



NOVEMBER-DECEMBER EDITION 2019

Out on a Limb:

The year, 2019, seems to have flown by much faster than I envisioned that it would. Where do I begin?

First of all, I want you all to know how much I have appreciated knowing and spending time together. Many thanks to our board of directors who work diligently to bring you good programs, enjoyable field trips, special events and outreach programs. My heartfelt appreciation for the wonderful party you gave for Chuck and I lead by Sue Sitko, Barb Davis, Loretta Pena & all the board members including: Tom & Liz Jernigan, Mary Freeman, Joan Patrick, Jody Inman & Rob Bettaso. What a wonderful evening that was. It was so special seeing so many people I hadn't seen in so many years along with the letters and emails that were sent.

I hope all of you will be able to come to the annual Christmas party potluck. This year, it will be held at the Lakeside Fire Department beginning at 5:30pm, with the meal being served at 6:00pm. If your last name begins with A-M, you can bring a side dish or a salad. Or, if your name begins with N-Z you can bring an appetizer or a dessert. However, if any of you have a favorite dish you would like to bring, please feel free to do so.

The December meeting is our annual business meeting and therefore we will be electing officers for 2020. The slate of 2019 officers is listed down below but nominations for 2020 will be accepted for any of the positions.

I walk outside and sit on a bench under an oak tree. I hear him calling - his call is loud, raucous, and demanding. Stellar's Jay wants a peanut! Everything is silent and in the silence, Stellar Jay lands on a limb above me and sings a beautifully, poignant song.

The moment is forever special. Perhaps someday he will sing to you...Enjoy birding.

Mary Ellen

White Mountain Audubon Society (WMAS) 2019 Chapter Officers:

President: Mary Ellen Bittorf 367-2462

Vice-President: Tom Jernigan 532-1510

Secretary: Liz Jernigan	532-1511
Treasurer: Chuck Bittorf	367-2462
Field Trips: Rob Bettaso	368-8481
Newsletter: Rob Bettaso	368-8481
Webmaster: Allen Vicker	
Membership: Mary Freemon	205-8597

Board Members (2019):

Mary Ellen Bittorf, Chuck Bittorf, Tom Jernigan, Liz Jernigan, Joan Patrick, Jody Inman, Mary Freemon, Kathy Dahnk, Rob Bettaso.

CALENDAR

All monthly programs/meetings begin at 6:30 pm on the first Wednesday of the month (except in January and February). Please note that all upcoming meetings are at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers, 325 W. White Mountain Blvd until future notice.

You may call Mary Ellen Bittorf (928-367-2462) for more information on monthly meetings and special events. For information on field trips please direct your calls to Rob Bettaso (928-368-8481).

2019 Upcoming Monthly Programs:

White Mountain Audubon has two more meetings in 2019. Check below for location change for December.



November 6- Dave Cagle will give us a tour of the West African country of Burkina Faso to experience local wildlife and interesting citizens. Dave will have video and photo of wildlife, including lots of birds, lions, elephants, and antelope. Meet at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall, 325 W. White Mountain Blvd., Pinetop-Lakeside.

December 4 - Holiday Party & Pot Luck. Travel to west Texas with Sue Sitko as she describes the birds, history, and experiences she and her husband had at Big Bend and Fort Davis, and how a little bird made her hike up a mountain. Bring a dish to share. Last name A – M bring side dishes and salads; N – Z bring desserts and appetizers (or feel free to bring one of your favorite things). The Bittorfs will bring a ham. Meet at the **Timber Mesa Fire Department meeting room, 2922 W. White Mountain Blvd., Lakeside.** Let's get together at 5:30 pm and we'll plan to feast at 6:00 pm. We will also hold our annual election of new WMAS Officers so come prepared to run (or to nominate someone to run).

2019 Field Trip Schedule:

The 2019 field trips season has come to a close. Please join us again in March 2020 when field trips will resume.

A BIRDER'S RIDDLE

By Rob Bettaso

(Answer to the Sept-Oct riddle was: Common Nighthawk)

My "Family" of birds is large,
With over 40 species in the West.
However, we are united in one regard,
As we all consider webbed feet the best.

Within my "Family" I have a "Tribe,"
We dabble in wetlands to feed.
Aquatic plants we eat to survive,
Though we'll take aquatic bugs if we need.

From a pond, we fly straight up,
No running on the water for us.
Frighten us and we will erupt,
So please, cause us no fuss.

Our drakes are subtle in their hues,
You will see them as gray with black rumps.
But look close; they have fine barring of fawn and slate-blue,
Never drab, they still take their lumps.

Our hens are mottled brown,
With yellow feet and white on wings.
She quacks; it's her only sound,
But then, no-one expects her to sing.

Around Pinetop and Show Low,
You'll find us year round.
When the cold wind blows,
We can really hunker down.

Of all the dabbling ducks,
Rob likes us best.
He wishes us good luck,
When hunters take no rest.

A Note from John W. Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

I wanted you to be among the first to know that a new study—led by Cornell Lab of Ornithology scientists—has found that **the breeding population of birds in the U.S. and Canada has dropped nearly 30% since 1970.** The study, published in the journal *Science* today by Cornell Lab scientists Ken Rosenberg, Adriaan Dokter, and Laura Helft, and collaborators at six other institutions—found that nearly 3 billion birds have vanished in our lifetime. These staggering losses have occurred across all habitats, from grasslands to the Arctic, shorelines to forests—and have taken a massive toll on even common species, such as sparrows, warblers, blackbirds.

If you have ever contributed citizen-science data or know someone who has, consider this: the findings emerged from new techniques to detect the volume of migratory birds aloft using weather radar, as well as nearly 50 years of bird-monitoring data, including citizen-science records. They show what we might not have perceived

otherwise—a rapid loss of more than a quarter of our nations’ bird populations.

This new knowledge is a wake-up call—a signal that our natural systems are losing the ability to support the richness and diversity of life that they once did just decades ago. Because you are part of our choir of people who love birds and nature, we need you more than ever to join us in lifting collective voices and influencing change.

Birds are resilient when we give them a chance—the data show that too. Waterfowl are up by 56%, and raptors have increased by 200% thanks to focused conservation funding and protections.

I urge you to share today’s news with your friends and communities. Consider how you can influence change—whether social, civic, or personal—to raise awareness and help bring birds back.

To read more about the findings and how you can help, please visit Birds.Cornell.edu/BringBirdsBack.

REMINDERS:

At our December meeting we will hold, as usual, the annual elections for Officer and Board member positions for the Chapter. Please join us and feel free to nominate yourself or somebody else who would enjoy serving as an Officer in 2020 and perhaps beyond. It is great fun to be a Chapter Officer and we welcome new energy and perspectives.

Have you paid your annual membership dues? If not, a friendly reminder that WMAS relies on membership dues for such important Chapter actions as our annual Scholarship Awards to White Mountain area graduating seniors who have expressed an interest in pursuing a career in natural history, conservation, and other related fields. Thank you for helping us to continue to make such programs a regular part of our Chapter mission. Note that the Donation form is at the end of every Newsletter.

Some Other Recent Bird Sightings From Around Our Region: Migrants are on the move & it is a good time to watch for shorebirds at local waters. Sparrows & finches are also on the move including some that head further south and others that will be winter residents.

White Mountain Membership or Donation Form

White Mountain Audubon Society chapter membership dues are: Individual \$15 or Family \$25 per year. Please renew your membership every January. 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 (\$15) _____ Family (\$25) _____

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! LIKE US ON FACEBOOK.

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

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