



MAY-JUNE EDITION 2020

Out on a Limb by Mary Freemon (WMAS Memberships Officer & Board Member):

It's rather sad to be stuck in the house in self-isolation because of something I can't even see as the world outside is turning to Spring! The trees and daffodils are blooming and the grass is turning green again. The birds are splashing in my birdbath, butterflies are flitting aimlessly through the air, and two little cottontail bunnies have taken up residence in the lot across the street... all without a care about COVID-19!

The robin is back and the spotted towhee - my personal favorite - along with several black chinned sparrows, juncos and others. I'm looking forward to warmer weather so I can sit outside... and the return of the hummingbirds!!

It's just a reminder that life and nature goes on no matter what we do or think we can control. Oh, to be a bird right now!



Photo of two Barred Owls by Ann Freemon (taken in her backyard in Everett, WA)

White Mountain Audubon Society (WMAS) 2020 Chapter Officers:

President: Mary Ellen Bittorf 367-2462
Vice-President: Tom Jernigan 532-1510
Secretary: Liz Jernigan 532-1511
Treasurer: Tom Jernigan 532-1510
Field Trips: Rob Bettaso 368-8481
Newsletter: Rob Bettaso 368-8481
Webmaster: Allen Vicker
Membership: Mary Freemon 205-8597

Board Members (2020):

Mary Ellen Bittorf, Chuck Bittorf, Tom Jernigan, Liz Jernigan, Joan Patrick, Mary Freemon, Rob Bettaso, Mary Williams.

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 Liz Jernigan (928-532-1511) for more information on monthly meetings and special events. For information on field trips please direct your calls to Rob Bettaso (928-368-8481).

Please note: Both the 2020 programs and field trips have been planned & scheduled but, unfortunately, are indefinitely suspended due to COVID19. Emails will be the most logical way for us to keep you posted as to when we are able to safely resume our 2020 schedule.

A BIRDER'S RIDDLE (as told by the male of the species) by Rob Bettaso

Note: the answer to our Nov-Dec Birder's Riddle was the Gadwall

I wintered down south, ol' Mexico way,
But I'm back now & plan to stay.
My family includes: towhees, longspurs & juncos,
As well as old world buntings & sparrows.

I'm proud to say, I'm one of the latter,
We're often in flocks, but know how to scatter.
You'll find us in piney-oak woods and tall grassy fields,
Feasting on seeds, fruits & tasty bug meals.

I'm small, slim & long-tailed year-round,
But during breeding, I sport a chestnut crown.
Below said crown, a streak of white,
Then next, an eye line that's a bold black stripe.

Breeding or non-breeding adults have clear breasts,
Sure, it's a dingy grey, but it suits us best.
Juvies however, have finely streaked chests,
Perhaps it helps them, hide in their nests.

Our song, should you ask, is a dry, chipping rattle,
It has only one pitch, no real cry to battle.
Although we are common throughout this great country,
Don't take us for granted, that's a simple affrontery.

Something to Consider from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

7 Simple Ways to Help Birds (the 7 point list below is a repeat/refresher from previous Newsletters, but, further below we focus, for the first time, on item number 3):

- 1. Make Windows Safer, Day and Night

Simple adjustments to your windows can save birds' lives.

- 2. Keep Cats Indoors

Indoor cats live longer, healthier lives. Outdoor cats kill more birds than any other non-native threat.

- 3. Reduce Lawn by Planting Native Species

The U.S. has 63 million acres of lawn. That's a huge potential for supporting wildlife.

- 4. Avoid Pesticides

Look for organic food choices and cut out some of the 1 billion pounds of pesticides used in the U.S. each year.

- 5. Drink Coffee That's Good for Birds

Shade-grown coffees are delicious, economically beneficial to farmers, and help more than 42 species of North American songbirds.

- 6. Protect Our Planet From Plastics

91% of plastics are not recycled, and they take 400 years to degrade.

- 7. Watch Birds, Share What You See

Bird watchers are one of science's most vital sources of data on how the ecological world is faring.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird feeds from native honeysuckle. Photo by David M. Shipper/Audubon Photography Awards.

3. Reduce Lawn, Plant Natives:

The challenge: Birds have fewer places to safely rest during migration and to raise their young: More than 10 million acres of land in the United States were converted to developed land from 1982 to 1997 ([source](#)).

The cause: Lawns and pavement don't offer enough food or shelter for many birds and other wildlife. With more than 40 million acres of lawn in the U.S. alone ([source](#)), there's huge potential to support wildlife by replacing lawns with native plantings.

Add native plants, watch birds come in: Native plants add interest and beauty to your yard and neighborhood, and provide shelter and nesting areas for birds. The nectar, seeds, berries, and insects will sustain birds and diverse wildlife.

Get started today:

- [Find out which native plants are best for your area](#)

UPDATES & REMINDERS:

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.

Also, if you are not a member of the National Audubon Society, we encourage all Chapter members to join the national organization. Information on joining the national organization is easy as you only need to type "National Audubon Society" into your internet search engine to obtain the simple instructions for joining.

At our December meeting we opened the floor to nominations for 2020 Officer and Board member positions for the Chapter. Amongst those in attendance, no nominations were offered, nor had any nominations been made in advance of the meeting. So, the new Board/Officers are as they were in the previous year with the exception of the addition of Mary Williams to the Board. That said, you should always feel free to offer your assistance to the Board. For that matter, there are some on the Board who are interested in moving on from the Board to focus on other aspects of their lives, so, we are always interested in hearing from anyone who might want to accept the fun challenges of filling a Board or Officer position!

Some Other Recent Bird Sightings From Around Our Region:

We are now in mid- to late Spring and bird life abounds. Many migrant have already passed through our area but there are still some more to come. Many birds are well along in their

breeding and nesting cycle which can make some easier to see, and others, less easy. Things can change rapidly at this time of year, so keep an eye out for new arrivals, departures, and passers-through.

Here are some species that you might see currently in the White Mountains area (grouped in 4's, so easier to remember): 4 types of warblers: Yellow-rumped, Yellow-throat, Yellow, & Painted Redstart; 4 types of swallows you might see include: Violet-green, Rough-winged, Barn, & Purple Martin; 4 types of flycatchers you might see include: Ash-throated, Cordilleran, Black Phoebe, & Say's Phoebe.

P.S. While "e-bird" is generally the most efficient way for our members to learn of bird sightings in our area, you can also feel free to give me a call if you are looking for a particular species or are trying to follow-up on birds that you have heard have recently been reported in the our area (Rob: 928-368-8481 and please leave a message so that I can return your call).

Membership/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 _____ 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! LIKE US ON FACEBOOK.

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**