



JULY - AUGUST EDITION 2019

Out on a Limb with your President

Note -- Mary Ellen invited Susan Taggart, Wildlife Rehabilitator, to contribute this edition's Out on a Limb (pertaining to what to do if you encounter what appears to be injured or orphaned wildlife):

Nestling Songbirds

It is not true that parent birds will reject or kill their babies because a human has touched them. Birds have a poor sense of smell and are more bothered by human noises and presence. If fallen nestlings—babies with no feathers, a little fuzz, or pinfeathers—aren't injured, shaking, or weak, quickly place them back into their nest.

If you either can't see or can't reach the original nest, you can make a surrogate home for nestlings out of a small basket, kitchen strainer, or small plastic container with holes punched in the bottom. Line it with shredded tissue paper; don't use cotton, grass, hay, straw (they can cause respiratory problems), or old birds' nests (which can contain parasites). Hang it in a sheltered place that is not accessible to cats or dogs and is close to the original location.

Parents of nestlings will continue to feed their young if the nest has been disturbed or if the babies have been moved, as long as the babies are close (100 yards or so) to where their parents left them, are in a safe location, and no humans or companion animals are nearby. Mother songbirds feed their babies frequently. Watch quietly from a distance for several hours to make sure a parent returns.

If a nestling is injured, weak, and shaking or if his or her parents do not return, place the baby inside a paper towel-lined margarine tub and place the tub inside a well-ventilated cardboard box. Contact a wildlife rehabilitator.

Fledgling Songbirds

Fledglings—young birds who are mostly feathered and learning to fly—can be moved a short distance to a tree or dense shrub to keep them safe from traffic and cats. Fledglings' parents are usually close by, so never attempt to rescue fledglings unless they are in immediate danger; their parents are the best ones to teach them to survive in the wild. Fledglings are often on the ground before they can fly for 2-5 days and parents continue to feed them. If a fledgling is clearly injured or ill, contact a wildlife rehabilitator.

Baby Deer

Baby deer, or "fawns," are spotted and spend most of their time alone—quiet and almost motionless—in open fields waiting for their mothers to return. Fawns are often mistakenly thought of as orphans because mother deer only nurse and attend to their young a few times per day. However, if you find a fawn who is wandering alone, calling, or lying on one side in a field, the animal may be orphaned.

Deer have a highly developed sense of smell, so never handle fawns unless absolutely necessary. If you do handle one and then find that he or she needs to be returned to mom, wipe the animal clean with a towel before returning him or her. Watch from a safe distance to be sure that the baby is not abandoned. Deer who do not have spots are not babies and, unless injured, do not need assistance. If you think that you have found an orphaned fawn, contact a wildlife rehabilitator.

Baby Rabbits

Cottontail rabbits make their nests in small depressions in the grass. The nests are lined with fur from the mother and loosely covered with grass. They are frequently disturbed by people when they mow their grass or rake leaves. In addition, dogs and cats find these nests and often kill or injure the babies.

If a nest is discovered or disturbed, place the baby rabbits back in the nest and leave them there unless they are injured or you are certain that the mother has been killed. Many people assume a mother is dead simply because they have not seen her return to the nest in quite some time, but this is completely normal. Female cottontails usually only come to feed their young twice a day, at dawn and dusk, because this decreases the chance of alerting predators to the nest's location. If you are not sure if the mother is coming back to feed them, try placing a string over the nest. If the string has been moved by the following morning, the mother has returned.

Young cottontail rabbits should only be rescued as a last resort. Baby rabbits have a high death rate when hand-raised, due in great part to the stress of handling by humans. People are NOT doing the babies any favors by attempting to raise them themselves. It usually only ends in sadness and frustration. When baby rabbits are about 5 inches long, they are completely on their own and away from their mothers. These rabbits do not need to be taken in unless they are injured. A good rule of thumb is, if you can't catch a rabbit without a chase, then he or she does not need to be rescued!

If baby rabbits are less than 5 inches long and are cool to the touch and their mother has not returned to their nest within one day, cover their heads with a dishtowel and quickly place them inside a warm, dark, newspaper-lined box. Place the box in a quiet place. Contact a wildlife rehabilitator

Baby Squirrels

Young squirrels are often found after a nest has been blown down from a tree following a storm. The best thing that you can do to reunite the young with their mother is to place the baby squirrels in a box and set the box at the base of the tree. The mother will usually retrieve the young and transport them to a safer location but only if she feels safe. Please resist the temptation to check on the baby squirrels frequently, and be sure to keep dogs, cats, and children away. It may be necessary to keep the young squirrels indoors overnight and then try reuniting them with their mother again the next day. Either way, it is always best to call your local wildlife rehabilitator for instructions and advice.

If a baby squirrel is injured, weak, or shaking contact a veterinarian or wildlife rehabilitator.

--Susan Taggart, White Mountains area Wildlife Rehabilitator

White Mountain Audubon Society (WMAS) Chapter Officers:

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| 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 Vickers | |

Membership: Position Open

Board Members:

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:

July 3rd – TBA

August 7th – Gwendena Lee-Gatewood, Apache Tribal Chairwoman, will talk about the positive impact of our Audubon organization from an Apache perspective. She will relate stories of WMAS scholarship recipients and the resulting influence on wildlife and nature.

September 4th – Dennis Tomko, President of Northern Arizona Audubon (Flagstaff-Sedona areas) will give a quick overview of NAAS including membership. He will talk about four bird sanctuaries they've developed and the bird species found there. One of the recently developed sanctuaries is Bubbling Ponds.

2019 Upcoming Special Events:

July 13th – Eighth Annual **White Mountain Audubon and Nature Center Film Festival and dinner**. This event takes place at the White Mountain Nature Center on 425 Woodland Rd., Lakeside. Tickets available at the Nature Center or from Board Members. \$25.00. Film titles: 1) Petrified Forest: Land, Culture and Sustenance. 2) Spring Birding- Gulf of Mexico. 3) Big Horn Sheep. See the WMAS/WMNC website for up-to-date information: www.whitemountinaudubon.org

2019 Field Trip Schedule:

Free Monthly Bird Walks - geared for bird lovers of all skill levels and all ages. Hiking conditions variable but suitable for participants in reasonably good health interested in walks ranging from 1-3 miles. All welcome; no pets please. Bring binoculars (if you have), field guide (if you have), and appropriate apparel, gear, snacks and water for outdoor walking in the White Mountains area during the April through October time frame. For further information call Rob at 368-8481.

July 20th – Birding field trip to Silver Creek State Fish Hatchery. Meet at the Silver Ck Hatchery parking lot at 7am (call Rob if you need directions).

August 17th – Birding field trip to Williams Creek National Fish Hatchery. Meet at the Williams Ck Hatchery parking lot at 7am (call Rob if you need directions).

2019 WMAS Scholarship News:

The two 2019 recipients of the WMAS Scholarship Grants are graduating high school seniors who wrote wonderful essays discussing their commitment to conservation, resource management, or environmental issues.

Catalina Lopez wrote: As I prepare to graduate high school and go to college, I am facing a lot of uncertainties, but one thing I am sure about is that I want to major in something that will allow me to focus on conservation as a career. I will most likely study biology as an undergraduate and pick a more specific field once I go to graduate school. Currently, I am considering going to graduate school for marine biology, but I recognize that I may become more interested in another branch of biological science once I go to college. . . . I also plan to return to my roots of starting or joining environmental campaigns, and this time I will have the knowledge, resources, and planning ability to help raise awareness of environmental issues and make the general population more environmentally aware.

Lindsey Real Bird wrote: As we have inhabited this earth we have treated it well until the rapid growth of evolving. Taking what has been given to us for granted, we now are seeing the effects of our choices. If not yet concerned for the health of our planet when we will we ever be. Climate change is a real thing that is affecting us now and will continue on in the future at a rapid pace. If we do something now we can slow down and see what a solution may be. For the future generation to enjoy the beauty of the earth and appreciate the gift of seeing it.

REMINDER:

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.

Birding in the White Mountains by Mary Williams:

Twenty people, both beginning and experienced birders, attended the first 'Birding the White Mountains' PowerPoint Presentation sponsored by our Audubon Society on June 7 at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall. Nine folks joined the follow-up bird walk at 6AM the next morning and we tallied a total of 27 species. It was fun to watch Western Bluebirds as well as Violet-green and Tree Swallows using nest boxes at the Nature Center in Lakeside. A few in the group also were able to enjoy a pair of Pygmy Nuthatches using a cavity in a dead pine, with one emerging from the hole while the other came with a beak full of tiny insects. A Plumbeous Vireo was first heard high in a pine and then flew into viewing range. Though often hard-to-see, a sweetly-singing Common Yellowthroat was also a morning highlight. Check out the next 3 sessions (5:00 pm Fridays July 26, Aug 23, and Sep 13). And a newly scheduled 5th session on 'Target Birding' will close out this series. Note that this last session will comprise the program for the monthly WMAS meeting on the evening of Oct 2nd.

Participants of the Birding the White Mountains series by Mary Williams for the WMAS.



Some Other Recent Bird Sightings From Around Our Region:

Good spring rains have helped produce a bumper crop of insects and, as a result, the bug-eaters are abundant this summer. A partial list includes: Western Wood Peewee, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Western & Cassin's Kingbirds, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Say's & Black Phoebes; House Wren; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher; Western & Mountain Bluebirds; Purple Martin, Violet-green, Tree & Barn Swallows; Common Nighthawk; & Plumbeous Vireo.

Editor's Note:

As a possible cost saving measure, I am canvassing our members to learn how many readers can **only** receive the Newsletter in hard copy form (via the U.S. Postal Service). If you can only read the Newsletters in hard copy, please let me know via an email (rhilbe739@gmail.com) or by phone (928-368-8481). If you can (and/or do) get the Newsletters via email, then we can save Chapter funds by dispensing with unnecessary hard copy postage. Thank you for your assistance as I attempt to address this issue.

This Edition's Birder's Riddle -- By Rob Bettaso
(The answer to last issue's riddle was the Western Tanager)

My group of birds,
Have a chisel-like bill.
We bore into wood for bugs,
And then eat our fill.

Two toes front,
And two to the rear,
Give us bark gripping power,
So heights cause no fear.

Our stiff tail's a prop,
To be used as we climb.
Our long tongue a tool,
To slurp ants, one at a time.

An American explorer,
Gave us his name.
His partner was Clark,
So we all share the fame.

I am large & black-backed,
My belly pinkish red.
Deep scarlet on my face,
A black top to my head.

Unlike others of my kind,
I'm often silent,
My flight pattern quite straight,
And I'm totally non-violent.

Here in the White Mountains,
I'm commonly seen.
In trees living and dead.
You may see me preen.

(Attend the July 3rd WMAS Meeting and bring your answer to the riddle. Your name will be entered in a drawing to win a 20 lb. bag of black oil sunflower seed).

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.

