



# Gambel's Tales

The Newsletter of the Sonoran Audubon Society

Volume 9 Issue 2

October, 2007

## At our next meeting....

**Wednesday, October 10, 2007 at 7 p.m.**

### **Birding in the Pantanal and Iguazu Falls Presented by George Wall**

From August 31 to September 12, 2007, a group from our Sonoran Audubon Society (Anne Durning, Karen La France, Tice Supplee and George Wall) and four others from Arizona (Anita MacFarlane, Leroy and Kate Ellison and leader Dr. David Pearson), went to South America. Specifically Brazil and Argentina. This was sponsored by Audubon Arizona and done through Field Guides.

Come out to this meeting and hear about this trip and the 309 species of birds seen or heard. There's lots of photographs of Rio de Janeiro, Iguazu Falls and the Pantanal presented in a Power Point program that should whet your appetite to journey there yourselves.



**Hyacinth Macaw**  
Photo by George Wall

## What's Happening in our Chapter?

**By Your Editor, George Wall**

The Sonoran Audubon Society board meeting convened at 7 p.m. on September 5, 2007. The attendees were board members Bob McCormick, Chuck and Loretta Richards, Eleanor Campbell, Suzanne Cash, and Andrée Tarby. There were two new member guests Pam Kutney and John Arnett. John, who is new to the area and is interested in filling the secretary position, gave a brief autobiography.

### **Committee Reports:**

**A. Membership:** Suzanne Cash has been calling members reminding them of upcoming meetings.

**B. Education and Outreach:** The first family nature and bird walk sponsored by SAS is scheduled at Tres Rios for Saturday, October 13, 2007. These walks will be the 2nd Saturday of each month unless other events preclude this. There will be free hand-outs as well as some books (some geared to children) and other items for sale.

**C. Field Trips:** The field trip committee met and scheduled trips through December. In December, the Christmas Count begins; so no new trips were scheduled for that month. The Trip Committee is scheduled to meet again on November 1, 2007, in order to plan 2008 trips.

**D. Programs:** The new committee has scheduled programs through the end of the year and working to schedule others.

If you have any ideas for possible programs, please contact one of the program committee members shown on page 3.

At the General Membership Meeting, the program on Birding in Ecuador was well received.

## EVENTS IN AND AROUND THE VALLEY

### Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project

There are bird walks, nature programs and other items of interest. Their location is 2439 S. Central Ave., Phoenix. Check the website at [www.phoenix.gov/riosalado](http://www.phoenix.gov/riosalado).

A birders paradise awaits you just 1/2 mile south of downtown Phoenix! Discover many of the 200 species of birds that have been identified at the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area as you walk along the Salt River. Participants will learn the basic skills of binocular use and bird identification before taking an easy 1-2 mile walk around the habitat. Please bring binoculars, camera, and field guides if you have them. These walks occur several times a month on Saturday or Sunday.

Frank Insana of the Sonoran Audubon Society will lead the one on Sunday, October 21, 2007. The walk starts at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 9:30 a.m. Meet at the visitors' plaza on the north bank at Central Ave. You should make your reservation in advance by visiting <http://phoenix.gov/PARKS> and click on "classes and programs". You can also call 602-262-6863 and leave a voice mail.

### Desert Botanical Garden

Each Monday morning from now through April, 2008, there will be bird walks from 8 a.m. to approximately 10 a.m. There will be additional walks on the second Saturday of each month at the same time. They see as many as 40 birds during these walks.

Desert Botanical Garden entrance fees of \$10.00 (\$9.00 seniors) apply unless you're a DBG member. Membership is \$55 a year. See their website at [www.desertbotanical.org](http://www.desertbotanical.org) for further information.

### Hassayampa River Preserve

Winter hours began on September 15, 2007. It's open Wednesday-Sunday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Entrance fees are \$5, TNC members \$3 and children 12 and under are free. For information call 928 684-2772 or e-mail [www.bmccollum@tnc.org](mailto:www.bmccollum@tnc.org)

For October there is Birding for Kids on Saturday, October 13, 2007, 9 -11:00 a.m.; an Interpretative Nature Walk on Saturday, October 27, 2007, 8:30 - 10 a.m.; and Regular Bird Banding: Sunday, October 14, 2007, and Saturday, October 27, 2007. Bird banding takes place at 6:30 a.m. both days.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Hassayampa urgently needs volunteers. Surely there are some of you who could volunteer for one or two shifts per month.

### Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Boyce Thompson Arboretum is now in their Fall schedule. They have bird walks and other programs. Their hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. The price of admission is \$7.50 for adults and \$3 for children ages 5-12. For driving directions or other details, call 520-689-2811 or visit their internet website at <http://cals.arizona.edu/BTA/>

### Birders' Anonymous

Birders' Anonymous, a group of birdwatchers, has their monthly meeting from 10—11:30 a.m. They meet on the third Friday of each month **all year around** at the Church of the Palms on the corner of Boswell and 103rd Ave. in Sun City in King Hall. Their next meeting will be on October 19, 2007, and program will be on Sandhill Cranes. For further information contact George Wall at [gwall5@cox.net](mailto:gwall5@cox.net)

### **Arizona Field Ornithologist (AZFO) State Meeting**

Saturday, Oct. 20: the Arizona Field Ornithologists (AZFO) will hold its first state membership meeting. It will be held at the Southeast Regional Library in Gilbert, Arizona, just southeast of Phoenix. This site is next to the Gilbert Water Ranch, well known as a rich birding spot. Opportunities for birding before and after the meeting and on Sunday morning will be organized. Maybe the Streak-backed Oriole will return for its third year.

The meeting will offer an opportunity to discuss reports on AZFO activities and hear three or four presentations from different parts of Arizona on bird distribution and recent research projects. Dues-paid members will be able to elect officers and the board of directors and approve the by-laws. New people who are not yet members are urged to come, join, and invite others. For those who sign up as new members at this meeting, their dues will be paid through 2008. (All dues and contributions to AZFO, which is officially a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, are tax-deductible.)

Updates on the program and schedule will be available on the AZFO website: [azfo.org](http://azfo.org).

If you are interested in attending or helping on this gathering, please contact meeting coordinator Keith Kamper at: [Keith\\_kamper@adventurebirding.com](mailto:Keith_kamper@adventurebirding.com).

### 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](http://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. For Information or questions call 623-939-6181.

SAS Web Site: [www.sonoranaudubon.org](http://www.sonoranaudubon.org)

Arizona Audubon Web Site: [www.az.audubon.org](http://www.az.audubon.org)

Desert Rivers Audubon Web Site:

[www.desertriversaudubon.org](http://www.desertriversaudubon.org)



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## AUDUBON CELEBRATION 2007

By George Wall

What a great time! Approximately 120 attended the Arizona Audubon Celebration 2007 held at the Fiesta Inn Resort in Tempe.

There were a lot of things going on such as workshops on Friday and Saturday, a luncheon, raffles, silent auction, banquet dinner, great speakers and numerous birding trips on Sunday.

I managed to attend several workshops and I learned a lot more on how to identify sparrows when I attended the Sparrow Workshop. The banquet dinner was held on Saturday evening and what a treat it was. This was followed by the keynote speaker, Dr. David Pearson.

The "Celebration" was open to anyone who wanted to improve their skills or just to enjoy the camaraderie of people of like interest.

Here are a couple of pictures I took.



Registration Table



The Banquet Dinner

## FIRST FAMILY BIRD WALK

If you've ever wondered about those screeching black birds or that little brown one in your backyard, here's an opportunity to find out.

Members of the Sonoran Audubon Society will conduct FREE monthly family-oriented bird walks at Tres Rios Wetlands (91<sup>st</sup> Ave near Broadway) in Phoenix on the 2nd Saturday morning of each month beginning October 13<sup>th</sup>. Join other outdoor enthusiasts on an easy hike through the desert, around the ponds and into the woods at this natural site.

Leaders will loan binoculars and bird guides and will introduce participants to the fun of birding in an environment ideal for attracting birds. On top of this, **there will be live raptors.**

Tres Rios Wetlands has progressed from a farm field to a nature reserve providing habitat for a variety of wildlife. Great Blue Herons nest in dead trees. Cinnamon Teals, among other ducks, spend the winter. Black Phoebes feed around the pond while Marsh Wrens call from the reeds.

Meet at the Tres Rios Wetlands Hayfields Site on Saturday morning, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. The entrance to the site is located on 91<sup>st</sup> Avenue, one mile south of Broadway Road in Phoenix past the sewage treatment plant on the left just prior to the Salt River. You'll see a yellow gate to the Hayfield site. Turn in and go about 1/3 of a mile to the end of the dirt road.

Bring your own binoculars if you have them. For more information contact: Rich Schooler at (623) 930-8904 or e-mail [raschooler@peoplepc.com](mailto:raschooler@peoplepc.com).

**The following article was taken from the Audubon Newswire dated September 13, 2007, and I thought it might be of interest to you.**

**Phoenix, AZ**-Audubon Arizona is one of four non-profits slated to be featured in an American Express video encouraging workplace giving. Parents, children, teachers, and award-winning pro-bono videographers braved triple-digit temperatures in Rio Salado to replicate Audubon Arizona's school-based programs for the video, including having the kids analyze water in restored riparian habitat in South Phoenix, where the Rio Salado Audubon Center will open next year. The video is expected to reach an audience of 32,000 people in the course of a six-week campaign.

The following article was taken and adapted with permission from the Cornell magazine "Connecting with Cornell". Thanks goes to Eleanor Campbell, a graduate of Cornell, who got permission and edited this article.

## **The Birding "Mecca"**

**By Pat Leonard**

Tucked amid the tees and wetlands of Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is a testament to human curiosity and a passion for learning about and protecting nature. It is home to people who make it their life's work to ask questions about birds, whales, elephants, frogs and fish. It is a portal to appreciation of the natural world, whether you live a mile down the road or miles from anywhere.

Arthur A. "Doc" Allen was the founder of the Lab. After earning undergraduate and graduate degrees from Cornell, he pushed for creation of the country's first graduate program in ornithology. The university responded and in 1915 the Lab of Ornithology was born, though it was housed in the entomology and limnology department.

Today the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is housed in the new Imogene Powers Johnson Center for Birds and Biodiversity which opened in summer 2003. Most often it is still called the Lab, or, affectionately, the Lab of O. Staff and students number nearly 200, working in a mind-boggling array of programs tailored to the Lab's mission: interpreting and conserving the earth's biological diversity through research, education, and citizen science focused on birds. As a nonprofit administrative unit of Cornell University, work at the Lab is supported in part by its 33,000 members. About 100,000 people pass through the visitors' center each year. Millions more visit vicariously via the Lab's top-notch web site: [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu).

Collecting the observations of everyday birders for scientific use has been a hallmark of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology from its inception. Only by employing the eyes and ears of bird watchers can scientists gather the data needed to get the big picture about the distribution and abundance of birds, a process made infinitely faster by the growth of the Internet and online data reporting.

The observations of citizen scientists have helped document the declines of some species, the range expansions of others, and even the spread of avian diseases across the continent. The observations

of birders help the Lab study birds in the city, birds in the forest, and help answer questions about how proximity to humans, pollution, and loss of habitat affect different species.

From its earliest days, the Lab has had a special interest in bird and animal voices and what they reveal about a creature's health and habits. Doc Allen and his students were pioneers in the field, recording the first songs on a film sound track. It used to take a wagonload of heavy equipment to mount a sound-recording expedition. Today's digital recording units, parabolas, and directional microphones are wonderfully sensitive and lightweight. Couple that with new sound analysis software and a whole new world opens up before your eyes and ears.

The world's largest collection of natural sounds is held in the climate-controlled archives of the Lab's Macaulay Library. There are more than 165,000 recordings of birds, bats, whales, insects, frogs, elephants, and other creatures. Sound archivists are adding to the collection daily. These sounds are used by researchers around the world.

Actually watching behavior in its natural setting is a key part of learning about an animal. With that in mind, the Macaulay Library is now growing its video collection. The high-definition movies in the Bartels Theater were produced in the Macaulay Library, and a documentary-length production is now in the works, delving into the world of underwater sound and the impact human-generated noise may be having on the creatures of the deep.

Sometimes electronic ears are needed to do what human ears cannot. The engineers in the Lab's Bioacoustics Research Program create the remote recording devices used by researchers around the world. These autonomous recording units (ARUs) consist of a hard drive, housing, and microphone array that can be mounted in a forest or anchored to the ocean floor. ARUs have been used in the Elephant Listing Project in Africa, studies of whales, and in the search for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in the dense forests of Arkansas.

The Lab's engineers are also working on a new programmable radio tag to track birds and other animals for longer periods of time or even to follow bird migration, about which so much remains unknown.

Aside from the work being done through citizen-science projects, the Lab's scientists, students, and visiting scholars are carrying on much original research. In the Evolutionary Biology Laboratory, for

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## **The Birding “Mecca”**

example, researchers are extracting DNA from living birds or specimens to discover fascinating information about the relationships among species and their lifestyles. Paternity tests on chicks, for example, can determine whether or not a female has just one mate

The Cornell University Museum of Vertebrates is also housed in the Johnson Center, with 1,000,000 specimens of fish, 45,000 birds, 3,200 eggs, and 15,000 each of mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, some now extinct.

The whole point in collecting so much data about birds and animals through citizen-science, research, and sound and video archiving is to learn what it takes to keep the earth in balance and perhaps undo some of the environmental trauma inflicted by pollution and destruction of habitat.

Dr. John Fitzpatrick, director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, envisions an even brighter future for the Lab, including a global role for this one-of-a-kind institution. “Our central goal is to promote environmentally sound decisions based on science,” he says. We strive to move human society toward investing in the permanent protection of natural systems all across our precious planet”.

**In the last newsletter, I requested input from our readers (whether members or not) and I got a few takers.**

### **In Search of...**

**Submitted by Dr. Jerry Theis**

In September, 2006, I traveled to Canastra National Park in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, in search of Brazilian endemics with Focus on Nature Tours. Our main target was the Brazilian Merganser, one of the rarest waterfowl in the world, with an estimated population of fewer than 200 birds. This bird lives only on infrequently visited, shallow, fast moving streams in south-central Brazil. On our last day, after much searching at waterfalls, traversing rickety wire bridges over rushing rivers, and stumbling in boulder-strewn waterways, I finally located a pair of the mergansers. Scope views showed the distinctive head and bill shapes as they blended in against the shoreline of grey rocks. It was the highlight of our trip because as recently as 50 years ago

the bird was thought to be extinct.



### **Brazilian Merganser**

Photo courtesy of FONT at font@focusnature.com

Side Note: This species is critically endangered. Numbers have reduced due to polluted rivers caused by forest clearance and agriculture. The current population is estimated at less than 250 adult birds.

### **Squirrel Fight**

**Submitted by Jan Morrison**

Last May when we were in Portal, we went on the road just east of the general store and turned left. About two miles or so up that road we came to an old trailer with lots of cars parked. We walked up a gravel path to where there are chairs and feeders to bird watch.

We saw something we had never seen before. Two ground squirrels were face to face standing up and fighting with their front legs. This continued for about five minutes. No one else in the group had ever seen anything like it before either. Unfortunately, my camera battery chose at that time to give up; so, I didn't get a picture of it. It was a very interesting thing to watch. I wonder if anyone else in the Society has seen this kind of action with squirrels.?

### **Roadrunner Summer**

**Submitted by Gillian Rice**

No, roadrunners do not make a “beep beep” sound! However, in my role as a docent at the Desert Botanical Garden (DBG), that sound, along with my accompanying visual demo, is certain to communicate to puzzled non-English speaking foreign visitors what bird I would like to show them hiding under a Palo Verde tree. Although I have been birding since I was a child in England, and have lived in

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## Roadrunner Summer

the Valley for over seventeen years, this summer I learned to recognize the Greater Roadrunner's true call for the first time.

Roadrunners have become a more common and welcome sight at the DBG only in the last few years. This summer, on June 16, I heard a noise in a large mesquite tree I hadn't heard before – a low-pitched rattling or drumming noise which I thought was perhaps the ladder-backed woodpecker looking for a meal. I couldn't see anything. The noise from the tree was being answered by the same noise but in lower volume out towards a trail that goes up a small hill. Finally I spotted the roadrunner perched high up in the mesquite, calling repeatedly. Lynn Hassler Kaufman in her book, "Roadrunners," describes the sound as similar to the sound of castanets and refers to it as bill clacking.



Photo by John Hardison taken at P.I.R. area  
See more at <http://fleas.smugmug.com>

A little later, I found a roadrunner, with a huge desert spiny lizard in its beak, and a young roadrunner begging to be fed. The parent kept beating the lizard on the ground although it was quite dead. Then it offered it to the youngster by putting it on the ground. The young bird poked it a few times and then fluttered its wings and opened its beak wide (showing all the red inside) asking to be fed. The parent ignored it, grabbed the lizard, beat it some more, and then offered it to the young bird again. This went on several times. I just couldn't understand how the young bird was going to eat that enormous lizard. I thought it must have to find a way to chew bits off it. Finally, the youngster got the message, grabbed the lizard and started to swallow it headfirst just as I've seen the green heron do with the large bullfrog tadpoles. The lizard did not go down

easily and seemed stuck - there was still a little bit of tail and some toes sticking out. Then the young roadrunner ran into the very thick undergrowth of a bush and I could see no more as to whether or how it succeeded. Lynn Hassler Kaufman explains that the repeated beating of prey serves to break its bones, making it longer and narrower and thus easier to swallow.

On July 2, I saw a pair of roadrunners building a nest about eight or nine feet off the ground in a thicket. The regular birders at the DBG think this was a second brood. The completed nest rested in branches overhanging the trail near the pond at the DBG. Visitors walked many times underneath it, completely unaware. Both roadrunners carried twigs to build the nest, one by one running to climb up the branches of the thicket. On two occasions I observed a bird on the nest, extremely well-camouflaged. Annalaura Averill-Murray in *The Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas* (edited by Troy Corman and Cathryn Wise-Gervais) details the breeding habits of the roadrunner and notes that in southern Arizona, the bird has a bimodal nesting season, with first broods initiated in spring and second broods begun in later summer after the start of the monsoon season. Eggs hatch at approximately twenty days and the young remain in the nest for 14-25 days after hatching. They are not independent until 30-40 days after fledging.

I often found it difficult to tell the young birds and their parents apart, as it seemed that the young did not have or show the colored patches near their eyes. My new knowledge of the roadrunner's clacking call was invaluable in finding members of its family. On August 12, one young roadrunner was sitting in the nest bush by the DBG pond for a few hours calling quietly and incessantly and towards the end of the morning, I saw a parent with a large desert spiny lizard being followed by another begging youngster. Strangely, the parent refused to give the lizard to the young one following it, instead, using the lizard to encourage the fledgling in the tree to come down (which was quite amusing as it almost tumbled out of the bush) and then it gave this fledgling the lizard. I have never seen anything like that before - I always thought birds fed the closest begging youngster that had the widest open mouth!

On other occasions (August 19, August 26, and September 9) I watched the roadrunner young being fed. On almost every occasion I found the birds by sound. The young would either shelter under bushes or sit high up in mesquite or palo verde trees. A Harris's antelope ground squirrel faced off around a barrel cactus with one young roadrunner for a few minutes, creating plenty of amusing entertainment for DBG visitors and myself. Of course, we were all rooting for

the little squirrel, which finally made a dash for it and escaped. One evening, a young roadrunner took a dust bath. Other times I watched as a roadrunner drank from the water feature in the DBG's wildflower garden. I saw the adult roadrunner catch and kill an Inca dove. It took some time to "tenderize" it - the dove started to fall apart and the parent fed its youngster the meal piece by piece in contrast to the way the birds ate the lizards whole. Another meal for the youngsters was a mourning dove. To hurry to have this meal, one of the young birds glided magnificently down from high in a mesquite tree.

I and other birders at the DBG are hoping that the roadrunners will continue to use the DBG as their territory, as they provide plenty of entertainment and education for us and our visitors. It's encouraging to see the birds breed in our oasis in the middle of our bustling city.

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## True Story

Submitted by Nancy Woods

In July, 2007, my friend and I visited Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado. After entering the park and following the main road for several miles, we drove up a side road to an overlook. As we approached the parking area for the overlook, the traffic came to a stop and, there, several cars in front of us, a female Blue Grouse ambled across the road, walked along the shoulder and then disappeared into the brush.

When we arrived at the parking lot, I told my friend that I would walk back to find the grouse, and she hiked on to the overlook.

When I returned to the parking lot (without finding the bird), she said she had met a park ranger. She is a new birder, and she asked the ranger if we could possibly have seen a female Blue Grouse.

"Oh, yes," said the ranger. "It was a grouse. They are all over this place. She is the dumbest bird there is. She stays in the road. She slows down traffic. We have to shoo them away. They are so dumb."

She then asked, "How is the male different from the female?"

The ranger replied, "He is no different. He is just as dumb as she is. Dumbest birds I ever saw."

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**Since I put out this request for stories from our readers, I have received poetry, recipes, fiction and true experiences. After careful consideration, I decided to limit the articles in our newsletter to strictly newsworthy items and true experiences. If you have something of interest, please submit them to me. As the editor, I will edit them without taking away from the total content and your meaning.**

## Fall 2007 Field Trips

An \* indicates a Birders' Anonymous planned trip

**REQUIREMENT:** On all trips, make reservations by calling or e-mailing the leader. The leader can then give updated information as to the meeting place, times, etc. Also, some trips are limited in size.

**Saturday, October 6, 2007**

**Rio Salado**

**Leader: Frank Insana**

**Contact: George Wall 623-875-7057**

[gwall5@cox.net](mailto:gwall5@cox.net)

Rio Salado is one of our newer birding areas on the Salt River in downtown Phoenix and Frank Insana who been leading trips there for sometime knows where the birds are hiding. There is plenty of water in the ponds and the river so birds should be there.

Difficulty 1: This is a morning walk only

Meet at the Sun Bowl parking lot on 107th Ave. in Sun City just S. of Peoria Ave. to leave at 6:15 a.m. or meet at the Rio Salado parking lot on South Central Ave (Northeast Corner) a little before 7 a.m.

**Thursday, October 18, 2007**

**Oak Creek Canyon and West Fork**

**Leader: Dan Bohlmann 602-938-8244**

[dansbohlmann@prodigy.net](mailto:dansbohlmann@prodigy.net)

We will bird at different spots in Oak Creek Canyon and hike into the West Fork of Oak Creek for about a mile. The U.S. Golden Age Passport can be used in place of the Sedona area parking permit(\$5) to park along the road and some other parking spots. Some parking areas such as West Fork cost extra (Up to \$7 a car) - we will avoid all except the West Fork.

What we will see in the way of birds is anybody's guess. It depends on what the weather is doing. Usually the trees in the West Fork Parking Lot are filled with all kinds of birds, woodpeckers, kingbirds, orioles, warblers, tanagers and goldfinches. There is a bridge that crosses from the parking lot over Oak Creek that is usually a good spot for observing birds along the creek and in the trees lining the creek. On the other side of the bridge are grassy fields and an old apple tree orchard that the trail winds through that contains another whole set of birds that prefer that habitat - sparrows, flycatchers, bluebirds and cliff swallows that nest on the nearby red & white cliffs.

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### **Fall 2007 Field Trips**

Then you reach the actual entrance to the West Fork Canyon where the old historic Mayhew Lodge used to stand and the typical forest birds start to show up (nuthatches, chickadees, and titmice). Even if birds don't show up, we can be pretty sure that the glorious sights and smells of Fall will be there since the West Fork is filled with lots of Maple and Oak trees that turn all sorts of beautiful shades of red, orange, pink and yellow. Against the background of blue sky, green pines and firs and streaked red and white canyon walls, it makes for an incredible contrast of colors.

Difficulty: 2 – Bring a Lunch

Meet at Denny's Restaurant, west of I17 near 27th Ave and Bell (In front of Fry's). We will leave at 7:00 a.m. We may try to also designate a Sun City meeting place at 6:30 a.m. if requested by callers.

**\*Thursday, October 25, 2007**

#### **Seven Springs and Camp Creek**

**Leader: Eleanor Campbell, 623-977-7639**

[ercamp@juno.com](mailto:ercamp@juno.com)

Stop in desert and chaparral habitats before arriving at the riparian site in the Tonto National Forest. Canyon Towhee, Sage Thrasher, and Hermit Thrush were seen on past trips.

Difficulty: 2 (one hill down to Camp Creek). Bring lunch.

Meet at Bell Recreation Center at the corner of Hutton Drive and Boswell one block south of Bell Road in Sun City to LEAVE at 7:00 a.m. Call the leader to arrange a meeting place farther east. Entrance fee to the park is \$4.00 per car.

**\*Saturday, November 3, 2007**

#### **McCormick Ranch Lakes & Pavilion Ponds**

**Leader: Dick Fogle 623-584-3922** [rfogle@yahoo.com](mailto:rfogle@yahoo.com)

McCormick Ranch is a master planned community in North Scottsdale. It has several lakes/ponds with grassy areas and trees to explore. In this urban setting there are always wintering ducks and Canada Geese and occasionally some rarities. We should see large flocks of American Wigeon. There is also the Pavilion Ponds near a shopping center that has plenty of waterfowl. Difficulty: 1 Morning only. Meet at Bell Recreation Center, SW corner of parking lot (Boswell and Hutton Dr. one block south of Bell Rd.) in Sun City to LEAVE at 7:00 a.m. or call the leader for a meeting place farther east.

**Saturday, November 17, 2007**

#### **Gilbert Water Ranch**

**Leaders: Chuck and Loretta Richards 623-594-6554**

[carichards@nowonline.net](mailto: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. Fifty plus birds are usually seen or heard on trips to this site.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Be sure to contact the leader to register and arrange car-pooling. Meet at Lowe's parking lot on Thunderbird just west of 83<sup>rd</sup> Ave. by the Burger King. There is lots of parking available. We plan to leave at 7:00 a.m.

**Thursday, November 29, 2007**

#### **Painted Rock Dam/Petroglyph Site**

**Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535** [rms1524@cox.net](mailto:rms1524@cox.net)

This area is located approximately 90 miles from Phoenix near Gila Bend. Not only can you look at birds, there is also a nearby petroglyph site along with picnic tables and a restroom.

Call leader for details and to make reservations.

**Plan now for this trip** as space will be limited to 12 participants: **Portal and Cave Creek** in SE Arizona on **May 21-23, 2008**, (Wednesday-Friday), there will be a local leader for this trip (Melody Kehl) who has led us once before). - Contact: Donna Smith 623-556-9535 [rms1524@cox.net](mailto:rms1524@cox.net) for details.

The Portal and Cave Creek area is located in Southeastern Arizona. The area offers a multitude of bird habitats as well as magnificent views of beautiful vistas. The Elegant Trogon nests along Cave Creek regularly. Grace's, Virginia's and Black-throated Gray Warblers and Painted Redstart may be seen. The Arizona Woodpecker is common. The Magnificent Hummingbird as well as several other species of hummers should be present along with several vireos and flycatchers. The Elf owl and Western Screech will certainly be heard and possibly seen. Besides the many national forest trails and campgrounds to explore there are private residents who welcome visitors to their backyards to view birds and they have put up feeders just for this purpose. This spot offers a range of ecological communities from desert and grassland through pine/oak woodlands, pinion/juniper, and cottonwood riparian areas—each providing a unique habitat for birds.

On our last trip to this area in June 2004, we saw 97 species. Check out the trip report on our website.

## Calendar of Monthly Meetings...

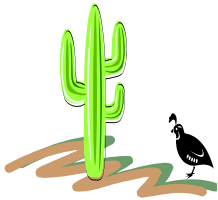
**Location: Auditorium, Glendale Public Library, 5959 West Brown Street  
(one block south of Peoria Ave. & 59th Ave. intersection) Time: 6:30 p.m. for socializing and  
7 p.m. for the start of the meeting and program**

October 10, 2007—George Wall: Birding the Pantanal & Iguazu Falls (Brazil & Argentina)

November 14, 2007—Barb Winterfield: Birding in Florida

December 12, 2007—"Hope Takes Wings" DVD Video

**Other Dates of Interest** October 3, 2007, 6:45 p.m. Board Meeting at Glendale Library in the small meeting room. All SAS members welcome.



**Sonoran Audubon Society**

**P.O. Box 8068**

**Glendale, AZ 85312-8068**