



Gambel's Tales

The Newsletter of the Sonoran Audubon Society

Volume 7 Issue 5

January, 2006

IBA NEWS

New study pinpoints extinction epicenters

December 13, 2005

Safeguarding 595 sites around the world would help stave off an imminent global extinction crisis, according to new research published late in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Conducted by scientists working with the 52 member organizations of the Alliance for Zero Extinction, AZE, (which includes Bird Life International and a number of Bird Life Partners), the study identified 794 species threatened with imminent extinction, each of which is in need of urgent conservation action at a single remaining site on Earth.

The AZE study found that just one-third of the sites are known to have legal protection, and most are surrounded by human population densities that are approximately three times the global average. Conserving these 595 sites should be an urgent global priority involving everyone from national governments to local communities, the study's authors state.

Particular concentrations of sites are found in the Andes of South America, in Brazil's Atlantic Forests, throughout the Caribbean, and in Madagascar. With 63 however, Mexico holds the most sites. The United States also ranks among the ten countries with the most sites (18 sites).

The relevance of the AZE approach can currently be seen in India, where one of the AZE species is under threat. The only known site for the critically endangered Jerdon's Courser *Rhinoptilus bitorquatus* (an enigmatic, nocturnal wading bird, rediscovered in 1986 having not been seen for almost a century) has come under threat from a new irrigation canal.

"Although saving sites and species is vitally important in itself, this is about much more," said Mike Parr, Secretary of AZE. "At stake are the future genetic diversity of Earth's ecosystems, the global ecotourism economy worth billions of dollars per year, and the incalculable benefit of clean water from hundreds of key watersheds.

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At our next meeting....

Wednesday, January 11, 2006 at 7pm

Shawneen Finnegan: "Desert Plover and Peep Primer"



Most birders who come to Arizona come to look for species not seen elsewhere in the United States, particularly those whose ranges spill just over the border from Mexico. And one doesn't exactly think of land-bound Arizona as a water-rich state that would host lots of shorebirds, but nonetheless we do get our share. Many winter here, and others breed here as well. Some shorebirds are easy to identify, like American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts, but many are not so obvious. All levels of birders may find the identification of the smaller ones and the group we fondly know as peeps a challenge, depending on their age and plumage.

Come join Shawneen Finnegan as she helps us learn how to tell them apart. She will also discuss some of the other difficult-to-identify shorebirds that grace our desert landscape. Shawneen loves shorebirds and has spent many years studying them, beginning in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1982, where she grew up. Living in Santa Barbara and Cape May for many years gave her plenty of opportunity to watch them.

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Shawneen Finnigan

After leading tours for WINGS in the 1990's she retired from tour leading and moved to Tucson to work full time in the WINGS office four years ago. Also an accomplished artist she has produced artwork for private collections, magazines and books. She is the author of Bird Area birding software, is on the Board of Advisors for WildBird and is a former member of the California and New Jersey Bird Records Committees.

Phoenix-Tres Rios Christmas Bird Count 2005 Highlights By Daniela Yellan

On Friday, December 16, close to seventy people, many of whom are Sonoran Audubon Friends and Members, participated in the fifth annual bird count in this revised count circle. Because of this exceptional large number of participants, it was possible to cover all eleven areas of the count much more thoroughly than in previous years.

The birding expertise of the participants ranged from novice to expert. Each of the eleven area teams was composed of birders with various levels of skill. In this manner the more experienced birders were able to lead and encourage those with less knowledge of birds. Most of the area leaders and many of the team members were quite familiar with their areas as they had led those areas or had been members of the same team in previous years. Several also took the time to scout the areas prior to the count.



Immature Bald Eagle—Photo by John Hardison

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What's Happening? By Your Editor

The Sonoran Audubon Society board meeting convened at 7pm on December 7, 2005. Here are some of the items discussed by board members Dan Bohlmann, Karen LaFrance, Loretta Richards, Dick Fogle, Anne Durning and George Wall. Also present were Tom Lazzelle and Tice Supplee.

1. Some committee reports were made.

a. **Hospitality:** Tom Lazzelle as chairman of hospitality discussed how it should be handled. After a discussion, the board approved the buying of cookies, instant drinks as well as water.

b. **Conservation:** The conservation committee will now be co-chaired by Tom Lazzelle and Karen LaFrance.

c. **Membership:** The monthly figures had arrived from the National Audubon Society as of this date. The board discussed membership and based on attendance there needs to be some changes made.

2. The board discussed an annual social event (one of the items suggested at the retreat) and it was decided to hold this event on a Saturday in late October, 2006. Tom Lazzelle will check the possibility of reserving Thunderbird Park for the event.

3. At the retreat, Dick Fogle and George Wall were asked to check on the prices of equipment to be used by leaders in IBA counts and in accordance with the AZFGD contract. They made their report and the board approved the purchase of four Global Positioning System, (GPS's), six wind gauges, three more cameras, and four walkie talkie sets. The board also approved the purchase of a pop-up tent to be used at various events.

4. Other things discussed at the meeting were a replacement for Ken Clark at the butterfly garden, speakers' gifts, raffle prizes, Sonoran Joint Venture and having a permanent phone number for the society.

At the monthly Sonoran Audubon Society membership meeting held on 14 December, 2005, Dr. David Pearson gave a great program on "Why are there more bird species some places than others". Ken Clark was presented an "Above and Beyond" certificate as well as a \$100 gift card for the work he has done at the Lake Pleasant butterfly garden.

Book Review

By Nancy Kroening

Winter World: The Ingenuity of Animal Survival by Bernd Heinrich, 2003, Harper Collins.

In Winter World, Bernd Heinrich shares what he and other scientists have learned about hibernation, torpor, snow caves, food caches, shared nests, shivering, mud, and feathers. Should you come upon a "dead" Poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*) in winter on a rock ledge, leave it there. According to Heinrich, the Poorwill could be in "torpor," nature's strategy to allow birds to survive low temperatures by lowering their own temperatures to a resting state.

Verdin, year round residents in Arizona and northern Mexico, build numerous "bedroom nests." Heinrich provides documentation that Glenn Walsberg, Arizona State University, observed a Verdin nest being used communally for a large group of black-tailed gnat-catchers. Wouldn't it have been fun to have seen them exit the nest in the morning? (I wonder if Verdin can collect rent!) Winter World is a delightful book that helps us birders better observe how animals stay warm, thrive and live during the winter months.

Join the National Audubon Society

New adult or family membership: \$20.00

Seniors and students: \$15.00

Renewal fee for seniors and students: \$15.00

These fees cover membership in the National Audubon Society and a subscription to Audubon magazine. An application form for National membership may be obtained from the chapter at the regular meeting or by contacting <chuckkan@mindspring.com>.

Each year all National members in the Sonoran Audubon chapter area receive the September *Gambel's Tales* that describes major chapter activities for the year. All monthly issues of *Gambel's Tales* may be obtained free from the chapter website <www.sonoranaudubon.org> or by mail for \$10.00 per year. If you wish to get the newsletter by mail or to be notified when a new issue is placed on the website, please contact chuckkan@mindspring.com or by mail to: Sonoran Audubon Society, P O Box 8068, Glendale, AZ 85312-8068

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Refreshments donated by

TRADER JOE'S®

The above sign was prepared by Jak Keyser, one of our talented members, and will be displayed at our meeting refreshment table: Thank you Trader Joe's

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Phoenix-Tres Rios Christmas Bird Count 2005 Highlights

The total number of species for the day was a record **147!** The highlights of the day include eight species of warblers: Two Northern Parulas, Townsend, Chestnutsided, Yellow, and Black-throated Gray, Common Yellowthroat, Orange-crowned, and Yellow-rumped (Audubon and Myrtle). Also observed were twenty-eight Ruddy Ground-Doves, seventy Eurasian Collared-Doves, and over a hundred twenty Neotropic Cormorants. Of note as well are two Golden-crowned Kinglets, a Winter Wren, a Brown Creeper, and three Bald Eagles (two adults, one immature). Especially delighting many observers were the American White Pelicans, the Burrowing Owls, and the thousands of blackbirds, both Red-winged and Yellow-headed. All the data will shortly be entered into National Audubon's CBC database and available to anyone interested.

The day's experience was concluded with a compilation dinner at Raul and Theresa's Mexican Restaurant. Here, about forty of the birders enthusiastically shared the day's experiences while rewarding their day's efforts with a great Mexican meal.

Special thanks go to the eleven team leaders for their time and effort in coordinating the teams: Roger Joos, Troy Corman, Tom Hildebrandt, Daniela Yellan, Marceline Vandewater, Andree Tarby, Jeff Fustich, Bill Burger, Greg Clark, Bob McCormick, and George Wall.

WINTER BIRD COUNT

By Bob McCormick

On December 3rd, Daniela Yellan and I participated in the Gila River Indian Community's 2005 Winter Bird Count. The count is similar to a Christmas bird count. The purpose is to introduce and encourage awareness and appreciation of avian diversity on tribal lands. This year three areas were covered: The District around Sacaton, District 6, and District 7.

The area we birded was the District 6 Count Site located around the community of Komatke just South of South Mountain on 51st Avenue. Charles Enos, an Aquatic Scientist with the Gila River Indian Community's Department of Environmental Quality was our leader. Several area families as well as some members of the Community's

Youth Council participated.

The first part of the morning was spent in the desert areas near the dry Gila River where Phainopepla seemed to be teed up on every tree and bush! The later part of the morning was spent around the agricultural fields farther east. Here we were overwhelmed by hundreds of several species of sparrows and many hawks. The surprise of the day was a flock of about 15 Black Vultures. In total we observed 35 species.

Other activities in conjunction with the Winter Bird count included presentations and displays at the Gila Community Arts and Crafts Center near Sacaton.

Daniela and I found the experience very rewarding. All the participants showed great enthusiasm and were eager to find out more about the local birds and their behavior.

At the conclusion of the count we were invited to lunch at the Vee Quiva Casino. Lunch was indeed a treat as, while we were eating, we watched a Roadrunner chase its lunch through the beautiful desert landscaping just outside the casino window.

EVENTS IN THE VALLEY

Adobe Mountain Sanctuary

Saturday, January 7th & 14th, 2006—11am—1pm at North Mountain Park, 10600 N. 7th St, Havasupai Ramada

Birds of Prey class— Join park rangers and staff from the Adobe Mountain Sanctuary to learn about Arizona birds of prey. The first session on 7 January will introduce the diurnal (active by day) birds of prey found in our area. The second session on 14 January will introduce the nocturnal birds of prey.

Find out the birds of prey's hunting habits, diet, identification and habitats. Participants will see live birds up close.

Phoenix Zoo

**Thursday, January 26, 2006, 7:00 pm
Speaker: Tim Gallagher**

The Phoenix Zoo hosts an Explorer's Club Lecture Series.

Cocktails (no-host bar), hors d'oeuvres & mingling with the presenter will begin at 7:00 pm. The presenter, Tim Gallagher, will speak at 7:30 pm about the rediscovery of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker at the Stone House Pavilion of the Phoenix Zoo.

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AWARDS

By Audubon Arizona

ACE Award: Each year, the National Audubon Society awards selected employees with the ACE award for distinguished service and work in several categories. In 2005, 96 nominations were submitted and 15 were selected. This time, our own Cheryl McNab from Audubon Arizona was selected and given the ACE "New Star Award" for her work as the Rio Salado Audubon Center Director.

During her short tenure (les than three years), she has worked magic to bring in partnerships and funds for a most ambitious Audubon Arizona project, the Nina Mason Pulliam Audubon Center on the banks of the reconstructed Rio Salado wetlands in downtown Phoenix. She has also taken up the duties of Education Director for Audubon Arizona. All of these accomplishments are making Audubon's name known throughout the state.

Conservationist of the Year for 2005: Arizona Game and Fish has announced that Tice Supplee has been selected as the Conservationist of the Year for 2005. This is a well deserved award as Tice has worked tirelessly on numerous conservation projects both when she worked for the Arizona Game and Fish Department and now as an employee of Audubon Arizona.

You all know her also for her work at the Sonoran Audubon Society. She rarely misses a meeting and was a Board Member of the group. She still is a member of the SAS and continues to provide her insight to the board as well as act as a great liaison between Audubon Arizona and the Sonoran Audubon Society.

The award will be presented to her at the Commission's Annual Awards Banquet on Jan 21, 2006 at the Doubletree Hotel, 5401 North Scottsdale Road. The reception will begin at 5:30 and dinner at 6:30pm.

BIRDS OF AMERICA

From the Arizona Republic

There was a little article in the 16 December, 2005 edition of the Arizona Republic. It stated that a rare and complete edition of John James Audubon's "The Birds of America" was auctioned off for \$5.6 million. It was an 1838 edition.

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This is a one-shot deal for the human race," he added. "We have a moral obligation to act. The science is in, and we are almost out of time."

Among the 794 imperiled mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and conifers are monkey-faced bats, cloud rats, golden moles, poison frogs, exotic parrots and hummingbirds, a hamster and a dormouse, a penguin, crocodiles, iguanas, monkeys, and a rhinoceros. Among the most intriguingly-named are: the Bloody Bay Poison Frog, the Volcano Rabbit, the Ruo River Screeching Frog, the Bramble Cay Mosaic-tailed Rat, the Marvelous Spatuletail (a hummingbird), and the Sulu Bleeding-heart (a dove).

Among the most unusual threats are volcanic eruptions, which threaten to destroy the forest habitat of the Montserrat Oriole *Icterus oberi*, a critically endangered Caribbean bird species which numbers just 200-800 individuals.

While extinction is a natural process, the authors note that current human-caused rates of species loss are 100-1,000 times greater than natural rates. In recent history, most species extinctions have occurred on isolated islands following the introduction of invasive predators such as cats and rats. This study shows that the extinction crisis has now expanded to become a full-blown assault on Earth's major land masses, with the majority of at-risk sites and species now found on continental mountains and in lowland areas.

Also published are a site map and a report that details the actions required to save these sites and species. These items, along with a searchable database of sites, web links and media contacts for the Alliance's 52 member organizations, and photos of AZE sites and species for media use, can be found at: www.zeroextinction.org

Comments by your editor.

An Arizona Important Bird Area, Huachuca Mountains in Southeastern Arizona, is one of 18 sites in the United States mentioned in the above article because of the Ramsey Canyon Leopard Frog which is in need of urgent conservation action. I also noted with interest the mention of the Marvelous Spatuletail hummingbird that I was privileged to see while in Northern Peru and in which I saw the destruction in person of some of its habitat. We must keep doing our part to protect our many sites around the world in any way we can. If we don't, future generations will miss out on what we currently have.

DO YOU WANT TO GO TO A BIRDING & NATURE FESTIVAL?

By George Wall

It's a simple question and probably many of us would answer "yes". Some of you have been to Birding and Nature Festivals and know what they are truly about; however, there are many of you who haven't and don't know the ins and outs. These are the people who will be interested in this article.

The Tres Rios Nature Festival is a fun event. There are displays, exhibits, live birds, talks, workshops, and of course literature from many organizations including sponsors. There may even be a bird walk. Many of you have attended this festival and will do so in the future and you should. But, all of this is on a small scale when compared to a large festival like the Yuma Birding and Nature Festival.

Here are some questions that one might ask if they've never attended a large festival.

1. How long do they last? The larger festivals usually are 3-4 days, from a Thursday or Friday until Sunday; however, you may want to attend only 1 or 2 days. That's up to you.

2. What about hotels/motels? The festival is sometimes held in a hotel and usually that hotel is slightly above average price. The festival will usually have a list of hotels/motels to stay at that will give you discount prices if you are a festival attendee. Also, if you are so inclined, usually at large festivals there are RV parks and campsites nearby.

3. Is there a Registration Fee and if so, how much? If you intend to partake of everything, then the answer is yes. The fee may range from \$10-20. At the time you register, you likely will receive a welcome package that might include a pin, badge, tickets for free drinks, etc.

4. Are there scheduled birding trips and if so, what are the costs? There are always scheduled trips and the cost depends on the trip itself. For instance, the San Diego Bird Festival has 9 trips scheduled. The cost ranges from \$30-75 per person. Besides these trips there are a couple of "free" ones. Naturally, you have to pick and choose as you can't take them all.

5. What about other types of trips? If the title of the festival has "nature" in it, you'll have other types of trips. For example, desert plants; desert creatures, bats, and so on. Most of these have costs attached.

6. What about the workshops or classes - do they cost money? Most of them cost anywhere from \$5 to \$20.

7. Do they provide lunch on the trips? Sometimes it's included in the cost, but most of the time you have to bring your own. They normally have box lunches for sale at around \$7-8.

8. What if I want to bird on my own and not take a costly trip, can I do that? Of course, but unless you know the area you won't see some of the target birds that trip leaders usually find. Also, sometimes the trips go to areas that you normally might not be able to go to.

9. What other things do they have at festivals? There are several booths with nature and birding items for sale. There are displays and sometimes free instructions on using binoculars and scopes that a dealer has for sale. Some of the big festivals have a nice dinner and guest speaker.

If you can afford to stay for an entire festival, it is well worth it. If you want to try and save some money, then I suggest you stay at one of the cheaper hotels that provide a discount. Chose one or two good trips to completely different areas and this way you will see a great variety of birds. Take advantage of any "free" workshops or programs and just enjoy yourself for 1-2 days only.

Here are some of the upcoming festivals.

Arizona

Wings over Wilcox—Jan 12-15, 2006

Tres Rios Nature Festival—Mar 11-12, 2006

Yuma Birding & Nature Festival— April 20-22, 2006

Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival—Apr 27-30, 2006 to be held at Dead Horse Ranch State Park in Cottonwood

California

San Diego Bird Festival— Feb 9-12, 2006

Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival— Apr 21-23, 2006

Kern Valley Bioregions Festival— Apr 19-30, 2006

Yosemite Birding Festival— May 5-7, 2006

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EVENTS IN THE VALLEY

Tim Gallagher is an award-winning writer and photographer credited with rediscovering the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. His discovery quickly led to the largest search ever launched to find this rare bird that was thought to have gone extinct 60 years ago.

For tickets and information contact 602-914-4333

Hassayampa River Preserve

Wednesday, January 28, 2006, 8 a.m.—4 p.m.

Dale and Debbie Keiser, award-winning photographers, will conduct a digital camera workshop for beginners. Class includes basic techniques, field work and digital photography software.

PRONOUNCED BÛRD

By Kurt Radamaker & Michael A. Patten

I'm sure many of you have had a hard time pronouncing some of the names of birds. Back in April, 1990, Kurt Radamaker and Michael Patten wrote an article in Birding that helps you in this endeavor. With their permission and as space permits, your editor will include some of their pronunciations in this and some future newsletters.

They stated "we have used the "moo-goo-gai-pan" method where the phonetic pronunciation of a syllable is spelled out and where syllables are separated by dashes. The syllable on which the stress falls is capitalized (e.g., PLO-ver).

ACCENTOR

ak-SEN-tor or AK-sen-ter (e.g., Siberian Accentor)

From the Latin ad "to" and cantor "singer," Which evolved to accentor, "one who sings with another."

ANI

Ah-NEE (e.g., Smooth-billed Ani)

Of Indian (Tupi-Guarani) origin, carried over into Spanish and Portuguese. It refers to any of several black cuckoos of the genus *Crotophaga* having a compressed blade-like bill.

BAIKAL

by-KALL (e.g., Baikal Teal)

"Baikal" is the name of a lake in the Soviet Union. It is the deepest lake in the world—5,714 ft deep and has a surface of 13,200 sq mi.

Winter/Spring 2006 Field Trips

All field trips are open to anyone who has an interest in nature. This especially includes members of the Maricopa Audubon Society and Birders' Anonymous. The Maricopa Audubon Society has its own website and list of field trips at www.maricopaaudubon.org and I feel sure we'd be welcome on their trips. Birders' Anonymous trips are included below along with the SAS field trips and are denoted by an asterisk (*).

Saturday, January 14, 2006

Arlington Valley

Leaders: Dean and Joan Luehrs (623) 875-1016

dluehrs@cox.net

Arlington Valley, west of Phoenix and south of Arlington, with its fields, ponds, canals, a dam and a desert butte offers a variety of habitats to search for birds. At this time of year there could be flocks of blackbirds, ibis and egrets feeding in the fields. Last year a White-tailed Kite and a Bendire's Thrasher were seen. A Prairie Falcon and Swainson's Hawks were among the 70 species sighted. Eurasian Collared-doves seem to have become "locals." There should be a good mixture of sandpipers and other shorebirds present.

Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave. just South of Peoria Ave. in Sun City at 7:30 a.m.

Difficulty: 1 (Very little walking; some birding from the car) Bring lunch.

***Wednesday, January 18, 2006**

Thunderbird Park Area

Leader: Carolyn Modeen 623-972-6273

ctmodeen@juno.com

This area contains a large pond to view water birds and another area to view desert birds. At this time of year, we should see 30 or more species of birds. Meet at Bell Recreation Center parking lot at Hutton & Boswell, Sun City to leave at 7:00 AM.

Difficulty: 1 (very little walking) Morning only

Saturday, Jan 28, 2006

Estrella Park, P.I.R. area

Leader: Dick Fogle 623-584-3922

rpfogle@yahoo.com

This regional park is a fine birding area with easy walking and the P.I.R. area has always been a good spot for birding. Last year at this time, 31 species were seen. Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave just south of Peoria Ave in Sun City to leave at 7:00 AM.

Difficulty: 1 (some easy walking) Morning only

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Fall/Winter 2005-6 Field Trips

Saturday, February 11, 2006

Gilbert Water Ranch

Leaders: Chuck & Loretta Richards (623) 594-6554
carichards@nowonline.net

The Gilbert Water Ranch is one of the Valley's better winter birding places. The ponds attract large numbers of ducks and shore birds. There are many common permanent valley birds, plus lots of other winter migrants.

The trails are well maintained, graveled and level. 50 birds were seen or heard on last year's trip to this site.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Meet at Lowe's parking lot on Thunderbird just west of 83rd Ave. by the Burger King. There is lots of parking available. We plan to leave at 7:30 A.M.

Saturday, February 18, 2006

Robbins Butte

Leader: Bob McCormick 602-237-3951
mcbobaz@aol.com

Robbins Butte is a Wildlife Area administered by the AZ Game & Fish Dept. This area hasn't been visited by our group of birders in a long time; so it's an unknown area as to what we'll find. Occasionally there are Sandhill Cranes and a White-tailed Kite is possible. Expect to see lots of hawks.

Difficulty: 1

Meeting place will be listed later.

***Thursday, February 23, 2006**

Tres Rios Wetlands

Leader: Eleanor Campbell (623) 977-7639
ercamp@juno.com

This constructed wetland complex on the Salt River at the 91st Ave. Waste Water Treatment Plant in Phoenix ranks among the best places to find birds in the area. Black-crowned Night Herons, Green Herons and Great Blue Herons are often seen in numbers. At this time of year Blue-winged Teal, Green-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Shoveler, and Common Goldeneye have been present. The Osprey is always sighted and there should be a variety of shorebirds including Greater Yellowlegs, Black-necked Stilt, and Long-billed Dowitcher. Expect to see egrets and passerines also.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave. just

south of Peoria Ave. in Sun City to leave at 7:00 a.m. or call the leader to arrange a meeting place further east.

Saturday, March 4, 2006

Granite Reef/Coon's Bluff

Leader: Dick Fogle 623-584-3922
rpfogle@yahoo.com

The last March trip to this area produced 52 species. These areas are located on the Salt River in the Tonto National Forest and provide good habitats for ducks, herons, hawks and Bald Eagles. The mesquite riparian area is home to woodpeckers, juncos and the Vermilion Flycatcher.

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch

Meet at the Bell Recreation Center parking lot near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City. Leave at 7:00 AM. Call leader for directions for meeting farther east and for details.

Saturday-Sunday, March 11-12, 2006

Tres Rios Nature Festival

***Tuesday, March 21, 2006**

Hassayampa River Preserve

Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057
gwall5@cox.net

This is one of our favorite spots to bird at this time of year—the start of the migration. Last year at this same time, we saw over 30 species including Lucy's Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat and the prize of the day a Lawrence's Goldfinch.

Meet at the Bell Recreation Center parking lot near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City. We'll leave at around 7:00 AM or you can meet the group at the Hassayampa River Preserve at 8:00 AM. There is a \$5 donation to the preserve for each person.

Difficulty: 1 This is a morning trip only, but you may want bring your lunch just in case the birding is good. There are nice picnic tables where you can eat and watch birds.

Saturday, April 1, 2006

New River Preserve

Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057
gwall5@cox.net

This is a new area to bird and hopefully, it will provide us with several nice migrants at this time of year. There are a few palm, walnut, cottonwood as well as the usual mesquite trees. Last year at this time when I first checked it out, we saw several Bullock's Orioles and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and I only spent a half hour there. Who knows what we'll find on this trip.

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Fall/Winter 2005-6 Field Trips

Difficulty: 1 - Morning only with about a 1 mile walk

Note: This is a rough road and does require a high clearance vehicle for car-pooling.

Meet at the Bell Recreation Center parking lot (near corner of Hutton and Boswell in Sun City) to leave at 7:00AM. Call for alternate meeting place.

Tuesday, April 11, 2006

Box Bar-Tonto National Forest

Leaders: Chuck and Loretta Richards

623-594-6554

carichards@nowonline.net

Box Bar is an area along the floodplain of the Verde River just northeast of Rio Verde. There are cottonwoods, willows and tamarisk along the banks of the river. We should see spring migration warblers, tanagers and sparrows as well as some water birds. We will be walking up and back on level ground about a total of one mile over sand and some river rock. Wear sturdy shoes. Last fall, we spotted a Black-throated Blue Warbler. This area is in the Tonto National Forest and has a \$4 fee per vehicle.

Morning only.

Meet at Denny's just W of I-17 at Bell (SW corner) to leave at 6:00 a.m. There is a large parking lot to drop off excess cars. We'll carpool from there. Those who want to meet at Box Bar can call the leader for directions.

***Friday-Sunday, April 27-30, 2006 (Get-Away)**

Verde Valley Bird & Nature Festival

Contact Person: George Wall 623-875-7057

gwall5@cox.net

Details are not on the birding festivals web site yet. It will be held from April 27-30, 2006 at the Dead Horse Ranch in Cottonwood. Last year there was a \$10 registration fee and begins on Feb. 1, 2006. There will be the normal workshops, exhibits and trips scheduled. Plan on leaving here (car pooling) on Friday morning & returning Sunday after check out. See the web page at: <http://www.birdyverde.org/> for more information on the festival.

Saturday, May 6, 2006

Yarnell City Park

Leader: Donna Smith (23-556-9535)

rms15247@cox.net

Yarnell is a charming town in the Weaver Mountains that welcomes birders

It is northeast of Wickenburg on State Route 89. This is high desert valley at 4780 feet. The park has restrooms and picnic tables with well cared for trails. There is a nice restaurant in town where some of us will have lunch. The rest can have a picnic lunch in the park.

Birds that have been seen are nesting juniper titmouse, acorn woodpecker, all three towhees, warblers, vireos, and orioles.

Meet at Wickenburg Community Center at 7AM. As you travel northwest on Highway 60 entering Wickenburg, you will cross the bridge over the Hassayampa River. Turn right immediately after the bridge, The road goes around a bend and you will see a large white building and parking lot on the right. It's a short scenic drive up the mountain to Yarnell.

Difficulty: 1

Saturday, May 13, 2006

Sycamore Creek and Canyon

Leader: Dan Bohlmann 602-938-8244

dansbohlmann@prodigy.net

The south end of Sycamore Canyon is located about 10 miles north of Clarkdale. The trail into the canyon drops down about 100 ft at first and is level from then on. There are lots of trees (Cottonwoods, Sycamores and Ash) and water in the creek and several springs. Usually there are lots of birds due to all the water year round. I've seen Kingbirds, Flycatchers, Warblers, Phoebe, Swallows, Woodpeckers, Jays, Titmice, Wrens, Bluebirds, Vireos, Robins, Sparrows, Waxwings and Gnatcatchers.

Difficulty: 2—Bring Lunch

Meet at Fry's Electronics parking lot at the SE corner of 31st Ave and Thunderbird. We will leave at 7:00 a.m.

Friday-Monday, May 26-29, 2006

Sierra Vista

Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

rms15247@cox.net

Sierra Vista will be the starting point for excursions to various birding sites. There are many canyons to explore: Garden, Miller, Ramsey and more. The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area along the San Pedro River is close by. At this same time frame in 2004, 95 species were seen including the Elegant Trogon and an Elf Owl. Who knows what is in store in one of the best birding areas in S.E. Arizona.

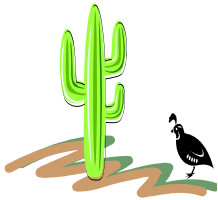
Please call the leader to get on the list for this trip. She will then provide you with more information as the time approaches.

Calendar of Monthly Meetings...

**Location: Auditorium, Glendale Public Library, 5959 West Brown Street
(one block south of Peoria Ave. & 59th Ave. intersection) Time: 6:30 p.m.**

January 11, 2006	Shawneen Finnegan: Desert Plover and Peep Primer: "Shorebirds in Arizona"
February 8, 2006	Hank & Priscilla Brodtkin: "Butterflies of Arizona"
March 8, 2006	Bob Brister: "Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness"
April 12, 2006	Scotty Johnson: "From Leopold to Carson: Saving the Endangered Species Act"
May 10, 2006	Andy Holycross: "Herps of Arizona"

Other Dates of Interest: January 4, 2006 at 6:45 p.m. Board Meeting at Glendale Library in the small meeting room. All SAS members welcome.



Sonoran Audubon Society
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