



July-August 2014

Calendar

All monthly meetings begin at 6:30 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.

Meetings and Programs:

PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR JULY MEETING IS ALWAYS THE 2ND WEEK OF JULY TO ACCOMMODATE INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS.

July 9: Sarah Porter (Audubon Arizona) – Audubon Western Rivers Action Network Bird Friendly Communities Initiative

Aug. 2: Gabrielle Zornes (Show Low Public Library Children's Librarian) – birds and wildlife on the Big Island of Hawaii

Sept. 3: Paul Green (Tucson Audubon President) – topic to be announced

Oct. 1: Speaker and topic to be announced

Nov. 5: Dr. Ole Alcumbrac (White Mtn. Animal Hospital) – topic to be announced

Dec. 3: Christmas Party Potluck

Field Trips for July and August are pending. Look for an eblast announcement from Liz.

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 and Richard Inman

Reach us at: www.whitemountinaudubon.org

OUT ON A LIMB WITH YOUR PRESIDENT~

The film festival is over and, all in all, I believe it went well. I think we made a little more this year, and everyone seemed to enjoy the dinner. We had seven filmmakers who each talked for a few minutes about their respective films. I then presented each of them with a medallion of participation. I want to thank everyone who furnished cookies for the films, our fine filmmakers, as well as everyone who helped in any way. The dinner at El Rancho Restaurant was very pleasant and everyone there was nice to work with. If any of you have ideas for next year's festival or for films, let me or any board member know.

Birdwatching at the Bittorf's has been very exciting. Over the last two weeks we have seen the following unusual birds: Plumbeous Vireo, Magnificent Hummingbird, Painted Redstart, Red-faced Warbler, Graces Warbler, Goshawk, (who carried off one of my birds) and nesting birds that included: Western Bluebirds, House Wrens, Juncos, White-breasted Nuthatch, Hairy Woodpeckers, and Acorn Woodpeckers. We have been putting out mealy worms for the Bluebirds, and now there seems to be a turf war between the Bluebirds and the Robins over who the mealy worm feeder belongs to. It has been a lot fun to watch all of the activity.

Don't forget that the next meeting will be on Wednesday, the 9th of July at 6:30 p.m. in the P-L council chambers. The speaker for this meeting will be Sarah Porter from the Rio Salado Nature Center in Phoenix. I hope to see you all there.

I hope you all enjoy this summer and.....enjoy birding.

Mary Ellen~

BIRD SIGHTINGS

Besides the birds Mary Ellen reported seeing in her "Out of a Limb" article, the Bittorfs also reported several other great sightings around their home in Pinetop: Spotted Towhee, Western Tanager, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Band Tailed Pigeons, and Three-toed Woodpecker.

Sue Sitko was at Tanque Verde Ranch, on the far east end of Tucson, and went out a couple of mornings to bird. Here's a list of some of the birds she saw: Brown-crested Flycatcher, Cooper's Hawk, Green Heron, Bell's Vireo, Vermilion Flycatcher, Gambel's Quail, Cactus Wren, Abert's Towhee, White-winged Dove, and a few other species. She got good pictures of a turkey napping in a flower pot, then later roosting at the top of a tree:



Sue was also in Minnesota over the first week in June. She got in some birding, and saw 40 species, including: Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Red-eyed Vireo, American Redstart, Warbling Vireo, Cedar Waxwing, Catbird, Baltimore Oriole, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, American Goldfinch, Cardinal, Black-capped Chickadee, and Bald Eagle.

The Inmans took a trip to Oregon and Northern California in May and reported 9 condors and a Northern Shrike at the Vermillion Cliffs, Arizona; 6 Turkeys, Clark's Nutcracker, Merlin Hawk, and Redtail Hawk at Jacob's Lake; 10 Swainson's Hawks, a Northern Harrier, immature Golden Eagle, Horned Lark, and a Kestrel in Beryl, Utah; California Quail, Scrub Jays, Magpies, Goldfinches, House Finches, and White-Crowned Sparrow in Carson City, Nevada; Trumpeter Swan in Susanville, California; White Pelicans south of Paisley, Oregon; Cooper's Hawk, Northern Harrier, and Bald Eagle (with squirrel prey in its talons) at Summer Lake, Oregon; Varied Thrush, Wilson's Warbler, Winter Wren, and Red-Breasted Nuthatch in Breitenbush, Oregon; Tri-Colored Blackbirds, Oystercatchers, Brown Pelicans, Ring-Billed Gulls, Black Turnstones, Willets, Common Murres, Wimbrels, Western Grebes (about 30), Surf Scoters, Osprey, Pelagic Cormorants, Pie-Billed Grebes, Sanderlings, Buffleheads, Cattle Egrets, Double Crested Cormorants, Forster Terns, and Sandpipers in Crescent City, California; Mergansers, Bald Eagle, Forster Terns, Goldeneyes, Great Blue Heron, Osprey (with fish in its talons), a Snowy Plover nest (roped off) at Big Lagoon, California; Canada Geese at the mouth of the Klamath River, California; Lesser Goldfinch, Black-headed Grosbeak, Stellar's Jay, Scrub Jay, Anna's Hummingbird, Tree Swallows, Cliff Swallows, and Ruffed Grouse in the Trinity Alps, California; Western Kingbird and Sandhill Cranes in Fallon, Nevada; and finally Nighthawks and Boat-tailed Grackle in Beatty, Nevada. At home in Pinetop, they also reported 5 Evening Grosbeaks (a first) at their feeder, a Western Tanager pair with a fledgling, and a Flammulated Owl calling behind their house, besides the birds they usually see.

Further sightings reported by Audubon members included Lark Sparrow, seen by Scotty Walker in Wilcox, and Silky Flycatcher, Lazuli Bunting, and Blue Grosbeak, seen by Shirley Bilderback at White Mountain Lakes. The Jernigans and Inmans also took a boat trip to the eagle nest at Show Low Lake and saw an eaglet stretching its wings in the nest and a parent nearby. The Jernigans went back a couple of weeks later and saw no sign of the eaglet or its parents in the area of the nest.

BIRDATHON 2014

Again in 2014, Loretta Pena gathered pledges for our annual **Birdathon**. This event has been our primary fundraiser since White Mountain Audubon Society began in 1987. These funds have been used for educational programs including scholarships, Audubon Adventures for schools and libraries, and the Beginning Birder's Workshop. This year, Loretta had more sightings than ever before. Because the North American migration count was on May 10th, Loretta had the help of Gus Hollenback that day; together, they saw a total of 58 species. Adding those birds to the ones Loretta saw in her yard, neighborhood, and on a trip to southern Arizona, Loretta and husband Bob saw a total of 75 species.

Some of the birds seen on the migration count were: Snowy Egret, Spotted Sandpiper, Western Grebe, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Mockingbird, Spotted Towhee, and Black Phoebe. They birded at Pintail and Telephone Lakes, Fool Hollow State Park, the sewage ponds in Show Low, and the NPC Campus. In Green Valley and Madera Canyon, some of the birds seen were: Cordilleran Flycatcher, Mexican Jay, Broad-billed Hummingbird, Turkey, and Vermillion Flycatcher.

NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT (NAMC)

The 2014 (NAMC) for Apache and Navajo Counties was held on Saturday, May 10, 2014. White Mountain Audubon members Richard Inman (local coordinator), Jody Inman, and Liz and Tom Jernigan surveyed birds at Sipes Ranch, Nelson Reservoir, in the town and wetlands in Nutrioso, the Alpine wetlands, Luna Lake, William's Valley, and Sierra Blanca Lake. The highlights of this particular area of the survey included a large population of Eared Grebes, Ruddy Ducks, Cinnamon Teals, and a nesting Bald Eagle at Luna Lake, several Evening Grosbeaks at Sipes Ranch and in Nutrioso (town), Horned Larks at Sipes Ranch, Blue-winged Teal at Sierra Blanca Lake, and Redhead ducks at the Alpine wetlands. These birds stood out because we don't see them that often. Overall, there were 6 teams counting birds in Apache County this year, with 14 participants (that includes the 4 White Mountain Audubon members mentioned above), with a total count of 139 species, including 14 species new to Apache County. The final count tally was 4,229 birds. If you want to join us next year, please contact Richard Inman, (928) 369-3240, email rinman@frontiernet.net.

"A free bird leaps on the back of the wind and floats downstream till the current ends and dips his wings in the orange sun rays and dares to claim the sky"

~ Maya Angelou

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CONSERVATION

“Coffee Bird”: Western Tanager (article from “American Bird Conservancy”)

It's an eye-catching mixture of red, yellow, and black. But the Western Tanager can be surprisingly inconspicuous during the breeding season, since it spends its time high in the treetops.

This tanager breeds farther north than any other member of its mostly tropical family. In winter, though, it joins [Ruby-throated Hummingbird](#), [Wood Thrush](#), and dozens of other migrants in Mexico and Central America, where shade coffee farms provide important habitat absent from the "sun" coffee farms that are rapidly replacing them.

On [Gaia Estate in Nicaragua](#), a family-owned farm, observers have seen up to 110 Western Tanagers in a day's time, making it one of the most common overwintering species. The farm is thought to host up to 150 bird species annually, in stark contrast to the deforested areas so common in the country.

Supporting [Bird Friendly® coffee](#) produced by such farms is an important way to keep Western Tanagers and other "coffee birds" common. ([Read more about Gaia Estate and its birds.](#)) The once-common Wood Thrush has declined rapidly because of deforestation in Central America, as "[Save the Wood Thrush](#)" by expert Bridget Stutchbury describes.



Like the [Golden-cheeked](#), [Golden-winged](#), and [Hermit Warblers](#), the Western Tanager benefits from ABC's [Quercus and Aves program](#), which protects habitat on its breeding and wintering grounds.

Western Tanagers glean insects from leaves and branches, and fly out to catch aerial insects (called **hawking** or **sallying**). In fact, the red face of the Western Tanager is due to rhodoxanthin, a pigment rarely found in birds, which the tanager probably gets from its insect diet. In winter, the birds switch to fruit, berries, and nectar.

If you'd like to help the Western Tanager, buy Bird Friendly coffee—and spread the word. At ABC, we like [Birds and Beans](#) for superior flavor, easy ordering, and of course, its Bird Friendly certification, which signifies the best benefits for birds.

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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
P. O. Box 3043
Pinetop, AZ 85935**

If you find distressed songbirds, raptors including eagles, waterfowl and small mammals, please contact Susan Taggart at (928) 242-5796. If you are unable to reach her and need assistance immediately, you may call the White Mountain Animal Hospital in Lakeside at (928) 368-8425 or Alta Sierra Veterinary Clinic in Show Low (928) 537-2880. Susan works in conjunction with the animal hospitals and is sub-permitted through the Arizona Game and Fish Department to care for injured and orphaned wildlife as a community service.

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