At our next meeting…. Wednesday, March 13, 2013, at 7 p.m.

Michelle Wiznitzer-Arizona Birding From a Non-birder

Michelle Wiznitzer is a “snowflake in training”, practicing law in Chicago and photographing birds in Arizona. Enlisting the eyes and ears of the Valley’s finest birds, Michelle continues her quest to capture the perfect bird shot.

Raised in the southern Caribbean on the island of Curacao (Netherlands Antilles), Michelle longed to feel sunshine on her bones again and followed her heart out West to Arizona. It was here that she accidently snapped her first hummingbird with her camera. She was instantly hooked. Michelle now ventures out far and wide throughout the State of Arizona to photograph our fine feathered friends. She hopes to capture them all….

Editors Note: I first met Michelle over a year ago when I went to the El Dorado senior living community in Sun City. She was giving a bird program to the residents and I had been invited there to view their facilities and sit in on the program since I was scheduled to also give one in the near future. I couldn’t help but immediately have an affinity for this bubbly photographer and her knack of speaking. I asked if she would consider giving a program for our Chapter and she kindly said yes.

Verdin—by Michelle Wiznitzer
What’s Happening in our Chapter
By George Wall

There was a Board Meeting on February 6, 2013. All of the Board members attended.

The January minutes were approved and the committee reports were given. On Membership, there are currently 811 members that included 154 Friends. There were no changes in the Trip and Program Committees. The Education/Conservation gave their report that all is set for the Girl Scout birding badge on March 2nd and April 6th. The financial report was given and approved. It was determined that we have enough (approximately 30) binoculars for this event.

A discussion was held on the nominations for the coming elections and Haylie Hewitt has stepped up to become our next President. See page 4 for the nominees.

The picnic is all set for March 23rd. A silent auction and a raffle will be held. We have a lot of items for both.

Karen LaFrance will be working on another Together Green Grant.

The February general membership meeting was held on the 13th. David and Diane Reesor present a great program Antarctic and South George. We had almost 80 people show up for the program and had to actually set up more chairs. They will be giving another program on Brazil next year.

2013 Field Trips—Spring

REQUIREMENT: On all trips, YOU MUST make reservations by calling the leader or the contact person. They can then give updated information as to the meeting place, times, etc. Also, some trips are limited in size. Anyone can do these trips and if a novice, you’ll get plenty of help.

Saturday, March 9, 2013
Estrella Mountain Regional Park
Leader: Joe Ford 623-792-8154 lford25@cox.net

Estrella Mountain Regional Park is located on the south side of the Gila River in Goodyear at Bullard Ave. and Vineyard Rd. There is a $6.00 per vehicle charge for entering the park

This is a two hour hike in the park and along the Gila river discovering the bird life of the park. Between the river habitat, the mesquite bosque, the nearby farm fields, and the turf area, over 150 different species have been observed.

Difficulty: 1

Meet at the Visitors Center parking lot at 8 a.m.

After this bird walk, go over to the Tres Rios Nature and Earth Festival. See page 7.

Thursday, March 21, 2013
East Verde River
Leader: Dan Bohlmann 602-938-8244
dansbohlmann@prodigy.net

The East Verde River has lots of sycamore and cottonwood trees that line it, lots of water and thus lots of birds. This is a great birding area that has the potential for variety of warblers, vireos, woodpeckers, flycatchers, phoebes, swallows, etc. The Tonto Natural Bridge State Park is a unique area that presents different habitats in the same small place. The bridge itself is more like a tunnel that Pine Creek flows through. These two areas should produce lots of birds.

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch

Meet at Fry’s Electronics Store, 31st Ave. and Thunderbird in the parking lot on the north side of the building (N.E. corner) at 7 a.m.

Saturday, April 6, 2013
Robbins Butte
Leader: Bob McCormick
Car Pool contact: Dan Bohlmann 602-938-8244
dansbohlmann@prodigy.net

Robbins Butte is a Wildlife Area administered by the AZ Game and Fish Dept. Here we will meet Ryan Sutter who is the new manager. In the past, we have had two picnics at this location as well as a couple of bird walks. No telling what you might see. In the past we have seen Bald Eagles, Sage Sparrows and a Great Horned Owl perched on the Butte.

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch

For car pooling, meet at Denny's on W. side of Litchfield Rd. just N. of I-10. If we leave there by 7:30, we will be at Robbins Butte by 8 a.m.

Directions: Get on 101 and head towards I10. Take the exit for Los Angeles. Take I10 several miles and get off at exit 112 which is Hwy 85. Robbins Butte is exactly 7 miles from I-10 on Hwy. 85. It is on the right hand side of the road and there will be a sign just before the dirt road. The dirt road runs about two miles to the Ranger’s house.

Thursday-Sunday, April 18-21, 2013
Aravaipa Ranch near Dudleyville
Leader: George Wall 623-875-7057 gwall5@cox.net

This trip is a three night stay at a private ranch. There are 55 acres of land with a continuous flowing creek. The ranch house is amid a pecan orchard surround by cottonwoods. There are trails galore. This is a perfect place and a perfect time for lots of birds. (Continued on Page 3)
2013 Field Trips-Spring

We’ll bring food for the three nights and the participants will bring their own breakfasts and lunches. There is a huge kitchen with all the facilities needed to cook anything. The ranch house has three bathrooms and seven bedrooms all completely furnished with towels and bed linens and pillows. The rooms hold anywhere from 2 – 5 people. This trip is limited to 20 people and no more than 5 vehicles that are high clearance. Cost will be $105 per person total for the 3 nights plus cost for food and for gas if you’re riding with someone.

Difficulty: 1

Further instructions, room assignments, car pooling and directions will be given to participants later on.

Friday, May 3, 2013
Mt. Ord
Leader: Andrée Tarby 602-421-9425 awtarby@gmail.com

This is a perfect time of year to go to Mt. Ord for birds. There are grassland, pinyon, juniper, and ponderosa pine habitats. Mt. Ord is the highest bird habitat in Maricopa County. We may encounter Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Scott’s Oriole, Gray Vireo, Black-chinned Sparrow, and many warblers as well as Summer and Hepatic Tanagers. A high-clearance vehicle is required.

Difficulty: 2 Bring a lunch

Meet at Denny’s in Fountain Hills to leave at 7 a.m.

Saturday, June 15, 2013
New River Nature Preserve
Leader: Bob McCormick mcbobaz@aol.com

Have you ever driven North on I-17 and wondered what that slender band of green is off to the East just past New River? Deeded to the Desert Foothills Land Trust in 1994, the New River Nature Preserve is a 20.8-acre habitat open during daylight hours to hikers and people on bikes or horseback. Bedrock comes to the surface here bringing with it the ground water that allows a mix of fan palms, willows, mesquite, native walnuts, cottonwood, gum and sycamore trees to thrive on the perennial spring waters. Lucy’s warblers, Bell’s Vireos, woodpeckers, cuckoos, Common Black-Hawks and several types of frogs have been seen on previous trips.

Difficulty 1 Bring a lunch

For car pooling, meet at the Bell Road Park and Ride lot on the SW corner of Bell and I-17. We will leave at 6:45 a.m. to arrive on site by 7:30 a.m.

Directions: From Phoenix, exit I-17 (exit 232) and take frontage road North roughly 2.2 miles (the road turns to dirt after 1 mile, but it’s passable by sedan) to a 3-way junction where there’s a row of mailboxes and a street sign reading Coyote Pass/Old Stage Road. You can park across from the mailboxes. There's room for about 3-4 cars. Do not block the private driveways in the area. From here, wall the dirt road straight ahead for about 0.1 mile, there will be a New River Preserve sign and a gate.

FAMILY BIRD WALKS AT ESTRELLA
Sponsored by the Sonoran Audubon Society

Estrella Mountain Regional Park is located on the south side of the Gila River in Goodyear at Bullard Ave. and Vineyard Rd. There is a $6.00 per vehicle charge for entering the park.

Join the Sonoran Audubon Society for an easy two hour hike in the park and along the Gila river. Over 150 different species have been observed at the park. We have a Saturday and Sunday walk each month. Bring your own binoculars and books if you have them, a limited number will be available.

SATURDAYS: These walks are held the second Saturday of each month. The next walk will be March 9, 2013. Meet at the visitors center parking lot at 8 a.m. The walk will last approximately two hours. For further information, contact Joe Ford: 623-792-8154 lford25@cox.net.

SUNDAYS: These walks are held on the fourth Sunday of the month. The next one will be on March 24, 2013, starting at 8 a.m. Follow the signs to the dirt parking lot on the east side of the park—the Navy Area. For further information contact Bob McCormick at 602-373-2952 mcbobaz@aol.com or Andrée Tarby at 602-421-9425 awtarby@gmail.com.

Book Review
By Evelyn Cheso

“Living in the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds” by Scott Weidensaul is not a new book; in fact, it was written back in 1999. It can still be purchased from many places like Amazon for approximately $12.00.

It is a fascinating book on bird migration. It is very well written and includes details of raptors to songbirds in their migration from one continent to another. I highly recommend it to anyone interested in how our birds live and survive for these many thousands of years.

There are numerous recent praises for this book at many sites like www.goodreads.com. Check it out!
Welcome and Thank You

Since our last newsletter, more people joined the National Audubon Society that live in our designated area. This automatically makes all of them a member of our chapter. These members are Linda Baltsen, Barbara Bullis, Barbara Chilleen, Shirley Compau, Sean and Trish Costello, Peggy Cullen, Jack Dau, Ashley Davis, Michael and Christine Dicken, Martha Fruechtem, Roberta Fru-merie, Linda Fugitt, Audrey Gallow, Roberta Guth, Theresa Hedrick, Keven Keller, Lynell Larson, Rich Marcia Moe, Kathyrn Martino, Pamela Nicola, Deb Piper, Lee Sliwa, Betty Sturm and Anne Varner. If any names are misspelled, we apologize, but these are the spellings received from National.

Welcome All! I also want to thank all the “Friends” who re-upped for another year as my recruiter used to say.
What Makes a Backyard Bird Habitat
By George Wall

In the October 2012, Sonoran Audubon Society Newsletter, I talked about sources of water. This article expounds on that one. You want a water source for your birds and most likely it will be a bird bath of some sort or even a pond.

Bird baths can be made of many materials like a durable resin, fiberglass, marble, ceramic, metal (copper and brass are the best metal ones), or formed cement one. The ideal backyard bird bath would be a pond, and they can be cheap or costly depending on what you want. The one shown below is a 4 ft. x 6 ft. and 18 inches deep in the center. The cost is $150. This does not include the running fountain, the rocks and other things around it. The kit just has the lining and instructions. It’s up to you to finish it, but that could be fun.

Now we’ll go to the opposite end of the spectrum. I really loved this picture that appeared in the May 2012 newsletter. It was taken in Dwayne Fink’s backyard and it’s so simple, yet so useful. It can easily be cleaned and also filled using a water can or rainwater if it’s about to rain.

The drip system is one of the best ways to keep water flowing into a bird bath whether on the ground, on a pedestal, hanging down or whatever. You usually have some type of hookup going from a faucet to some type of tubing. The tubing can be simple like the one on the left or very decorative like the one on the right. The drip system keeps the water in motion which attracts birds and keeps the mosquitoes away.
What Makes a Backyard Bird Habitat
By George Wall

The water agitator is another way of keeping the water in motion. There even have solar powered ones. Some of them have a little electric pump so that when the solar power runs out, the pump takes over. The cascading water one is nice.

I like the one I have in my yard. It involves a small $20 electric motor that I put in my cement fountain. The fountain spray certainly disturbs the water and definitely attracts the birds. In fact, hummingbirds like to fly through the water. I have a 1/4 inch rubber tubing attached to one of my faucets running underground and into the back of the fountain. I turn the water on so that it only drips very slowly. The fountain sits on a simple rock/cement foundation that I easily made. I ran my electricity for the motor through a PCV pipe that I put underground from an outdoor outlet.

There are a few other things you should know about putting a bird bath in your backyard. You should pick out a location that is shady (mine is shady as soon as the grape arbor not too far away starts getting it’s leaves. Also a big tree blocks the sun most of the time). Also, try to keep (as much as possible) the bird bath away from dropping leaves or clippings. At the same time, don’t put the bird bath right near a bird feeder where seeds may fall in.

With all fountains, drippers or whatever bird bath you have, they will get dirty. The longer they sit there the dirtier they’ll get and algae will start to grow especially in summer. That leads to the next thing – cleaning. I only clean my fountain once a month and even though there are algae at the bottom, it only takes me a few minutes of physical time. I put about three cups of chlorine bleach into the fountain and let it sit for a about three hours. Before I walk away for those three hours, I throw a small tarp over it so the birds won’t get into the chlorinated water. After the three hours, I turn off the electricity to the pump and then use my shop-vacuum to suck up the water. I dump the old water and fill up the fountain again using a high-powered spray from my hose. This will dislodge anything stuck on the bottom or sides of the fountain. After the fourth fill up, the water is clear. To keep it clear, I use a product called Fountec which controls algae and is also a clarifier. There are some other brands that work, but I like this one the best and is safe for birds. I use 10 drops every week which keeps the algae from showing in the water. Even with the best of care though, algae will still grow on the bottom especially during the summer which is why I clean the fountain once a month.
Tres Rios Nature and Earth Festival  
Saturday-Sunday, March 9-10, 2013 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
The event and activities are free – Parking is $3 per vehicle

Tres Rios Nature and Earth Festival is an annual two-day outdoor event that focuses on the rich diversity of wildlife, habitat, history and culture of the Gila River drainage. This is an opportunity to celebrate the rich heritage, ecology, history and wildlife of the Gila, Salt and Agua Fria Rivers! It is a great opportunity for the whole family to enjoy a beautiful spring day in Arizona and learn something about the place we call home.

Activities Include: Canoe Excursions, Hikes, Fishing Clinic, Early Birding Tours 7:30-9 a.m. (Pre-register by e-mail to McBobAZ@aol.com or phone to 602-237-3951), Regular Birding Tours 9:30 and on, Fashion Show: Recycling Fashion Show for kids Kindergarten through 6th grades and Stage Entertainment daily.

To reach the Baseline Meridian Wildlife Area just Southwest of Phoenix:  
From central Phoenix, take I-10 west to Avondale Blvd./115 Ave. exit. Travel south on Avondale Blvd./115th Ave. towards Phoenix International Raceway. You’ll see the parking area on left.

See the website at http://www.tresriosnaturefestival.com/activities.htm for more info and detailed maps.

THE SONORAN AUDUBON SOCIETY’S  
SIXTH ANNUAL PICNIC  
Saturday, March 23, 2013  
at  
Horseshoe Ranch  
Agua Fria National Monument  
EVERYONE IS WELCOME

There will be a Bird Walk from 8—10 a.m. Regular festivities go from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Free Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, cold drinks and water (attendees will be asked to bring a small side dish if they can).

A Raffle & Silent Auction—Including a Pink Jeep Tour Voucher, Telescope, Book Reader, Nature Photographs and much more. Proceeds will be used for our conservation and birding projects like the Speakers Bureau, Girl Scouts birding badges, and Building Our Bird-Friendly Community. Be prepared to support these worthwhile project by bringing your checkbook or cash.

This is a fun event with lots of camaraderie. If possible, bring your own lawn chair.

There are restroom facilities.

Directions: Horseshoe Ranch in the Agua Fria National Monument is 60 miles north of Phoenix. Take I-17 towards Flagstaff and take exit 259 (Go east on Bloody Basin Road which turns into a well established dirt road) and bear right for approximately 5 miles. Gate entrance is on the left and it will be well marked.

Reservations Needed: Contact George Wall at 623-875-7057 gwall5@cox.net

This is a free event and open to all who are interested in birds and fellowship. You do not have to be a member to attend.
EVENTS IN AND AROUND THE VALLEY

Audubon Arizona Rio Salado Habitat

Audubon’s Birds ‘n Beer, is being offered on March 21st from 5:30-7:30 p.m. with the program beginning at 6:30 p.m. This event is held every third Thursday of the month sponsored by Four Peaks Brewery. Proceeds from the sale of beer go to Audubon Arizona. Local professionals will present a program and give you a refreshing way to learn about Arizona birds and other wildlife.

The Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center is located at 3131 S. Central Avenue in Phoenix and their regular hours except for special events are Tuesday-Sunday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 602-468-6470 or e-mail riosalado@audubon.org, for more information about their programs and events.

Birders’ Anonymous

Birders’ Anonymous has their monthly meeting on the 3rd Friday of each month from October through May starting at 10:00 a.m. at the Church of the Palms on the corner of Boswell and 103rd Ave. in Sun City. The next meeting is on March 15, 2013. Joel Pearson will be giving a video program on the Lesser Nighthawks. The monthly trip will be March 2nd to Hassayampa River Preserve for bird banding and then birding. Meet at the church parking lot to leave at 8 a.m. Anyone is welcome to attend the meetings and trips.

For further information on Birders’ Anonymous meetings, programs and trips contact Marshall Esty at 623-977-1637 mne@juno.com or Shirley Fackelman at shirleyfackelman@yahoo.com. Better yet, come to the meeting.

Hassayampa River Preserve

Anne Leight has bird banding programs on Saturday, March 2nd and on Sunday, March 10th at 6:30 a.m. Newcomers are welcome; however, if you want to help bird band, you must contact Anne Leight at birdannabelle@hotmail.com.

There will be an Interpretive Tour on Saturday, March 30th from 8:30-10 a.m. Enjoy an easy paced walk along the trails with a docent to catch sight of resident and migratory birds.

Bird Nests and Eggs is March 3rd, Sunday, 8-10:30 a.m. Learn how to identify bird nests and eggs from professional bird tour leader Kathe Anderson.

Hassayampa is having its Nature Festival again this year. It will be held Saturday, April 6th, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. The Sonoran Audubon Society will have a table there again this year.

Hassayampa is open mid-September through mid-May Wednesday-Sunday 8 a.m.–5 p.m. and mid-May through mid-September Friday-Sunday 7-11 a.m. Entrance fees are $5.00 for adults and $3.00 for children. Members fee is $3.00.

Gilbert Water Ranch

This is one of the best places in the valley to bird watch. There are nice easy trails that you can walk that take you around numerous ponds. There is also a nice visitor center.

Take highway 60 to Greenfield Road. Turn right and drive S. on Greenfield for 1.5 miles. Turn east (left) on Guadalupe. The entrance to the parking lot for the Water Ranch is the third driveway on the right. See their website at http://sites.google.com/site/birdsofthegilbertwaterranch/

Desert Botanical Garden

Each week on Mondays there is a bird walk. The bird walks for March will be starting at 8 a.m.

Desert Botanical Garden entrance fees are $18 for adults, $15 for seniors and $10 for students. DBG Membership is $65 a year ($75 for Families). When special events are held, the entry fee could be higher. See their website at www.dbg.org for further information.

Arizona Field Ornithologists

See their website at www.Azfo.org for more details.

Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Learn to identify resident birds and seasonal migrants on a bird walk guided by Arizona Game and Fish Department avian expert Troy Corman and Prescott College Professor Carl Tomoff on March 2nd, Richard Ditch March 10th, Craig Anderson March 16th, and Kathe Anderson March 24th.

Boyce Thompson Arboretum opens at 8:00 a.m. $9.00 for adults, $4.50 for ages 5-12. For driving directions or other details, call 520-689-2811 or visit their website at http://arboretum.ag.arizona.edu/.

Festivals/Expos


Arizona Archaeology Expo, Saturday, March 16, 2013

This will be held at Horseshoe Ranch at the Agua Fria National Monument. Event hours are 9 a.m.—4 p.m.

This year’s Expo will offer educational attractions and activities for archaeology and history buffs. This is a FREE event.

Horseshoe Ranch is 60 miles north of Phoenix. Take exit 259 off of I-17.
Calendar of Monthly Meetings…

Location: West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, corner of 59th Ave. and Cholla in Glendale — Time: 6:30 p.m. for socializing and 7 p.m. for the start of the meeting and program.

Upcoming Schedule:

March 13, 2013: Michelle Wiznitzer—Arizona Birding from a Non-birder

April 10, 2013: Thomas Gaskill—Jays, Nutcrackers and Pines

May 8, 2013: David Dise—Brown Canyon & Area Adventure

October 9, 2013: Ross Hawkins—Hummingbirds Galore

November 13, 2013: Len Boeder—His Best Bird Pictures

February 12, 2014: David and Diane Reesor—Brazil

Other Dates of Interest: March 6, 2013, 7 p.m. Monthly Board Meeting at above location. Members are invited to attend as guests. Annual picnic on March 23rd.

Sonoran Audubon Society Officers, Board Members and Committee Contacts:

Officers
President: George Wall 623-875-7057 gwall5@cox.net
Vice President: Tim Cullison 602-863-9744
timcullisonaz@aol.com
Treasurer: Haylie Hewitt 623-581-1180
haylie.hewitt@cox.net
Secretary: Gail Bliss 623-877-3317 gmbliss@juno.com

Board Members—Directors at Large
John Arnett 623-695-0953 treerunner@yahoo.com
Eleanor Campbell 623-977-7639 ercamp@juno.com
Jim Consolloy 609-439-8851 jconsolloy@gmail.com
Joe Ford: 623-792-8154 jford25@cox.net
Darnell Kirksey 602-938-6174 dkirk38338@aol.com
Andrée Tarby 602-421-9425 awtarby@gmail.com
Jerry Theis 623-878-6258 jerry.theis@bannerhealth.com

Committees
Programs: Darnell Kirksey, Jerry Theis and George Wall—See phone numbers and e-mail addresses above.

Education/Conservation: Currently meeting every month; contact Karen LaFrance 602-809-3360 klaf40@gmail.com.

Field Trips: Dan Bohlmann 602-938-8244
dansbohlmann@prodigy.net

Hospitality: Haylie Hewitt 623-581-1180
haylie.hewitt@cox.net

Publicity: Tim Cullison: 602-863-9744
timcullisonaz@aol.com

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

Database Manager: Tom Lazzelle 602-843-8451
tlazzelle@cox.net

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

Upper Agua Fria Watershed Project: Karen LaFrance 602-809-3360 klaf40@gmail.com

SAS Web Site: www.sonoranaudubon.org
Audubon Arizona Web Site: www.azaudubon.org
Desert Rivers Audubon Web Site: www.desertriversaudubon.org
Maricopa Audubon Web Site: www.maricopaaudubon.org
Arizona Field Ornithologists: www.azfo.org
National Audubon: http://audubon.org/

Care Centers for Birds

Fallen Feathers
Handles and cares for all birds
9532 W. Cielo Grande, Peoria
Jodie Kieran 623-533-2348
623-566-5302

Adobe Mtn. Wildlife Center
Cares for all wildlife including birds
1-17 & Pinnacle Peak
623-582-9806

Wild At Heart
Raptors only
31840 N. 45th St.
Cave Creek
480-595-5047

7480 W. Bell Rd in Glendale and located near 75th Avenue behind Mimi’s Café and next to the Souper Salad.
Ph: 623-773-3000—Website: http://Glendale.wbu.com

www.pinkadventuretours.com
Friends of the Sonoran Audubon Society provide the principal financial support for the chapter and its activities. SAS operates with a minimum overhead (chapter administration and insurance) in order to make revenues go as far as possible. All Friends contributions are fully tax-deductible.

THE FRIENDS

( ) I would like to become a Friend of the Sonoran Audubon Society. Indicate your choice of level:
( ) Verdin (Adult) $20.00 to $49.99 per year
( ) Burrowing Owl (Seniors) rate $15.00 to $49.99 per year
( ) Cactus Wren $50.00 to $99.99 per year
( ) Gilded Flicker $100.00 or more per year.
( ) Newsletter $10

NAME(S) ________________________________________________________________
ADDRESS _______________________________________________________________
CITY, STATE AND ZIPCODE ______________________________________________
PHONE: ________________________
E-mail ___________________________________________________________________

Send to SONORAN AUDUBON SOCIETY, P O Box 8068, Glendale, AZ 85312-8068

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