



## **FEBRUARY EDITION 2026 (SUET FADES FAST; CHICKADEES GROW PLUMP)**

**“Out on a Limb” by Mary Freemon – White Mountain Audubon Society (WMAS) Board Member:**

As I write this we're well on our way into 2026! We've had our first snow of the year; let's hope it's not our last. My resident raven and a number of crows have been the most noticeable birds early this January. I have seen a Bald Eagle soaring high overhead on occasion.

Lately, the usual winter birds have been showing up, probably due to the fact that my neighbor's apple tree still has fruit on it! There seems to be little else of sustenance in my neighborhood. I've seen robins, flickers, Steller's Jays, a Spotted Towhee and both Hairy and Acorn Woodpeckers along with the abundant chickadees, nuthatches, and juncos. All in the apple tree!!

I've also seen a couple of sapsuckers but I haven't been able to positively identify which species; probably the Red-naped, as I've seen that species up here before. I should also mention the very acrobatic Abert's squirrel and dozens of mule deer!! I'm observing all of this from my dining room window as it's too cold for me to venture out for anything more than essential errands.

Happy birding to all, especially if you're lucky enough to be where it's warm!!

**Below:** Left - American Robin; Right - Red-naped Sapsucker (both photos by Ron Pedersen).



### **White Mountain Audubon Society (WMAS) 2026 Chapter Officers:**

President: Vacant

Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Millie Emerson 316-295-6404

Treasurer: Ron Pedersen 505-313-9343

Field Trips: Rob Bettaso 928-368-8481

Newsletter: Rob Bettaso 928-368-8481

Membership: Susie Walker 480-205-6119

Webmaster: Alan Vickers

### **2026 WMAS Board Members:**

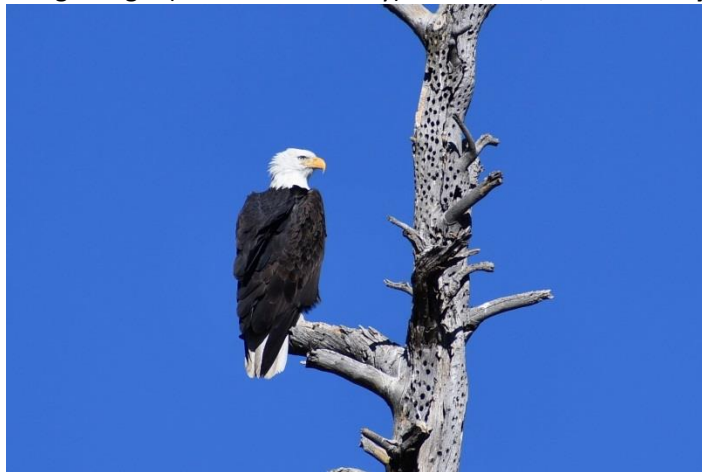
Rhonda Forsha, Mary Williams, Mary Freemon, Millie Emerson, Susie Walker, Ron Pedersen, & Rob Bettaso.

### **White Mountain Audubon Society Calendar etc.:**

For 2026, we expect that all monthly Audubon speaker programs will continue to happen on the first Wednesday of the month. We will presumably have our monthly meetings from May thru Oct. The programs will be free and open to all. Monthly meetings are held at the White Mountain Nature Center, 425 Woodland Road, Pinetop-Lakeside.

**January 31<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 a.m. 2026 White Mountain Eagle Festival**  
**This year moved to Arizona Game and Fish Pinetop office**  
**2878 East White Mountain Blvd, Pinetop, AZ**

A regal eagle (of the Bald variety) in Lakeside, AZ. **Photo by Jon Orona.**



**The Regular Monthly WMAS Birding Field Trips:** Monthly bird watching field trips on the 3rd Sat of every month; usually led by Rob Bettaso but also by Jon Orona when he is available (and if others would like to lead, pls give me a call so we can discuss). If you're interested in attending, feel free to give me a call and leave a message so that I can return your call to give you the details for the upcoming trip. The next outing is **Feb 21<sup>st</sup>**. Also, on the fourth Sat of each month I lead a "Fitness Birding" outing that

combines slightly strenuous activities (longer hikes, bicycling, paddling, X/C skiing) with birding. The next Fitness Birding trip will be **Feb 28<sup>th</sup>**. Feel free to leave me a message if you're interested.

#### **OUR WHITE MOUNTAIN AUDUBON SOCIETY (WMAS) JANUARY FIELD TRIPS:**

A major winter field trip occurred on Jan 5<sup>th</sup> when 10 avid WMAS birders participated in our Chapter's annual Christmas Bird Count (part of an international event started over 100 years ago by an early form of the National Audubon Society). A summary of the birds that were seen by our Chapter is attached to the same email that contains this Newsletter. Thank you to all participants in the field and thank you Ken for compiling/entering/presenting all of the data!

Wild and free adult Bald Eagles, perched vigilantly near Woodland Lake. **Photo by Gaston Porterie.**





**Below:** A carnivorous Loggerhead Shrike at Chaco Canyon in New Mexico (photo by Anne Groebner) and a snow-bathing (?) Northern Flicker at Woodland Lake (photo by Gaston Porterie).



**Below:** Smallish and “earless” Burrowing Owls near Florence, AZ (both photos by Millie Emerson).



**Below:** A Great-horned Owl silently sailing over the Sonoran Desert. Photo by Chuck Lanska.



Chuck also offers us the following unattributed quote: "Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

#### **UPDATES & REMINDERS:**

Have you paid your annual membership dues? Thank you if you have and if not, note that the membership form is at the end of every Newsletter. Dues are for the year in which they are paid and are not necessarily valid for 12 months following payment (unless you pay in December or January). You can now also pay by using Zelle, so pls contact Ron Pedersen for details (his phone number, along with other Board member numbers, are provided earlier in this 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.

And remember, you can 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 position! We are especially keen to recruit diverse candidates to be a part of WMAS, including more people below the age of 60 (so that we can plan for our Chapter's future) and also more people that are representative of the various demographic groups found in the White Mountains. And remember, you can be on the Board without being an Officer – in fact, you can even just attend a Board meeting as a guest. Please feel free to join us (call Rob: 928-368-8481).

Master of the air and our Nation's emblem – an unbounded Bald Eagle. **Photo by Jon Orona.**





See our WMAS ad in **Anne Groebner's Outdoors Southwest** magazine (a monthly publication focusing on our White Mountains environment). You can check out Anne's **OSW** at the following website: [OutdoorsSW.com](http://OutdoorsSW.com) or you can pick-up a hardcopy version at the Nature Center, Safeway, Town Hall, and many other locations.



#### 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 and visit our website.