



Gambel's Tales

The Newsletter of the Sonoran Audubon Society

Volume 4 Issue 7

March 2003

California Condor Found Dead

The California Fish and Game Commission
February 20, 2003

In 1986, the California Fish and Game Commission authorized the capture of all remaining wild California condors to establish a captive breeding program in an effort to save the species from extinction.

On February 18, the last California condor (AC8) born in the wild was recovered from southern Kern County. A necropsy determined that the bird died of a gunshot.

When informed of the tragic death, Commission President Michael Flores expressed his dismay. "I'm very upset by this senseless killing of an endangered species," Flores said. "This death could have far reaching ramifications on the entire condor recovery program." Flores also said that the Department of Fish and Game is working very closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to find the person or persons responsible for this terrible crime.

The captive breeding program has been very successful in trying to recover the California condor as there are 118 birds now in captivity at the San Diego Wild Animal Park and the Los Angeles Zoo. With the death of AC8, only 79 birds remain in the wild.

I believe many of you are aware that our Sonoran Audubon board member, Bruce Palmer, works for U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is in charge of the California Condor Reintroduction program. He led a field trip to the Grand Canyon July 25, 2002. Those of you who can get on line can read the trip report by clicking on the Sonoran Audubon Society : www.sonoranaudubon.org and click on trip reports. On January 9, 2002 Bruce gave a monthly program entitled: "The California Condor Reintroduction Program" On both the program and on his field trip, Bruce gave us a complete run down on the Condor reintroduction program. He told us that there would be a release of captive Condors in northern Mexico and there would continue to be releases in Arizona and California.

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At our next meeting....

Wednesday March, 12 at 6:30 p.m.

"The San Pedro River-Avian Paradise"

By

Sandy Anderson, Director, Gray Hawk
Nature Center



Picture of Sandy Anderson wading in the San Pedro River

Furnished by Sandy Anderson

Sandy Anderson is the founder and director of Gray Hawk Nature Center which is located on the beautiful San Pedro River. She says on her web page that the purpose of the center is to "promote understanding, appreciation, and conservation of the natural environment through education and hands-on learning experience."

She further remarks that "We are a non-profit, 501c3, environmental education facility among the 'sky islands' of southeast Arizona. This location in one of the most ecologically diverse areas of North America, provides an ideal outdoor classroom where students of all ages can explore, study, and learn about the world around them."

Sandy says that in her "spare time" she is a professional guide and tour leader for S&S Tours. She has now lived on the San Pedro for eleven years and is an invaluable source of information on the whole Sierra Vista area. I'm sure you will all enjoy her presentation of the thing she loves best - the San Pedro River.

(Continued from Page 1)

California Condor Found Dead

The Condor release in Mexico has been successfully completed and Bruce said that it went quite well.

I had asked Bruce about the Condor a number of us including me, Bob Bradley and Marion Bound had seen on an Arizona field trip to California. The sighting took place on June 10, 1986 at Mt. Pinos, California. We had heard that we had seen the last wild California Condor and a short time later it was captured and put into a captive breeding program. Bruce told me during the Grand Canyon field trip, this past summer, that the Condor was AC8 and had been re-released in California and was doing quite well. I think you can understand how shocked I was to read that "my Condor, A C8" was found dead and was shot by an unknown person. I hope that someone who might have witnessed the shooting will turn in the responsible person to the California Fish & Game Department.

Help Clean Up The Watershed Saturday, March 8, 2003, 9 am - 3 pm

Volunteers from the Upper Agua Fria Watershed Partnership & The Cordes Lakes Community Assn (with support from Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Arizona Public Service, the Arizona Land Department, and the EZ Ranch) will pick up, sort and recycle massive amounts of trash dumped on State Land just east of Cordes Lakes near the power lines.

Your help is needed!

9:00 Learn about water pollution and safety with Brian Gangwisch, ADEQ. This trash ultimately affects the groundwater you drink.

9:15 Learn about general recycling with Mary Hoadley.

9:30 Help clean up this stretch of land with neighbors. Refreshments will be provided.

For further information and to sign up call

928-632-6212

Members of the Sonoran Audubon Society have been working with the Upper Agua Fria Watershed Partnership. For more local information call Dwayne Fink or Chuck Kangas.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Chris Horyza, Project Manager

Agua Fria National Monument RMP

The Bureau of Land Management's Phoenix Field Office (BLM) is continuing the resource management planning process underway for the Agua Fria National Monument and the Bradshaw Foothills-Harquahala area. The Scoping Report is complete and has been well received. We are getting copies of it out to locations where they will be available for review. Copies of the report are now at, or will soon be delivered to: Glendale Public Library, Foothills Branch and the Peoria City Planning Department

Now that citizens have provided their scoping comments, it is time for them to participate in the next step, the formulation of alternatives. The purpose of the March and April workshops is to continue involving citizens in the process by beginning development of alternatives for the plan as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Two workshops are planned during March and April in Phoenix at the Deer Valley Community Center, 2001 West Wahalla Lane, (One block south of Beardsley Road). The first workshop is on Thursday March 6 from 6 to 9 p.m. The second workshop is on Thursday April 3 from 6 to 9 p.m. The first set of workshops will be an opportunity to discuss citizens' visions for BLM lands, to orient people to the data collected by the specialists so far, and to begin exploring alternative ways to manage BLM lands and resources.

During the month following the first set of workshops and prior to the second, citizens will have the opportunity to hone their management strategies and prepare alternatives or portions of alternatives. The second round of workshops will give citizens the opportunity to become familiar with ideas that were presented during the first workshop at other locations, as well as to provide any additional comments as a result of intervening community discussions and work.

In May, a third set of workshops is being planned for Phoenix, Prescott, and Wickenburg. At that time the BLM will present the range of alternatives that citizens helped to craft, which will later be analyzed in an Environmental Impact Statement as required by the NEPA.

Chris

A message from your president...

It's that time of year again where we have our annual Sonoran Audubon Society's board election. The board officers are elected one year and the board members at large the next. This year we elect the board members at large. The ballots are found attached to this newsletter. See page eight for more information on the nominees.

Three of our present board members at large have indicated that they will not run for reelection. They are Hugh and Regina Rodgers and Bruce Palmer. Bruce's job with Fish and Wildlife keeps him in California most of the time and the Rodgers work commitments keep them from attending many of the meetings. All three said that it wasn't fair to hold a board position when their jobs forced them to miss so many meetings. All three helped us to become the successful chapter we are today. All three also indicated that they will continue to work for the chapter even though they won't continue to be board members. I'm sure that the rest of you along with me are grateful for their contributions.

I told you a little about Bob Bradley's field trip in my last month's message from your president. Bob and Eleanor Campbell have worked out more details of the trip. I hope many of you can join us on what will be an outstanding field trip. Also, be sure to check out Eleanor's trip to G Grey Feather's Lodge north of Silver City, New Mexico. Their web page can be found at: www.greyfeathers.com.

You will notice that they only have 14 rooms, so get in touch with Eleanor so your place can be reserved.

SAS Web Site: www.sonoranaudubon.org

Join Sonoran Audubon Society.....

New Adult or Family membership: \$20.00

Seniors and Students: \$15.00

Renewal fee for Students and Seniors: \$15.00

Mailed Newsletter subscription : \$8.00

Fee includes membership in the National Audubon and your local Sonoran Audubon Societies, and a subscription to the Audubon magazine. Your check should be made payable to the National Audubon Society, along with the membership form, preferably obtained from the Sonoran Audubon Society and containing our chapter ID number B07.

The Sonoran Chapter newsletter, Gambel's Tales, may be obtained free from the chapter website <www.sonoranaudubon.org>, or by subscribing for a mailed hard copy. Web site recipients will be notified when each newsletter is posted if the chapter has your e-mail address. Send your membership name and e-mail address to <chuckkan@mindspring.com>. If subscribing for a hard copy, send check (\$8.00), made payable to the Sonoran Audubon Society, to Sonoran Audubon Society, P.O. Box 8068, Glendale, AZ 85312-8068. Please include your address, and telephone number.

Sonoran Audubon Society Officers & Board Members

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Treasurer Josh Burns 602-468-3002 josh_a_burns@yahoo.com

Secretary Tice Supplee 602-258-7080 tice_az@hotmail.com

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Tom Jones 602-861-1217 trjones@grand-canyon.edu

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Hugh Rodgers 623-974-1105 hugh.rodgers@cox.net

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Tom Lazzelle 602-843-8451 lazzelle.tom@ev.state.az.us

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More on the Agua Fria Monument

By Dwayne Fink

The Spring Count of birds on the Agua Fria National Monument will be conducted the week of 14 April (Monday) through 19 April (Saturday). Those who were on past counts have already been alerted. If you would like to get involved, email me at edna.fink@asu.edu or call me at 480.967.9202. The winter count was fun and exciting. The spring count should be even better, what with the migrants coming through and the beginning of the nesting season.

More on the Agua Fria National Monument, and on the Bradshaw-Harquahala areas: The BLM is in the middle of an extensive planning process on how to manage these large adjoining areas just to the north of our Sonoran Audubon Chapter. The BLM has invited the public to get involved in the planning process. Several thousand comments have come in from phase one, and have been categorized into various interests.

We want environmental issues to be well represented in the planning process, else the BLM will ascertain a lack of interest. You know what that means. The planning will be done at two workshops – one in early March and the second in early April. Each workshop will be conducted at five locations adjacent the areas. For specific information call Chris Horyza at 623.580.5500, or visit at the BLM web site www.az.blm.gov

Spring 2003 Field Trips

Sonoran Audubon strongly encourages carpooling on all outings!

Please organize your own carpool, consolidate vehicles at meeting places, and/or contact leaders for carpooling assistance. Sonoran Audubon strongly encourages carpooling on all outings!

Field Trips are rated in difficulty levels one, the easiest, to five, the most difficult. It is recommended that passengers reimburse drivers at an agreed rate.

REMINDERS: Don't forget water, sunscreen, hats and insect repellent. Wear neutral colors. Avoid bright colors. Wear sturdy walking shoes

Saturday, March 1, 2003

**Audubon Environmental Education Center
Leader: Dwayne Fink 480-967-9202**

Explore the site of a future Audubon Environmental Education Center under construction in downtown Phoenix. Audubon Arizona is working with the city of Phoenix on the Rio Salado Project to preserve the river and riparian habitat. The proposed facility will be at the corner of Central Ave. and Rio Salado and the preservation will encompass land from 24th St. to 19th Ave.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Call leader for meeting place and time.

Saturday, March 15, 2003

**Ox Ranch
Leader: Tom Lazzelle 602-843-8451**

We will visit a working, diversified, ranch on the road to Hillside northwest of Wickenburg. The ranch is on Date Creek. When the present owners bought the ranch, Date Creek had been over-grazed by cattle. Working with the Heritage Fund and Partners for Wildlife, the owners have restored the riparian area and stream to a proper functioning condition. For their efforts, the owners received the Arizona Game and Fish Department's "Stewardship Award" in 2002.

Upon arrival at 9 A.M., there will be a brief orientation to the ranch, discussing present best management practices for the cattle and farming operations. Trip participants can drive or walk around the 3 acre lake and have lunch there. The leader visited the ranch headquarters and lake area on December first and found Canvasback, Redhead and Bufflehead ducks, Snow and Canada Geese and Pied-Billed Grebes.

After viewing the lake, there will be a short drive and a ½ mile walk to Date Creek to look for spring migration of birds.

Please plan for an all day trip as the driving time is 2 hours. The tentative meeting location for the field trip to the Ox Ranch has been changed. The final location is the Lowe's parking lot on the south west corner of Grand Avenue and Bell Road. Enter Loews parking lot at the Del Taco entrance on Grand Avenue. Park next to the Target sign. Departure time will be between 0700 and 0715.

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch.

Wednesday, March 19, 2003

**Badger Springs/Agua Fria National Monument
Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057**

WALLABY@worldnet.att.net

Enjoy both desert and a unique riparian habitat at one of our new national monuments. Take an easy 3/4 mile walk to the perpetually flowing river. Petroglyphs enhance the scenery of the site. The monument is an adopted Sonoran Audubon project where volunteers have spent days researching and counting butterflies and plants as well as birds. The last Spring Bird Count here revealed 95 species. This is a combined Birders Anonymous and Sonoran Audubon trip. Meet at Bell Recreation Center, corner of Boswell and Hutton Dr., Sun City, to LEAVE at 6:30 a.m. OR take Rte. 17 north and take Exit 256. Go to paved road and turn right where there is a parking area on left. Meet rest of group at 7:30 a.m.

Difficulty: 1 Bring lunch

Tuesday March 25, 2003

**Boyce Thompson Southwestern Arboretum
Leader: Tice Supplee 602 258-7080
tice_az@hotmail.com**

This unique state park near Superior is one of our most popular field trip destinations. The diverse flora and permanent water here appeal to many birds year round--some rare for this area. There is a \$6.00 per adult admission charge.

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch.

Contact leader for meeting time and place

**Thursday-Sunday April 3-6, 2003
Gunnison/Grand Junction Colorado
Leader: Bob Bradley
azbradley@earthlink.net**

See the rare Gunnison Sage Grouse booming on the lek. Look for Three-toed Woodpecker, Pine Grosbeak and Gray Jay at Grand Mesa southeast of Grand Junction. We plan to spend the first night in Cortez and will bird at McPhee Reservoir. On Friday we'll stop at Blue Mesa Reservoir enroute to Gunnison where we'll meet Bob who will lead us to the Grouse on Saturday. It's possible to stop at The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park also. Then we'll travel to Grand Junction for all day birding at Grand Mesa with Bob on Sunday.

Please call Eleanor Campbell at 623-977-7639 for details and information on motels, carpooling, etc.

Spring 2003 Field Trips

Saturday April 12, 2003

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

Leader: John Gunn 480-488-6601

This Conservation Area in Cave Creek, managed by the Maricopa County Parks & Recreation Department, is designed to protect and enhance the conservation areas, archeological and natural resources while providing recreational opportunities. Explore the cottonwood riparian area with a leader who knows the scope of the biotic diversity of the area. Warbler migration should be well underway. There is a \$3.00 per adult admission fee. Take Spur Cross Road for 3.5 miles from Cave Creek Road.

Difficulty: 1 Morning only.

Tuesday April 15, 2003

Lake Pleasant/Morgan City Wash

Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

e-mail: rms15247@cs.com

This is a riparian area at Lake Pleasant Regional Park that the public can't use without a ranger present. We'll meet Park Ranger Terry Gerber there for a walk. There is water in the wash that comes from underground springs. Donna Smith, who is a volunteer at the park education center, will take us to spots where birds are known to appear. There is \$5.00 per car fee for admission.

Difficulty: 2 Morning only, but bring lunch if you want to stay and enjoy the park facilities.

This is a Birders Anonymous and Sonoran Audubon combined trip. Meet at Bell Recreation Center, corner of Boswell and Hutton Dr., Sun City, to LEAVE at 7:30 a.m.

Wednesday April 23, 2003

Hassayampa River Preserve

Leader: Lorraine Thompson 623-546-2103

The Nature Conservancy's Preserve on the Hassayampa River near Wickenburg is still open to the public. The trails, maintained by volunteers, continually change due to flooding, but always provide access to a great variety of birds. The endangered Southwest Willow Flycatcher and the Red-shouldered Hawk have nested there for several years. Blue Grosbeak, Yellow-breasted Chat, Black-headed Grosbeak, Hooded Oriole, and many species of vireos **and** warblers are seen at this time of year. There is a \$5.00 donation per adult suggested for TNC non-members.

Difficulty: 1

Morning only, but bring lunch if you want to enjoy the picnic area later. Meet at the Preserve on Route 60 about three miles southeast of Wickenburg, about 50 miles west of Phoenix at 8:30 a.m.

Saturday May 3, 2003

Agua Fria National Monument

Leader: Josh Burns 602-468-3002

josh_a_burns@yahoo.com

SAS has adopted the new Agua Fria National Monument and has initiated a number of projects that reflect a focus on the Agua Fria River. Volunteers have nearly completed a bird list for Arcosanti which lies in the monument. Others are working with BLM to create an ongoing seasonal and distribution checklist for the entire monument with four major bird counts scheduled. To see some of the monument and learn more about the area birds, join our society's treasurer, who has been involved in saving the varied habitat, on this field trip.

Difficulty: 1 Contact leader for meeting time and place.

Friday May 16, 2003

Camp Verde State Park/Verde River

Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535

rms15247@cs.com

Visit the Verde River area during spring migration. Explore Camp Verde Park where there are lots of trees and birds. Last year the leader found a nest of Common Black Hawks there.

Difficulty: 1 Bring Lunch.

This is a Birders Anonymous and Sonoran Audubon combined trip. Meet at Bell Recreation Center, corner of Boswell and Hutton Dr., Sun City, to leave at 6:30 a.m. OR call leader to meet enroute.

Friday May 30-Sunday June 1, 2003

Grey Feathers Lodge

Silver City, New Mexico

Leader: Eleanor Campbell 623-977-7639

ercamp@juno.com

Grey Feathers Lodge advertises itself as "A Birder's Paradise." It is a long rustic building nestled on the side of a mountain in the heart of the Gila Wilderness, 24 miles north of Silver City, N.M., at 6,000 feet. There's a stream across the road, a small lake a few miles away and abundant birding sites nearby. One of the greatest attractions at the lodge is the incredible numbers of hummingbirds that migrate and nest there. During the peak of migration in July it's estimated that they feed 5,000 birds a day!

The cost "in season" is \$49.95 per room double occupancy which includes Full breakfast. Dinners with homemade cakes and pies are available.

The leader will scout out good birding sites prior to the weekend. There is also a local resident who does birding tours as a business. There are only 14 rooms, so make your reservations now if you're interested. Some birds seen from the lodge porch: Montezuma Quail, Piñon Jay, Spotted Owl, Red-faced Warbler, Lazuli Bunting, Calliope Hummingbird.

Calendar of Monthly Meetings...

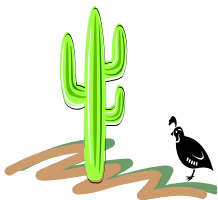
**Location: Auditorium, Glendale Public Library, 5959 West Brown Street
(one block south of Peoria Ave. & 59th Ave. intersection)**

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Mar 12, 2003	Sandy Anderson, Director, Gray Hawk Nature Center "The San Pedro River-Avian Paradise"
Apr 9, 2003	Mike Rupp "Birding the Salt River"
May 14, 2003	Judd Klement , Regional Coordinator , National Audubon Society - Public Policy, "Politics is for the Birds"

Other Dates of Interest:

Mar 5, 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

SONORAN AUDUBON SOCIETY

BALLOT

The chapter by-laws require that all Sonoran Audubon Society members are furnished an election ballot to be included in the March newsletter. If the member is unable to attend the April meeting, this completed ballot is to be mailed to:

Sonoran Audubon Society
P. O. Box 8068
Glendale AZ 85312-8068

The following members were nominated by the nominating committee to fill four positions of Board Member at Large: (two-year term)

_____ Dwayne Fink

_____ Tom Jones

_____ Tom Lazzelle

_____ Bob McCormick

If you will be attending the April meeting, please bring the completed ballot with you.

Those non-members who receive our newsletter, please ignore this ballot.

These are brief biographies of the four candidates for our Board Members at large positions. This is to allow you to have a better idea of the people who were nominated by our nominating committee.

From Bob McCormick:

I moved to the valley in 1985 from Spokane, Washington where I graduated from Whitworth College with a BS in Geology. I went from 100 straight days with an inch of snow to 100 straight days over 100 degrees. I spent my first six years here at Allied Signal doing jet engine test data. I have now been at Fiberquant for 11 years mainly doing microscope work looking at asbestos fibers but I also travel a lot testing buildings for lead paint and I have found that Sweetwater is the best rest stop in the state. My house bird list is now at 60. This weeks highlights include Lark Sparrows, and a flock of 200+ very noisy Red-Winged Black Birds in the front yard. Northern Harriers, Cardinals, and a male Pyrrhuloxia are daily sightings. Abert's Towhees, Curved Bill Thrashers, Cactus Wrens and others nest in the yard. I live close to Tres Rios so I am there usually every other week with my bird dog Daisy May. (The road to the East ponds is almost done)! I also have one of the largest Naval ship photo collections in the US.

From Tom Lazzelle:

I became a member of Monterey Peninsula Audubon in Carmel, California in 1951. I learned about birds and the Audubon philosophy from my school teacher mother. She incorporated the Junior Audubon Club class curriculum materials in her class room and was given an Audubon Camp Scholarship in 1952. Resulting from her influence, and after many local field trips, I led my first bird trip in 1954.

During the past 12 years in Arizona I have been on the State and local Sierra Club Executive Committee, a delegate to the Sierra Club Southwest Region Conservation Committee, and a member of the local Sierra Club Conservation and Political committees.

I volunteer manual labor for the use of any outdoor club in wildlife management or research studies. I represented the Sierra Club at the Empire Ranch Dedication Ceremonies for its conversion to the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area. I received a letter and certificate of appreciation for the Sierra Club from the Bureau of Land Management Field Manager.

Tom Jones

Tom Jones was unavailable at the time of publication so the following is from our April 19, 2000 newsletters. Tom presented the second program of the Sonoran Audubon Society on "The Flora and Fauna of Sonoran Sand Dunes".

Dr. Tom Jones is a professor of biology at Grand Canyon University where he has taught for about eight years. He received his Master's degree at Auburn University and his PhD at Arizona State University. His primary academic interests include ecology, systematic and evolutionary biology of amphibians and reptiles, but an overriding interest in natural history has led him to investigate a variety of plants and animals. At GCU he has been teaching freshman biology, fundamentals of ecology, vertebrate and invertebrate zoology. Tom also has taught a summer course on Neotropic Herpetology at Estacion Biologia Boca del Toro, Panama.

From Dwayne Fink:

Dwayne Fink was a member of the group that initiated the formation of the new Sonoran Audubon Society chapter. He chaired the Bylaws Committee, and has served as liaison to the Membership Committee. He and Josh Burns cooperated in developing a Bird List for Arcosanti, and presently are coordinating a volunteer project by the Chapter with the Bureau of Reclamation, to evaluate the bird life on the Agua Fria National Monument. In a prior life, Dwayne was an agronomist with the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. He gets money requests from the University of Minnesota and Virginia Polytechnic, plus a half dozen other colleges where his kids matriculated. He was on the Board of Maricopa Audubon prior to joining Sonoran. He has the only GOOD xeriscape on his block in Tempe, and wishes his next door neighbors would join in to change this micro habitat into a mini habitat.

Dwayne didn't say that has also has a PhD. I believe he went to the University of Minnesota. I think you can see what a diverse board of directors we have. In a future newsletter I'll put in articles about our other board members. They all have interesting backgrounds.

I know that I mentioned the three board members who are leaving the board, I think I should amplify my remarks. Hugh Rogers was our program chair for the first two years of our existence. He was responsible for getting us off to a wonderful start and we've kept up having great programs ever since. Regina Rogers was our newsletter editor and was responsible for putting together the newsletter format that we still use. Both of them put in many hours of work which resulted in our chapter being in the position it's in.

Bruce Palmer has an extremely interesting background. I first met Bruce when he worked for Arizona Game and Fish. He then went over to the Fish and Wildlife Service working for the federal government. Bruce is not only very knowledgeable about birds but he also knows a lot about other wildlife and plants. I hate to see the three of them leave the board but I can understand we all have limitations on our time.