioles** and a pair of **Juniper Titmice** drinking out of the hummingbird feeders in her backyard in Show Low. On a trip to Minnesota and Wisconsin, Jan Newton saw loon, cardinal, **Sandhill Crane, Baltimore Oriole**, and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**. From Alpine, Anne McGregor reported a sighting of **Red-faced Warbler**. Loretta Pena had an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** drinking water at the birdbath.

At the August 7th meeting, these were the sightings: Mary Ellen & Chuck Bittorf reported **White-breasted Nuthatch, Acorn Woodpecker** and **Mountain Chickadee** at their home in Pinetop. In Greer, Diane Dorsay saw **Mountain Bluebird**. Kenci Lewis had grosbeak, nuthatch, jay and hummingbird. Jan Newton reported **Yellow-breasted Chat, Rufous Hummingbird** and **Osprey**. Redding saw **White-breasted Nuthatch, Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Scrub & Stellar Jays, Pygmy Nuthatch, Black-chinned, Rufous & Broad-tailed Hummingbirds**. In Show Low, Loretta Pena sighted **Western Wood Pewee, Broad-tailed Hummingbird** and **Chipping Sparrow**.

Thank you very much everyone for letting us all know what you saw!!

White Mountain Audubon Society Membership/Donation Form

White Mountain Audubon Society membership dues are: **Individual \$15**, or **Family \$25 per year**. Please renew your membership. Your tax-deductible membership supports our on-going programs and activities, as well as future new projects. Your membership and donations do make a difference!!!

MEMBERSHIP _____ DONATION _____

Individual _____

Family _____

Name _____

Date _____

Mailing Address _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

Send this form and your dues or donation to:

**White Mountain Audubon Society
P.O. Box 3043
Pinetop, AZ 85935**

You may use this form for either your Membership renewal or a Donation to WMAS. Please designate above which you are doing. Thank you very much for your support of White Mountain Audubon Society!

August 10th Field Trip to Luna Lake

Mary Ellen, Chuck and I were the only attendees of the August fieldtrip; Chuck was kind enough to drive us there and our first stop was at Nelson Reservoir. We saw Barn Swallows at the north end of the lake and couldn't see any birds on the water from that spot. Next we headed to the southern parking lot and saw lots of Barn Swallows hovering above the sunflowers seemingly in a kind of dance. Mary Ellen identified a Sora by call and I was able to hear the Common Yellowthroat. Neither bird showed itself, but we heard them calling repeatedly from the reeds right in front of us. Mary Ellen used the Sibley app on her Nook to confirm the calls we were hearing. Other species seen here were Mallard young, Coots, Violet-green Swallow, Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe and Lesser Goldfinch. At Luna Lake, there were many Eared Grebes with young of 2 different ages, Cormorant, Great-blue Heron, Ruddy Duck, Brown-headed Cowbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, TV, Raven and we think a Golden Eagle. We were hoping to see hummingbirds at the tackle store there, but the owner didn't put out feeders this year. We saw Barn Swallows and saw young in a nest on the side of the store. We saw Cliff Swallows there flying back and forth to their nests. Here, also, there were a lot of Eared Grebes with young.

We enjoyed lunch at a picnic table near the lake while admiring the many different kinds of wildflowers. The wildflowers reminded Mary Ellen of Dick and Betty Youse and their knowledge of not only birds, but flowers and trees. Former residents of Blue, AZ and members of WMAS, Dick and Betty were fondly remembered. The temperature was perfect with hardly any breeze; large white fluffy clouds filled the sky and overall it was a wonderful day and outing.

~Loretta Pena

White Mountain Nature Film Festival 2013

Last year the board of White Mountain Audubon Society began thinking of ways to raise money to fund our educational programs. After Dr. Fred Peters showed his film titled "Bald Eagles and Bears", at our May 2012 monthly meeting, Mary Ellen realized that we have some wonderful local filmmakers, including our own Barb Davis. She thought we could have a film festival and show nature and wildlife films as a fundraiser. The first film festival was held in October 2012.

This year the WM Nature Film Festival was held June 7-9, 2013, beginning with a reception which was held at Pizzeria Venti in Lakeside. After the buffet dinner, Mary Ellen introduced the filmmakers in attendance and some excellent short films were shown. On Saturday and Sunday a great lineup of nature films were shown at Unity Church in Lakeside.

Sponsors for this year's festival were: **Darby's Restaurant, Hondah Resort, Joy's Furniture, Beverage House, TRACKS Trail Crew, White Mountain Conservation League, Dr. Alcumbrac of WM Animal Hospital and the Red Devil Restaurant. Thank you very much sponsors!!**

Thank you also to **all** who worked on the festival in one way or another- selecting films to be shown, arranging venues for the event, providing technical support and previewing films, judging the films, providing lodging for filmmakers, baking cookies, donating water, selling tickets, advertising the event and projecting the films at Unity. Thanks to the filmmakers who permitted us to show their films and those who came and spoke about the work involved in making the films. Thanks to all of you who came, bought tickets and supported our effort to bring wonderful nature films to the White Mountain communities.

This year's net income was \$1656.52; these monies will allow WMAS to fund Audubon Adventures, the Beginning Birder's Workshop and scholarships for graduating seniors in the White Mountains.

Thanks to each and every one of you for helping to make this event a success!!

~Loretta Pena

www.whitemountainaudubon.org

CONSERVATION

American Bird Conservancy

Last week—out of concern for bees and other pollinators—EPA announced new labeling requirements for four neonicotinoid pesticides. American Bird Conservancy commends EPA for taking this first step. However, as EPA undoubtedly recognizes, this new labeling requirement will not solve the many problems, including impacts to birds, resulting from the use of neonic insecticides. The labels, along with EPA's efforts to address dust drift and to advance Best Management Practices, do not get to the heart of the problem: that these insecticides are systemic (infiltrating the entire plant, including the pollen and the nectar) and persistent (lasting in the environment for months and even years).

We encourage EPA to go beyond this first step to address the toxic effects of neonics. Below is an editorial outlining steps American Bird Conservancy urges EPA to take, in order to protect birds and other wildlife from pesticides.

Note to EPA: Protect the Birds and the Bees

Editorial by Cynthia Palmer, Pesticides Program Manager, American Bird Conservancy

The U.S. EPA has a checkered record when it comes to evaluating pesticides. A case in point is the agency's slow response in regulating the neonicotinoid insecticides, or "neonics," despite extensive scientific evidence of the threat to bees, birds, and other wildlife. A 100-page report by the American Bird Conservancy, *The Impact of the Nation's Most Widely Used Insecticides on Birds*, examined the risks to birds and aquatic systems, including extensive comparisons with the older pesticides that the neonics have replaced. The results reinforce the need for immediate intervention.

Neonics are easily the world's most widely used pesticides, to the point where it is difficult to find a pest-control product that does not contain at least one of these chemicals. The EPA helped make the neonics best-sellers by approving no less than 595 of these products since the 1990s—including nearly 100 different seed treatments—even though the agency's own toxicologists were raising red flags about potential environmental threats. In internal reviews conducted by the EPA, agency scientists voiced concerns about how long it took for neonics to break down, how readily they got into water supplies, and how harmful they could be to pollinators and other wildlife.

We believe those warnings would have been even more dire if the scientists who issued them had gone beyond the agency's antiquated risk assessment protocols. But they did not. Instead, EPA scientists measured the toxicity of neonics to aquatic invertebrates by running tests on a species of freshwater flea that happens to be uniquely insensitive to these chemicals. They evaluated the potential threats to birds by running tests on Mallards and Northern Bobwhites, even though other birds can be ten times more sensitive to pesticides like these.

ABC's review of 200 studies turned up ample evidence that the threats posed by these chemicals are more than theoretical. A single seed treated with the neonic imidacloprid can kill a bird the size of a Blue Jay. One-tenth of a seed per day during egg-laying season can impair reproduction. These pesticides are having dire effects on terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates as well.

Astonishingly EPA does not require that registrants of acutely toxic pesticides develop the tools necessary to diagnose poisoned birds and other wildlife. When you bring a dead bird to a state agency, there is no easy way to identify neonicotinoid poisoning as the smoking gun. Moreover, EPA does not require registrants to report any bird fatalities involving fewer than 200 of a "flocking species," 50 of a songbird species, or five raptors. These 1997 revisions to federal pesticide laws essentially place the agency in a state of enforced ignorance. The feeble reporting requirements, combined with the failure to require development of basic biomarkers, help keep the government in the dark on a range of pesticide effects on wildlife.

In April 2013, the European Union announced a two-year ban on three neonics, effective December 1, in light of the ongoing threat to food production systems. ABC is calling on the EPA to do likewise—to suspend all uses of neonics pending independent review of their effects on birds, terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates, and other wildlife.

Take Action: It's Time for Congress to **Get Serious about Neonicotinoid Pesticides!**

Please write your U.S. Representative TODAY and ask her or him to **support the Save America's Pollinators Act of 2013**. This bill will direct the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to suspend registration for neonicotinoid insecticides, which are causing serious harm to birds, bees, and aquatic life.

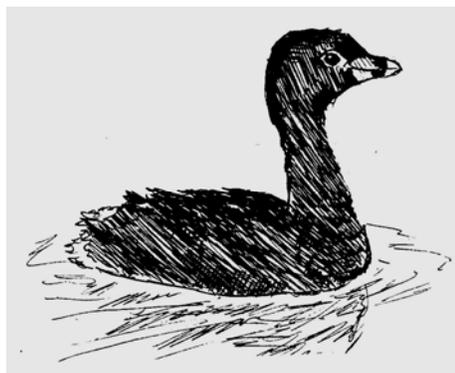
www.whitemountainaudubon.org

DONATIONS

THANKS to each one that has given a donation to White Mountain Audubon Society during 2013 including the following:

White Mountain Women's Club

Arizona Game & Fish Department (Pinetop)



Kirsten Munson

Do you know which bird is the smallest in the world?

The Bee Hummingbird, found only in Cuba, is the world's smallest bird. It is also known as Zunzuncito or Zunzun Hummingbird and compares in size to a bumblebee, weighing less than a penny. They range in size from 2.1 inches to 2.4 inches in length.

(Information is from AvianWeb.com)

BIRD NOTES

Eared Grebe

On our fieldtrip to Luna Lake in August, there were lots of Eared Grebes with young of two different ages. The Eared Grebe is small, narrow-necked, with a thin, slightly upturned beak. It is approximately 12 ½ inches in length. The adult breeding bird is handsome, mostly black with rufous-color on the sides of the body and wispy yellow plumes flaring out behind each eye. They breed in marshes, ponds and lakes, usually having one brood, but on occasion will have two. A floating platform of fresh and decayed vegetation, anchored to emergent vegetation comprises their nest. Their diet is mostly aquatic insects and larvae, fish, crustaceans, mollusks and amphibians and feathers! Yes, they do eat feathers. From *The Birder's Handbook* by Ehrlich, Dobkin and Wheye it states: "Perhaps because the idea of swallowing hair is so unpleasant to us, it is difficult to believe the stories of birds deliberately eating their feathers. Nonetheless, some do and they do so regularly. Grebes, for example, consume their feathers by the hundreds. Feathers taken from parents are found in the stomachs of chicks only a few days old. Fifty percent of the stomach contents of a Horned or Pied-billed Grebe may be feathers."

Their range is the western United States, appearing only rarely in the east. They winter south to Mexico and as far as Guatemala.

The young hatch asynchronously. They swim very well underwater, continually diving and hiding, and remaining submerged with the bill exposed. Chicks ride and are fed on their parent's back.

(Information is from *The Birder's Handbook* by Ehrlich, Dobkin and Wheye.)

To: All Birders

From: Rita Fenwick, American Bird Conservancy

Date: August 14, 2013

Alert: Hummingbird Haven Facing Uncertain Future

Several months ago, American Bird Conservancy board member Victor Emanuel made an impassioned request that American Bird Conservancy help acquire an American birding landmark that had recently come on the market: **Paton's Birder Haven**.

This property, located in **Patagonia, Arizona**, is the loving project of Wally and Marion Paton, who for more than 35 years built their property into a premier Arizona birding site and opened their home to thousands of local, American, and international birders to see Arizona's outstanding hummingbird diversity. Many visited the site for a chance to get a "life" Plain-capped Starthroat, Violet-crowned Hummingbird, or Magnificent Hummingbird for their North American list. The property has passed on to the Paton's children, who would like to honor their parents' labor of love in making the property a memorable, welcoming stop for birders visiting Arizona.

In partnership with Tucson Audubon Society and Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, American Bird Conservancy has entered into a contract with the Paton family to acquire the property and to maintain the property in perpetuity as a hummingbird sanctuary open to visitors. We have raised \$100,000 of the needed funding, but urgently need to raise by October 15th the remaining \$200,000. Once acquired, Tucson Audubon Society will assume long-term ownership and management of the property.

Can you please help by making a donation at <http://www.abcbirds.org/paton/> and by FORWARDING this email to as many birders as you can, encouraging them to click on the link provided and make a donation today? Please post this request for help on blogs, Facebook, Twitter, websites, and any other outlet you think will reach birders who have visited Paton's or plan to in the future. One hundred percent of each tax-deductible donation will be applied to the acquisition and management needs of this historic property. We truly need every dollar to succeed.

Thank you very much for your support and help! Please let me know if you have any questions or you have a favorite picture from Paton's Birder Haven you would like to share.

Learn more ... please give



Kirsten Munson

Where to write

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC 20206
202-456-1111

U.S. Sen. Jeff Flake
B85 Russell Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
www.flake.senate.gov/contact

Gov. Jan Brewer
Executive Tower
1700 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007
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Rep. Albert Hale
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White Mountain Audubon Society is dedicated to the enjoyment of birds and other wildlife by providing environmental leadership and awareness through fellowship, education, community involvement, and conservation programs in the White Mountains and surrounding areas.

**White Mountain Audubon Society
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