



## NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2010

### CALENDAR

**All monthly meetings begin at 7:00 pm at Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers in Lakeside. Fieldtrips meet at Pinetop McDonald's at 7:00 am, unless stated otherwise.**

**November 3-** Monthly meeting speaker will be Dan Groebner with AZ Game & Fish Department who will speak about Bald Eagles in AZ.

**November 20-** Fieldtrip to Pintail Lake and possibly other area lakes. For Show Low residents, meet at Chase Bank at 7:30 am.

**December 1<sup>st</sup>**- Christmas Party at 6:00 pm at Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers. See article inside.

**December 18<sup>th</sup>**- Christmas Bird Count; see article inside

**(There are no monthly meetings in January & February.)**

### YOUR OFFICERS

<b>President:</b> Mary Ellen Bittorf	367-2462
<b>Vice Pres.:</b> Tom Jernigan	532-1510
<b>Secretary:</b> Liz Jernigan	532-1510
<b>Treasurer:</b> Chuck Bittorf	367-2462
<b>Programs:</b> Loretta Pena	368-3380
<b>Editor:</b> Loretta Pena	368-3380
<b>Membership:</b> Mary Gordon	537-0447

**Board Members:** Mary Gordon, Steve Gordon, Kent Schipper, Lloyd Pentecost and Doris Raspa

**Reach us at: [www.whitemountainaudubon.org](http://www.whitemountainaudubon.org)**

### Out on a Limb with Your President~

As 2010 comes to an end, I want to thank all of you who have joined White Mountain Audubon society, donated, attended meetings and / or fieldtrips, attended special events. I hope you have enjoyed your year with us. Your Audubon board has worked to make this a good year, and I want to thank all of them for their work and dedication. I also want to thank Loretta Pena for the wonderful speakers that she lined up for us and Diane Dorsay for always having refreshments. Thanks to Bobbi and Sam Goode for the raffles, and to Tom Jernigan for selling bird seed. Doris Raspa has taken care of publicity for us. Tom and Liz were responsible for the Camp-Out in June, and Tom and Liz, Steve & Mary Gordon, Sue Sitko, Doris Raspa, and Lloyd Pentecost did the Beginning Birder's Workshop. Chuck and I and Diane Dorsay were at the Hummingbird Banding at Sipe Wildlife Area in June. As you can see, we had a busy year. Best wishes to Bobbi and Sam Goode, as they have had some serious health issues this past year. Chuck Bittorf is having knee replacement surgery in October, and Doris Raspa is having hip replacement surgery in December. I wish you all a speedy recovery.

### Don't forget to get your newsletter off the web site.

We will mail the newsletter to those of you who have requested us to so. In your newsletter is a ballot for next year's officers. Please mail it in so your vote can be counted. The Christmas party will be on December 1st at the Town Center. It will again be a potluck, and we will begin at 6:00 p.m. Chuck and I will furnish either a ham or a turkey (depending on my timeline). If your name starts with A thru H, bring a vegetable or salad, I thru Z bring dessert or appetizers.

I want to wish you all a wonderful Holiday season, and Best Wishes for the New Year, 2011!! and...enjoy birding!!!

~Mary Ellen

## 25 TOP BIRDING WEBSITES

(from Birding.com Go to Birding.com and read a brief description of each website and then enjoy some fun surfing.)

1. Patuxent Wildlife Research Center
2. FatBirder
3. Cornell lab of ornithology
4. Bird Studies Canada/Bird Links to the World
5. Birding.About.com
6. BirdSource
7. eNature.com
8. American Birding Association
9. Dutch Birding
10. Bird Cinema
11. Minnesota Ornithologists' Union
12. Texas ornithological society
13. Surfbirds.com
14. Where do you want to go birding today?
15. Birding on the Net
16. Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center
17. Birdlife International
18. Owl Pages
19. UtahBirds.org
20. Birdwatching Australia
21. The Tennessee Ornithological Society
22. Wildbirds.com
23. Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory
24. Ebird
25. The Maryland Ornithological Society

### Submissions Welcome

Have you taken a trip and seen some different birds or have you had seen unusual birds in your area? Would you be interested in telling other readers of the *Osprey Overlook* about your experiences? Send submissions to [lbpena1@cableone.net](mailto:lbpena1@cableone.net)

[www.whitemountainaudubon.org](http://www.whitemountainaudubon.org)

## BIRD SIGHTINGS

The following birds were reported:

Diane Dorsay saw a **Mountain Bluebird** at Woodland Lake Park. Pat Calkins sighted **Blue-throated Hummingbird** and **Dark-eyed Junco** in her back yard in Pinetop. She also saw **Mallard** and **Coot** at McNary Pond. Pete and Mary Jane Milne had a female **Hepatic Tanager**, **White-breasted Nuthatch**, **Mountain Chickadee**, **Hairy** and **Acorn Woodpecker**, **Northern Flicker**, **Dark-eyed Junco** and **Stellar Jay** in their yard in Lakeside. Kathryn Melsted reported **Stellar's Jay**. In Show Low, Doris Raspa saw a **Summer Tanager** in her yard. The Bittorf's had **Band-tailed Pigeon**, **Mourning Dove**, **Pygmy Nuthatch**, **White-breasted Nuthatch**, **Mountain Chickadee**, and **Cassin's Finch**. At Hawley Lake, they saw **Common Mergansers** and **Ruddy Ducks**. The Penas saw **Soras** and **Red-naped Sapsucker** at Pintail Lake and also had a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** in their yard in Show Low. While kayaking at Show Low Lake Dee Oster and Loretta Pena saw 5 **Cattle Egret**. They also saw an **Eared Grebe** later in the fall, again at Show Low Lake. Gus Hollenbeck reported a **Magnificent Hummingbird** in the area east of Snowflake and an **Anna's Hummingbird** in Show Low.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS IN DECEMBER

The following people are presently officers for White Mountain Audubon Society and are willing to serve again:

Mary Ellen Bittorf – President  
Tom Jernigan - Vice President  
Liz Jernigan - Secretary  
Chuck Bittorf - Treasurer  
Steve Gordon - Board Member  
Mary Gordon - Board Member  
Lloyd Pentecost - Board Member  
Kent Schipper - Board Member  
Doris Raspa - Board Member

There will be elections December 1<sup>st</sup> at the Christmas Party at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers. If you are unable to attend the 12-01-10 party, please complete the ballot below and send it to the address listed on the ballot.



### ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS IN DECEMBER

President \_\_\_\_\_ Board Member \_\_\_\_\_

Vice-Pres. \_\_\_\_\_ Board Member \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Board Member \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_ Board Member \_\_\_\_\_

Board Member \_\_\_\_\_

Send to WMAS, P. O. Box 3043, Pinetop, AZ 85935

## CONSERVATION

### Six Months Later: Audubon Reports on the Louisiana Coast

Recently, Audubon released a new report on the status of birds and oil along the Louisiana Coast. Its findings—and its warning that the future of birds and the region's ecosystems remain uncertain because oil and other threats are still too close for comfort—are the result of recent field surveys conducted by a team of Audubon scientists. They returned to Louisiana, nearly six months after BP's Deepwater Horizon disaster began spewing oil into the Gulf, to assess the health and overall condition of birds and coastal habitat, visiting some heavily oiled sites as well as some that received little or no oiling.

The Audubon team, led by Chief Scientist Tom Bancroft, found plentiful birds that appeared both resilient and loyal to their normal habitats as the tragedy's six-month anniversary approached. But the team also found cause for concern, as expressed by Audubon President David Yarnold:

*"People shouldn't be fooled into thinking that the danger to birds and the environment is over just because the oil stopped flowing. It's going to take years of monitoring just to understand and start dealing with the long-term impacts of the oil—and they're just part of a much bigger threat."*

This report leaves no doubt that Audubon's ongoing work in the Gulf—both in direct response to the spill and to address long-term environmental threats facing the region—is more important than ever.

Go to [nationalaudubon.org](http://nationalaudubon.org) and view an audio slide show of the region.

### CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2010

December 18, 2010

This year will be the 111<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count. Between December, 14<sup>th</sup> and January 10<sup>th</sup> volunteers will participate in an event that has become a tradition for over one hundred years. Families and students, birders and scientists, binoculars in hand, go out on an annual mission to count the birds.

Each of the participants who braves snow, wind or rain to take part in this count makes a huge contribution to conservation. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations and to help guide conservation action. The count in 2010-2011, will help scientists understand the impact of the Gulf oil spill on wildlife.

Those who take part in the CBC do so for the love of birds and the excitement of friendly competition and the knowledge that their work is making a difference for science and bird conservation.

We will **meet at Darby's Restaurant at 7:00 am** for breakfast. Then we will break up into teams and bird our specific area. We'll decide on a place to meet for lunch before we head out. After lunch, we go back out and continue the count until dark, if you have the time. Those of you who are unable to take part in the outdoor count may count birds at your feeders. Compile your results (how many of each species you see) and the following day you call Mary Ellen with your results. There is a \$5 fee for each participant.

Remember to wear layered clothing, bring water, snacks, binoculars, bird guide, tablet, pen, and plan for a wonderful day of winter birding.

For more information you may call **Mary Ellen at 367-2462**.

[www.whitemountainaudubon.org](http://www.whitemountainaudubon.org)

## White Mountain Audubon Local Chapter Donation Form

White Mountain Audubon Society needs your **tax-deductible donation** to support our on-going programs and activities, as well as future new projects. **Your funds do make a difference!!**

**YES!** I would like to donate: \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your donation and this form to: White Mountain Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 3043  
Pinetop, AZ 85935

**PLEASE NOTE** that in our January and March newsletters, you will find our annual membership dues form. In our other newsletters (May, July, September, and November,) you will find this "general donation" form, which will now be used for donations above and beyond your \$10 dues. **Please use this form only for donations other than your membership dues. THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!**

### MANY THANKS TO SUPPORTERS OF WHITE MOUNTAIN AUDUBON

Robert Gahagan  
Joan McEachen  
Ria Ratcliffe  
Steve & Sherri Beardsley  
Anna Hollenbeck  
Carol Sletten  
Maya Chilcott  
Durene Legros-Ferguson  
Jeanne Stiteler

Mary Jane Milne  
Gus Hollenbeck  
Bobbi Goode  
Darlene Brinkerhoff  
Warren Goff  
Robert Clark  
Danielle Michael  
AZ Game & Fish Department

Donations to the White Mountain Audubon Society are **greatly appreciated** because they help us to give a \$1000.00 scholarship each year to a graduating senior in the White Mountains, provide Audubon Adventures to 50 classrooms and libraries, send out six newsletters each year, sponsor a Beginning Birder's Workshop, participate in Science Takes Wings, the Wildlife Expo, and pay our speakers who must travel more than 100 miles. This year, even though we will not be printing as many newsletters, we are changing web masters and updating our website, and there will be expense involved. Thank you all again for your contributions to White Mountain Audubon. I hope you have all enjoyed your year of bird watching; I hope you will all come back, bring a friend...and enjoy birding!!!!

~Mary Ellen

[whitemountainaudubon.org](http://whitemountainaudubon.org)

### September Fieldtrip 9-18-10

About 15 birders carpooled to Silver Creek Hatchery and Wildlife area on Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>. We expected to meet up with the Game and Fish ranger right away and get the tour of the facility, but didn't encounter him immediately. So, not to waste our precious early morning hours, we started upstream. The **Violet Green Swallows, Barn Swallows and Tree Swallows** were everywhere. We even spotted a nest in the eave of a building. **House Finches** dotted telephone lines and fence posts. Other species seen in and around the junipers were **Northern Flickers**, a **Rufous Hummingbird**, **Broadtail Hummingbirds**, a **Black Phoebe**, a **Say's Phoebe**, and a **Lesser Goldfinch**. Our group was strung out along the stream but we all managed to gather at one spot by the stream where a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was taking a bath. The sunlight caught the black, gray and white contrasts; it was really striking! As we continued on we saw **Mountain Chickadees, Scrub Jays, Dark-eyed Juncos, Common Ravens, American Crows, Turkey Vultures, and Great Blue Herons**. Other creatures along the creek were a Garter Snake and a Frog.

By the time we got back to parking area, we met up with the Game & Fish Ranger. I would say we got the "grand tour". First he pointed out where the elk had been chewing on tree leaves right next to the parking area; he had heard them the night before. We then got in our cars and drove up to the first hatchery pond where the fry are initially introduced. Those trout were approaching adult size and made quite a splash when the feed was thrown in the stream. We even saw the spring which provides the water for that beautiful creek. We then convened further downstream where even bigger trout were being raised. It was a fine day for birding and visiting with new and old friends.

September was the perfect time of year to visit Silver Creek.

~Liz Jernigan

### October Fieldtrip 10-16-10

The Milnes, Bittorfs and I all arrived at McDonald's in Pinetop and waited for more birders, but none came. The Bittorfs were unable to go out birding, so Pete and Mary Jane and I changed the plan and headed over to Big Springs.

Usually right at the beginning of the walk, there are Lewis Woodpeckers flying from snag to snag; today however there were none to be seen.

We three started out and near the wooden bridge saw a Ruby-crowned Kinglet and some sparrows. None of us could ID them in their fall plumages.

As we followed the path to the spring, few birds were out and about. In the water we saw Mallards, Coots, and Pied-billed Grebe. We found sunny seats on the benches at the amphitheater and enjoyed sharing bird stories and sighted Northern Flicker, Raven and Dark-eyed Junco. It was not a productive birding day, but we had a wonderful visit and enjoyed the time at Big Spring.

~Loretta Pena

### Audubon Round-Up 2010 November 11-14-2010

Join other Auduboners for an unusual learning experience in the high Sonoran Desert along beautiful Salt River at Saguario Lake Ranch ([www.saguarolakeranch.com](http://www.saguarolakeranch.com)). All Audubon Chapters in AZ, NM, Utah, Nevada and Colorado are invited to attend. There will be learning opportunities to benefit your Chapter's projects and your chapter's sustainability, networking, "down time", for fun and relaxed friend-making and excellent Sonoran Desert birding.

To register and obtain more information go to Sonoran Audubon Society website at [www.sonoranaudubon.org](http://www.sonoranaudubon.org) and click Roundup. You may email Karen LaFrance at [klaf@cox.net](mailto:klaf@cox.net) for more information also.

[whitemountainaudubon.org](http://whitemountainaudubon.org)

## BIRD NOTES

### Sora

Recently at Pintail Lake, Bob and I spent some time watching four Soras as they fed along the edge of the cattails and reeds. They darted in and out and at times walked a short distance from the plants in full view. We were able to see them very well.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology says:

"A small secretive bird of freshwater marshes, the Sora is the most common and widely distributed rail in North America. It's distinctive descending whinny call can be easily heard from the depths of the cattails, but actually seeing the little marsh-walker is much more difficult."

The Birds of North America Online state:

"Soraras feed primarily on seeds of wetland plants and on invertebrates. Wild rice is a favorite food in late summer and fall. Although appearing to be weak and reluctant fliers, Soraras migrate hundreds of kilometers each spring and fall between breeding and wintering wetlands. Many of the wetlands most important to Soraras rank among the most threatened in the United States, including coastal marshes in California, Florida, Louisiana, New Jersey, and Texas; palustrine emergent wetlands in southern Florida and the Prairie Pothole Region; and western riparian wetlands.

"The Sora is legally hunted in 31 states and 2 Canadian provinces. Bag limits are generally liberal, but little information is available on total harvest, population trends, or effect of harvest on populations.

"Key studies of the Sora's breeding biology, ecology, and behavior have been conducted in the midwestern United States by Walkinshaw (1940), Pospichal and Marshall (1954), Tanner and Hendrickson (1956), and Kaufmann (1983, 1987, 1989)."

The Sora is about 8 ¾ inches long. It has a short thick yellow or greenish- yellow bill. The breeding adult is coarsely streaked above with a black facial mask and throat. Its body is grayish-brown and has some white speckling. Male and female have similar plumage but the females are a bit smaller.

White Mountain Audubon Society wishes to extend our heartfelt condolences to Paula, longtime Audubon member, on the loss of her husband, Robert (Bob) Clark.

Robert was a Park Ranger at Fool Hollow State Park for 18 years. He kept us informed of the birds and wildlife that came to the park and lake over the years. Because of him, we knew when the Tundra Swans came in the middle of winter, when the Cliff Swallows arrived and began building their nests and where he had seen the Snowy Egrets. Thank you, Bob.

Robert was a good friend and supporter of White Mountain Audubon Society.

### REMEMBER THE CHRISTMAS PARTY!

Turkey or ham will be provided by the Bittorfs. Please bring a dish to share; if last name begins between A-H, bring a salad or vegetable. If last name begins between I-Z, bring an appetizer or dessert.

Come at 6:00 pm to the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers.

Everyone is welcome!!

## Where to write

President Barack Obama  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, DC 20206

U. S. Sen. Jon Kyl  
702 Hart Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510  
202-225-3121 or  
1-888-355-3588

Gov. Jan Brewer  
Executive Tower  
1700 W. Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
1-800-253-0883  
FAX: 602-542-1381

Rep. Jack Brown  
House Wing  
1700 W. Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
602-542-5219

U.S. Cong. Ann Kirkpatrick  
1123 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
202-225-2315

U.S. Sen. John McCain  
111 Russell Senate  
Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510  
202-224-2235

Sen. Sylvia Allen  
House Wing  
1700 W. Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
602-926-4480  
FAX: 602-417-3224

**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**