



## JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2013

### Calendar

All monthly meetings begin at 7:00 pm at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers. Fieldtrip times and meeting places vary, so please check the website or call 367-2462 for more information. There are no regular monthly meetings in January and February.

**March 6th** Speaker for the meeting is unknown at this time.

**March 16th-** Field trip tba. Meet at 7:00am at the Pinetop McDonald's.

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>**- Monthly meeting speaker tba.

**April 20<sup>th</sup>**- Field trip tba.

### 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:** Loretta Pena 368-3380

**Membership:** Position open

**Website Manager:** Richard Inman 369-3240

**Board Members:** Kent Schipper, Jody Inman and Richard Inman

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

### Out on a Limb with your President...

My first order of business is to thank all of the birdwatchers who braved the cold weather on Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup> to do the Christmas Bird Count. It was 18 degrees when they started out, and when it is that cold it is difficult to think about counting birds. The twelve people who came out were: Barb Davis, Sue Sitko, Bob Pena, Loretta Pena, Ann Hillyard, Evelyn Trieman, Julie Bradley, Richard Inman, Jody Inman, Dave Cagle, Cheryl Cagle, and Kent Schipper. I don't have a count for you now, but it will be in the March-April newsletter.

As we begin 2013, I have been thinking about gifts that we all enjoy. Some of these "gifts" include our sight, hearing, speech, mobility, and sense of smell. The past year has made me more aware of these because I have struggled with my loss of vision due to Macular Degeneration, and more recently a pesky cataract. Fortunately, the cataract was removed just before Christmas, and vision is a little better, but I have to adjust to the fact that my vision won't ever be the same. I had reached a point where I had trouble identifying new birds because I wasn't seeing colors very well. All of this started me thinking about our "gifts". When we look at birds we absorb, their color, their size, shape, and we often hear their call or their song. It is easy to take all of this for granted. It is the same with other things in nature- the sight of a butterfly, the sound of a stream, the sight and smell of beautiful flowers, watching the antics of animals, the beauty feather patterns or fur patterns. There is a lot to see and do in this natural world, and often we tend to take it all for granted. I have decided to appreciate all of the gifts around me, and maybe you will think about it and do the same. We are all very blessed in many ways. I hope none of you lose any of the wonderful senses that you have, but know that if you do, you always have others to take their place. Always enjoy the things of nature around you, and know that we are all richer for them

I am very thankful for all of you whom I have had the honor to know through Audubon. I hope you will all have a Happy New Year, full of the great gifts of nature, and...enjoy birding.

~Mary Ellen



Steven D'Amato

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

Between now and March 15<sup>th</sup>, is the time to renew your membership in White Mountain Audubon Society. Please note on the form that dues have been raised to **\$15 for an Individual and \$25 for a Family**. You may use the form below. Thank you very much for supporting the programs and projects we sponsor. Your membership and donations do make a difference!

**WMAS is looking for someone to fill the membership position for our group. Please contact Mary Ellen at 367-2462 if you are willing to do this job.**

“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” Theodore Roosevelt

## 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 by March 15<sup>th</sup>. 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!**

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

An invitation from Dr. Thomas Palmeri, faculty member at Vanderbilt University, has come to WMAS. His work involves laboratory studies of human expertise with a new study on bird expertise. He wishes to recruit birders of all experience levels, from beginner to expert. Contact him at [Thomas.j.Palmeri@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:Thomas.j.Palmeri@vanderbilt.edu)

All experiments are online. The website is <http://expertise.psy.vanderbilt.edu/> You may go to the website to register and participate in the study. His studies are made possible with grants from the National Science Foundation and the James S. McDonnell Foundation.

### CampOut 2013

Due to lack of attendees, the White Mountain Audubon Society CampOut has been **cancelled** for 2013. **Many thanks** go to Tom and Liz Jernigan for their hard work on the CampOut for many years now.

### WINGS OVER WILLCOX 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CELEBRATION (WOW) January 16-20, 2013 Willcox, Arizona

This birding and nature festival will include tours, geology, local history, and botany. There will be seminars a nature expo featuring live animals, a wildlife arts/crafts show and as well as children's activities.

Registration is now open and it fills quickly, so be sure and sign up soon for the things you wish to participate in. Go to [wingsoverwillcox.com](http://wingsoverwillcox.com) to register.

**WOW** banquet speaker will be Kenn Kaufman presenting a talk titled "Birding in Outer Space". He is an author, artist, naturalist and conservationist renowned for his work on several field guides of birds and butterflies in North America.

Willcox and the surrounding area is winter home for Sandhill Cranes, Raptors and Sparrows.

For more info you may go to the website or call Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture at 520-384-2272 or 1-800-200-2274.

## SIGHTINGS

Sightings reported at the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting are: Bob Pena saw a **Bald Eagle** while fishing at Hawley Lake. Dave Cagle reported a **Wood Duck** at Sierra Blanca Lake. At Sky Hi Retreat, Jody Inman thinks she saw **Lark Buntings**. At Silver Creek Golf Course, John Davis sighted **Red-tailed Hawk**. On their trip to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the Bittorfs saw the following birds: **Tufted Titmouse, Eastern Downy Woodpecker, Robin, Cardinal, and Summer Tanager**. Loretta Pena saw **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** in Show Low.

In an email from Eric Hough on 11-23-12, he reported seeing **Swamp Sparrow** at Big Springs. At Jacques Marsh, he saw **Swamp Sparrow** again, as well as **Golden-crowned Kinglet**, a lot of **American Robins, Yellow-rumped Warbler** and a light morph **Rough-legged Hawk**.

December sightings turned in at the December 5<sup>th</sup> Christmas Party are: Diane Dorsay saw **White Pelicans** at the Gilbert Water Ranch. Jernigans sighted **Bald Eagle** at Forestdale and grackles in Mesa. In Kent Schipper's yard the **White winged-Doves** have increased from four to eight; at Horseshoe Lake, he saw **Bald Eagle, Canadian Geese and Ruddy Duck**. Tony reported seeing **Ringed-necked Duck, American Wigeon, Bufflehead, Acorn & Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Stellar Jay, White-breasted Nuthatch**, and juncos. In their yard in Pinetop, Bittorfs had **Red-naped Sapsucker** and they saw **Bald Eagles** at Lake of the Woods. Kay Alderton saw **Great-blue Heron** at Silver Creek Fish Hatchery. A **Golden Eagle** was seen by Ann Hilliard west of St. Johns. In Minnesota, Sue Sitko saw several species including **Pileated Woodpecker, Bald Eagle and Tundra Swan**. Paula sighted the following birds on the CA Coast: **Oystercatcher, Great Egret, Osprey, dowitcher, and condor**. Richard Inman heard a **Flammulated Owl** near his home in Pinetop and Jody Inman saw **Brown Pelican, Willet and Sanderlings** in Carlsbad, CA.

Thanks to all for letting us know what you have been seeing!!!

## Arizona Field Ornithologists- Citizen Science

October 2012 AZFO State Meeting Review

By Laurie Nessel

***“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.”-Chinese Proverb***

The annual AZFO state meeting is a great opportunity to learn, to share, to embrace the birding community. Presentations at Lake Havasu last Saturday featured fascinating field study reports by Gale Monson Research Grant recipients. Topics on the local habitat, the Lower Colorado River Valley, included the effects of Tamarisk Beetles on Southwestern Willow Flycatchers, Yellow-billed Cuckoo surveys, the fluctuations of bird populations recorded over 5 decades and more. The afternoon was dedicated to remembering and reflecting upon the contributions to our knowledge of Arizona and Mexico birds by consummate birder Gale Monson.

It was an unforgettable experience to hear the knowledgeable and articulate speakers, to rub elbows with birding legends and mavens, to browse the book sales table and go on various field trips. The meeting went flawlessly and was both inspiring and heart wrenching to learn of the continuing pressure placed on so many species. To know that so little remains of the natural Lower Colorado River Valley ecosystem, that most habitat is mitigation and restoration, that man has conquered nature at an unparalleled cost, but can also reverse the impact with vigilance and commitment.

Note that this article is under the heading “Citizen Science”. This is to emphasize that the AZFO is an organization of dedicated birders, professional and amateur alike. Don’t be intimidated by the organization name. You do not need to be an ornithologist. This distinction is so important that it is part of the mission statement:

“AZFO, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, was founded in 2005 by a group of field ornithologists who believe Arizona, as one of the premier ornithological destinations in the country, should have an active organization of birders and ornithologists dedicated to increasing the knowledge of the identification, status, and distribution of Arizona’s birdlife.

Enthusiastic birders as well as AZFO greatly benefit from AZFO membership at all levels. Expeditions and migration counts always need extra eyes and ears in the field. AZFO seeks your help in collecting reliable information on the seasonal and geographic distribution of individual species and their nesting activity, early and late arrival dates, irruptions, unusually high or low concentrations, and birds found in unexpected habitats or areas of the state.

### **AZFO provides:**

#### **Arizona Birds Online:**

- *The Journal of the Arizona Field Ornithologists, rigorously peer-reviewed articles about status, distribution and identification of Arizona Birds*
- **Recent Arizona Rarity Photos**
- Birding in Arizona, Birding Destinations, News and Notes: easy reading essays on topics such as little known and seldom birded areas of Arizona, and anecdotal stories about birds and birding in Arizona.
- Field check lists by state and by county
- Field expeditions and summaries. The next expedition is Nov 10-11 San Carlos Reservation. See next item for details.
- AZFO MP3 Bird Sounds Library includes sonograms while the song plays if using Raven Lite player by Cornell Labs
- **Gale Monson Research Grants:** financial support to individuals to conduct field research that will enhance our knowledge of the status, distribution, identification, and other aspects of Arizona birdlife. Two \$2,000 grants available annually in honor of long-time ornithologist Gale Monson.

#### **What you can do:**

#### Participate in events:

Annual Greater Phoenix Area Water Bird Census held in January

Field Expeditions

State meeting in Sierra Vista October 2013

Donate to Gale Monson grants fund

Donate books for the annual book sale fundraiser

Go to the AZFO website [azfo.org](http://azfo.org) to learn more about field expeditions and future meetings.

Peruse images, sounds and articles online.

Submit sightings, images and recordings

Purchase AZFO merchandise, (available soon online) including the tribute book, **Counting Birds**

**with Gale Monson.** Proceeds of this book fund the Gale Monson Research Grants. **JOIN AZFO!!**

**Join!** Members receive an interesting and educational Newsletter about three times a year.

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

## Great Backyard Bird Count Goes Global in 2013 February 15-19, 2013

*Bird watchers worldwide can take part for the first time*

After 15 years of success in North America, the **Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)** will open up to the entire world for the first time in 2013. Anyone, from anywhere on earth, can participate by visiting [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org) and reporting the kinds and numbers of birds they see during the 16th annual count, **February 15–18, 2013.**

A joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with partner Bird Studies Canada, the four-day count typically receives sightings from tens of thousands of people reporting more than 600 bird species in the United States and Canada alone.

“This year’s count will give us a whole new perspective as sightings pour in from around the globe in real time,” said Marshall Iliff at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. “Millions of people encounter birds every day all over the world. Imagine what scientists will learn if each one of us shares observations from our own area!”

During the 2012 count, participants reported 17.4 million bird observations on 104,000 checklists. Snowy Owls thrilled many participants when these striking birds-of-prey ventured south from the Arctic in record numbers. In 2013, scientists predict that U.S. and Canadian bird watchers will see an influx of Red-breasted Nuthatches and winter finches (such as Pine Siskins) because of scarce food supplies on their northern wintering grounds.

“The **GBBC** is an ideal opportunity for young and old to connect with nature by discovering birds and to participate in a huge science project,” said Gary Langham, Audubon’s Chief Scientist. “This year, we hope people on all seven continents, oceans, and islands, will head out into their neighborhoods, rural areas, parks, and wilderness to further our understanding of birds across the hemispheres.”

Participating is easy. Simply watch birds for at least 15 minutes at the location of your choice on one or more of the count days. Estimate the number of birds you see for each species you can identify. You’ll select your location on a map, answer a few questions, enter your tallies, and then submit your data to share your sightings with others around the world.

The global capacity for the count will be powered by eBird, an online checklist program for all of the world’s 10,240 bird species. Participants will be able to view what others are seeing on interactive maps, keep their own records, and have their tallies recorded for perpetuity. “The popularity of the Great Backyard Bird Count grows each year,” said Dick Cannings, Senior Projects Officer at Bird Studies Canada, “and with the new features, participation will be even more exciting.”

The Great Backyard Bird Count is sponsored in part by [Wild Birds Unlimited](http://www.wildbirds.org).

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

## Where to write

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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**