At our next meeting…. Wednesday, September 14, 2011, at 7 p.m.
George Wall—Alamos and Beyond

Our scheduled program was to be on Gardening for Birds by Kendall Kroes- sen of Tucson Audubon; however, due to conflicts with his schedule, he had to cancel and we rescheduled him for February of next year. As a re- sult, I’m presenting a program that I had ready for just such a cancellation.

I’ve made four trips down to Alamos, Mexico, over the years and all of them were excellent. This program covers all four trips that started in 2001 and ended with the last one in 2010. 27 of our members or past members attended at least one of these trips. The attendees were in alphabetical order were Len Boeder, Bob Bradley, Eleanor Campbell, Anne Durning, Joyce Eggert, Marshall Esty, Shirley Fackelman, Dick Fogle, Joe Ford, Darlene Gatto, Gerry Horton, MaryAnn Hovan, Rich and Karen Kaiser, Chuck Kangas, Ken and Rosita Larsen, MariIynn Lauterbach, Vera Markham, Jane McNeill, Barb Meding, Jim Morgan, Nancy Reed, Andrée Tarby, Austin Turner and George and Maria Wall.

About Alamos—Diego de Guzman, a Spanish explorer, came through the location where Alamos was eventually to be settled in 1533. Another Ex- plorer, Francisco Vazquez de Coronado and the future gover- nor of Western Mex- ico, camped in Ala- mos in 1540. Alamos got its mission in 1683. One of the places we stayed at was “The Citadel” built in the 1680’s. It was originally a garri- son fort.

Today, Alamos has about 8,000 residents and tourists are flocking to this very old city which is located almost 600 miles from here.

As your president and newsletter editor, I am not going to go into a lot of detail about myself. You know that I travel a lot. I just got back from an eight day trip to Northwest Mexico which is on page four and was written and inserted prior to my knowing about the change in program schedules. I spent the entire month of April 2011, in Kenya, Africa, and I’ll do a program on that trip next January. If my health holds, I’m plan- ning more trips around the world. There is so much to see out there and so little time.

I hope you enjoy this program as much as I enjoyed putting it together.
What’s Happening in our Chapter?
By Your Editor, George Wall

A few birding trips were cancelled this summer due to non-participation. Perhaps the heat, snowbirds being away or just no interest in the birding spot was to blame. We have some very nice field trips scheduled for the coming fall and winter. Hope to see you come out to some of these trips.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 1, 2011. This is our annual Retreat which will be held at the Hassayampa River Preserve in Wickenburg. We will be making our plans, goals and where we want to be in the future. We can use all ideas.

Looking over the attendance sheets for September 2010 through May 2011, there were two people who managed to make all the general membership meetings. They were Eleanor Campbell and Joe Ford—both are board members. The average attendance during this period was 45. I hope to see you this year.

Thursday, September 22, 2011
Arlington Valley Area
Leader: Donna Smith 623-556-9535
rms15247@cox.net

Arlington Valley west of Phoenix and south of Arlington with its fields, ponds, canals, a dam, and a desert butte provides a variety of habitats to search for birds. In a previous year in September, 61 species were seen with the best being a Pectoral Sandpiper.

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch.

Meet in the parking lot of the zoo on Northern Ave. near the aquarium to leave at 6:30 a.m.

Wednesday, September 28, 2011
Glendale Recharge Ponds
Leader: Rich Schooler 623-930-8904 raschooler@cox.net

The recharge ponds currently have water and this should make for a good morning trip to see some shorebirds as well as some others in nearby trees.

Difficulty: 1

Meet at the Burger King Meet just off of 101 on Thunderbird in Peoria to leave at 6:30 a.m.

Saturday, October 1, 2011
Hassayampa River Preserve
Leader: George Wall, 623-875-7057 gwall5@cox.net

This is the day of our annual retreat in which everyone is welcome to participate. We’ll have a bird walk starting at 7 a.m. prior to our breakfast and meeting at 8:30 a.m. Anyone is welcome to show up for the bird walk even if they don’t attend the retreat.

Difficulty: 1

Meet at the Hassayampa River Preserve at 7 a.m.

Wednesday, October 19, 2011
Dead Horse Ranch State Park
Leader: Dan Bohlmann 602-938-8244 dansbohlmann@prodigy.net

This is where they have the Verde Birding and Nature Festival every year. Lots of trails and great birding. For a list of the birds seen there go to: http://www.birdyverde.org/

Difficulty: 1 Bring a lunch.

Meet at the McDonald's at I-17 & Carefree Highway at 6 a.m. Limit of 12 people (3 car loads). Note: there is an admission charge of $7 per vehicle.

(Continued on Page 3)
2011 Field Trips—Fall/Winter

Thursday, November 3, 2011
Badger Springs
Leader: George Wall, 623-875-7057
gwall5@cox.net

Enjoy both desert and a unique riparian habitat at one of our national monuments. Petroglyphs enhance the scenery of the site. Badger Springs is a part of the Agua Fria National Monument with a variety of habitats there including a desert and mesquite area, a cottonwoods stand, and a trail leading down to the Agua Fria River where the river runs all year long at this location.

Difficulty: 1-2
We’ll be eating lunch at the Roadrunner Restaurant & Saloon in New River. They have great hamburgers.

Meet at the Burger King just off of 101 on Thunderbird in Peoria to leave at 6:30 a.m. or at McDonald’s at I-17 & Carefree Highway at 7 a.m.

Wednesday, November 16, 2011
Gilbert Water Ranch
Leader: Rich Schooler, 623-930-8904
raschooler@cox.net

Visit the Gilbert Water Ranch located at the SE corner of Guadalupe Rd. and Greenfield Rd. (go east on US 60, then south to Guadalupe Rd.) and park in front of the library. A bird list of more than 140 species has been compiled there including more than 50 species of water/shorebirds including Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets.

Difficulty: 1
Meet at the Wal-Mart parking lot at Northern and 55th Ave. to leave at 7 a.m.

Tuesday, December 6, 2011
Tres Rios – new area
Leader: Vera Markham , 623-974-1110
vjmsaint@cox.net

The new area of Tres Rios is not yet open to the public except for organizations like us. There are a series of ponds and roads that wind around the area making the viewing of birds, especially water and shore birds, very easy. This should be a perfect time to see a lot of them.

Difficulty: 1
Meet at the Burger King just off of 101 on Thunderbird in Peoria to leave at 7 a.m.

Friday–Sunday, April 27-29, 2012
Brown Canyon Ranch & Area
Leader: George Wall, 623-875-7057
gwall5@cox.net

This is a special trip that we have arranged with Buenos Aires National Wildlife Preserve. We have reserved the Brown Canyon Environmental Education Center. This is a 7 bedroom ranch house that sleeps 14 on the second floor. This means there will be roommates. It has 2 bathrooms on the upper floor and a bathroom on the bottom floor. There is a large kitchen with refrigerator and oven and a very large meeting room with a huge table to seat everyone.

This ranch house is located on a dirt road quite a distance from the paved road. A canyon wash (sometimes with water) leads up into the mountains to an archway. Birds abound especially if there is water. Not only will we bird here, but also at nearby spots like the preserve and Arivaca.

There is limit of 14 people. The cost for renting is $560 for the two nights. This means if we get 14 people (which I anticipate easily), the cost will be $40 for the two nights plus your travel costs. You have to bring your own linens for your bed or a sleeping bag, towel, and any other toilet necessities. We chip for the suppers (usually spaghetti/meatballs, salad and dessert one night and hot dogs, potato salad, baked beans and dessert the next). You bring your own food for breakfast and lunches.

I’ve stayed there 3 times in past years; so, I’ll do all the planning and preparation for this trip. Once I have commitments, I’ll request the $40 which will only be refundable if we can get someone to fill your spot. I anticipate this trip to be a sellout. More details will be sent to participants at a later date.
Northwest Mexico
By George Wall

Have you seen the Thick-billed Parrot, one of the most endangered bird species with only about 3,000 still surviving? Well, that was my goal when I signed up for the Northwest Mexico trip with David MacKay of Solipaso.

Many of you might think “He’s crazy to go into Mexico”. Believe me; Mexico is much safer than some areas of Phoenix. The killing in Mexico is between drug cartel gangs, police and the army. I’ve been to Mexico dozens of times and I have always felt completely safe especially with David MacKay, an American who speaks fluent Spanish and owns a home and cabins on his twenty acres in Alamos, Mexico. This was my fifth trip with him. See his website at www.solipaso.com.

This trip focused on the birds of the northern Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range, both in Chihuahua and Sonora. This rugged area of Mexico is home to a whole range of interesting birds, including a high number of Mexican endemics.

Five of us, David Hursh, John and Barbara Perry, Kathy Sanders and myself, were picked up in Tucson by David and his assistant, Rafael Arenas, in their large van. We made our way into Mexico and our first stop was at Lake Colorado where we saw a couple of interesting birds – a Black Tern and a Snow Goose before spending our first night in Nuevo Casas Grandes. The next morning, we continued our birding on our way to the logging town of Madera. However, before getting there, we saw the Paquime Indian Ruins called Cuarenta Casas (Forty Homes). It was a spectacular sight.

The next morning we visited Ejido el Largo Thick-billed Parrot Reserve, and looked for the Thick-billed Parrot and we found about 60 of them. From Madera, we headed to the natural marvel of Basaseachic Falls, one of the highest single drop waterfalls in the world where we spent time marveling at the falls and also birding. We spent a couple of days in Yecora where we saw some beautiful birds and finally ended up in the city of Hermosillo, state capital of Sonora, for a going away dinner party.

The entire eight day trip turned up 190 different species including the Eared Quetzal, Elegant and Mountain Trogans among others. It was a very satisfying trip adding 10 lifers to my list.
Burrowing Owl Project

Greg Clark, who is in charge of reestablishing Burrow Owls throughout Arizona, sent a request for help. Our board met and discussed the situation. Since we are involved in so many projects, we are going to leave this particular project to you – our members and readers. Here is the gist of the message.

Wild At Heart is going to start installing 400 artificial owl burrows at a farm Northwest of Gila Bend on October 15th and November 19th—other dates may be established. Sonoran Audubon Society members would sure be welcome on those dates. Unlike most of my large installations such as this one, there is no local base of community organizations that I can call on to ask for installation help. Also, a farmer near the new site has installed 200 burrows this year and has another 200 to go and he is using some volunteers for that project. So, I need to ask for help from any group or person that might be able to help between October 2011 and January 2012. The farmer will be creating the trenches we need to install the burrow materials, the volunteers will be hooking up the tubing to the burrows and putting some soil back in to stabilize everything so a machine will do the rest. I can create a work day that fits into the volunteer’s schedule (or more than one work day if you were so inclined!). I will need 6-8 work days to complete this project, such as 2 per month between October and January. Once we get to the end of February it is time to put up release tents and put the owls inside. Also something we would need help with, but now the habitat is the focus. The farm is located near Painted Rock Dam, not too far from Gila Bend, and there is a paved road to the farm. – Greg Clark

If you are interested in helping with this worthwhile project, contact Greg Clark at gsc.rai@earthlink.net

FAMILY BIRD WALKS AT ESTRELLA
Sponsored by the Sonoran Audubon Society

Estrella Mountain Park is located on the south side of the Gila River in Goodyear at Bullard Ave. and Vineyard Rd.

SUMMER WALKS have been ongoing this year with Joe Ford leading the walks. The response has been great in both attendance and in the number of birds seen. The final walk for the summer will be held on September 10, 2011, starting at 7 a.m.

SATURDAYS: These walks are held the second Saturday of each month. The next walk will be on Saturday, October 8, 2011. Meet at the visitor’s center parking lot at 8:00 a.m. The walk will last approximately 2 hours. For further information, contact Rich Schooler at 623-930-8904, raschooler@cox.net.

SUNDAYS: These walks are held the fourth Sunday of each month. The next walk will be on Sunday, October 23, 2011, at 8:00 a.m. Follow the signs to the dirt parking lot on the east side of the park (Navy Area). For further information contact Bob McCormick at 602-373-2952 mchobaz@aol.com or Andrée Tarby at 480-948-1074 atarby@cox.net.

There is a $6.00 per vehicle charge for entering the park; however, the bird walks are free of charge.
The Palmchat
Submitted by Dr. Jerry Theis

The Palmchat, *Dulus dominicus*, is a small, long-tailed passerine bird, the only species in the genus *Dulus* and the family *Dulidae*. It is thought to be related to the waxwings and is sometimes classified with that group. The Palmchat is the national bird of the Dominican Republic and is endemic to the island of Hispaniola, including the adjacent Saona and Gonave Islands.

On both my visits to the Dominican Republic, in March of 2008 with FONT and again in March of 2011 with Field Guides, the Palmchat was one of the first birds I saw and heard. It is found in the city as well as in the countryside and is one of the easiest endemics to add to your Caribbean list. The Palmchat is common, conspicuous and widespread in lowlands to mid-elevation. Its habitat is primarily royal palm savannas (it favors *Roystonea* palms) and also other open areas with scattered trees. It is arboreal and forms flocks. It is noisy, particularly around the nest, producing a variety of strange call notes. It is an odd bird, looking most like a coarse-plumaged tanager or oriole. It is 8 inches long, dark brown above with underparts whitish and heavily streaked with brown. It is plump-bodied with medium length wings. The bill is longish, rather heavy and slightly hooked. The Palmchat’s diet is mainly fruits and berries, including those of palms and the Gumbo-limbo tree, as well as flowers, especially those of epiphytic orchids.

The Palmchat’s name reflects its strong association with palms for feeding, roosting, and nesting. Many birds combine to build a colonial nest of twigs at the top of a palm tree (telephone poles may also be used). This serves as a place to roost at night and as a breeding center. Each pair has its own apartment with a separate entrance. Females lay clutches of 2-4 thickly spotted, grey-purple eggs. The nest can be up to ten feet high and four feet in diameter! A nest may contain up to 30 individual chambers. A Palmchat nest is so large that other birds may nest on top of it. In 2011, we saw such a nest on nest situation in the eastern end of the Dominican Republic in a palm tree within Los Haitises National Park. The bird, another island endemic, found nesting on top of the Palmchat nest will be the topic for next month. Any guesses?

Thank You

Larry and Sharon Levinson rejoined us as a “Friend” and member of the Sonoran Audubon Society just prior to summer. If you aren’t a “Friend” join us. I’d love to put your name here. Remember, a “Friend” membership goes from January 1st through December 31st of each year.
A Fascination for Feathers
Book Review by George Wall

I just finished reading “A Fascination for Feathers” which consisted of observations, tales, and recollections about birds by Connie M. Thompson and I did find it interesting. It’s a book that has a little bit of information for most bird watchers including the novice. This is especially true if you’re from Michigan - what she calls “God’s Country”.

Connie didn’t start out as a bird watcher, but when she moved to an area that was inundated with nature and lots of birds, it awakened her love of these creatures. She started sharing her sightings with others and in time became a writer of a column about birds in a local newspaper. Later she wrote a monthly newsletter she called “Birds in Our Backyards”.

This book covers not only her observations but lots of stories and tidbits from her readers. It also contains numerous black and white photographs. I had a little bit of trouble trying to figure out what the chapters were about even though she listed each article under the chapter in the Table of Contents. I think it would have been easier for me if each Chapter had its own title. However, overall, I enjoyed reading the book.

This soft cover book is published by Ridge Road Enterprises in Michigan. The price is $15.50 which is a reasonable amount for this type of book and can be purchased at www.ridgeroadenter.com.

New Species of Bird

The Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago announced on February 25, 2011, a new bird to science emphasizes the critical need to conserve the remaining dry forests of Madagascar. In a recent issue of the scientific journal Zootaxa, researchers from Madagascar and the United States described a new species of forest-dwelling rail. The new bird was named Mentocrex beankaensis, with the genus Mentocrex being endemic to Madagascar and the new species beankaensis being coined after the type locality, the Beanka Forest in western central Madagascar. This species was distinguished from another in the same genus, known from the eastern portion of the island, based on aspects of size, plumage, and DNA.

Have You Got a Story?

We are planning on having a program in April, 2012, featuring you. All you have to do is submit a true story of how you got into bird watching or a personal reminiscence of something that happened to you with nature. Send them to Darnell Kirksey at dkirk38338@aol.com and Haylie Hewitt at haylie.hewitt@cox.net.

They will review the entries (hopefully a lot) and chose the ones that would interest us most in the April meeting. They would then talk to the winners, take a video of them and prepare the program.

Financial Report

This financial report as of July 31, 2011, just covers our assets and does not include what we pay out each month for rent, web site and administrative costs.

Current Assets

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Arizona Field Ornithologists

AZFO is having its state meeting October 21-23, 2011. It will be held at the AZ Game and Fish Dept. office in Phoenix just west of I-17. All are welcome. See their website at www.Azfo.org for more details.

As in the past, They are planning on having a used book sale. If you have any used birding books that you no longer need, please bring them to the September SAS meeting.

Boyce Thompson Arboretum

On September 24th, ASU Professor and author Dr. David Pearson is the special guest interpretive guide for seasonal salute to the Arboretum's flock of Turkey Vultures before the big black birds fly away on their winter migration southwards. The Arboretum opens at 7:00 a.m. that day one hour earlier than usual for September, so visitors can join our staff and volunteers 'vulture viewing' from 7:00-8:30 before Dr. Pearson leads the 8:30 a.m. bird walk.

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/

Desert Botanical Garden

Desert Botanical Garden entrance fees of $15.00 ($13.50 seniors) apply unless you’re a DBG member. Membership is $75 a year. When special events are held, the entry fee could be higher. See their website at www.dbg.org for further information.

Festivals

The first-ever Tucson Bird and Wildlife Festival is scheduled for August 17 - 21. "August is the time when we have more kinds of birds in southeast Arizona than at any other time of year," said Dr. Paul Green, Executive Director of Tucson Audubon. "We want people from around the world to come and experience them with the best of our world-class local leaders." www.tucsonaudubon.org/festival


EVENTS IN AND AROUND THE VALLEY

Audubon Arizona Rio Salado Habitat

Audubon’s latest program, Birds ’n Beer, offers local professionals a fun and refreshing way to learn about Arizona birds and other wildlife while networking with fellow nature-lovers. Once a month, professionals from all over the Valley come to the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center to enjoy a cold Four Peaks brew while enjoying an enlightening and lively presentation on Arizona nature.

Stop into the Audubon Center every third Thursday of the month, 5:30 - 7:30 for this popular new event. Generously sponsored by Four Peaks Brewery.

The Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center located at 3131 S. Central Avenue in Phoenix. 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 normally on the 3rd Friday of each month starting at 10:00 a.m. at the Church of the Palms on the corner of Boswell and 103rd Ave. in Sun City.

For further information on Birders’ Anonymous, special meeting places and program, contact Marshall Esty at 623-977-1637 or at mne@juno.com or Shirley Fackelman at shirleyfackelman@yahoo.com

Hassayampa River Preserve

Anne Leight will start the fall bird banding program on Saturday, September 10th at 6 a.m. There will be another banding session on Sunday, September 18th 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.

The preserve 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

The Gilbert Water Ranch is located on the SE corner of Greenfield and Guadalupe Roads in Gilbert, Arizona. From the Superstition Freeway (US 60) exit at Greenfield Road 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
Join the Sonoran Audubon Society

This can be done in two ways: become a “Friend” of the Sonoran Audubon Society or join the National Audubon Society. The difference is as a “friend” all the money goes to our chapter. As a National member, you still become a member of our chapter, but less money goes to us; however, you get the National Audubon Society Magazine. Some people choose to do both. See our website for the applicable forms.

Adult or family membership: $20.00
Seniors (60 and up): $15.00
Students Under 18: $10.00

All monthly issues of Gambel’s Tales are free from the chapter website <www.sonoranaudubon.org> or by mail for $10.00 per year.

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: Carol Schooler 623-930-8904
raschooler@cox.net
Secretary: John Arnett 623-695-0953
treerunner@yahoo.com

Board Members—Directors at Large
Eleanor Campbell: 623-977-7639 ercamp@juno.com
Joe Ford: 623-792-8154 lford25@cox.net
Haylie Hewitt 623-581-1180 haylie.hewitt@cox.net
Darnell Kirksey 602-938-6174 dkirk38338@aol.com
Karen LaFrance 602-788-9646 klaf@cox.net
Rich Schooler 623-930-8904 raschooler@cox.net
Andrée Tarby 602-421-9425 awtarby@gmail.com
Jerry Theis 623-878-6528 jerry.theis@bannerhealth.com

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

Education: Rich Schooler 623-930-8904
raschooler@cox.net

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: Charles Kangas 623-931-6677
chuckkan@mindspring.com

Database Manager: Lauren Bosch 520-603-3652
lmsfreebird@aol.com

Upper Agua Fria Watershed Community Planning Project:
Karen LaFrance 602-788-9646 klaf@cox.net

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

Conservation: Tina Bickel bbickel08@gmail.com

Care Centers for Birds

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<td>Fallen Feathers</td>
<td>9532 W. Cielo Grande, Peoria</td>
<td>Jodie Kieran 623-533-2348</td>
<td>623-566-5302</td>
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SAS Web Site:  www.sonoranaudubon.org
Arizona Audubon Web Site:  www.az.audubon.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/

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

Scheduled Programs:
September 14, 2011: George Wall—Alamos and Beyond
October 12, 2011: Tom Gaskill—Birds of India
November 9, 2011: David and Diane Reesor—Botswana
December 14, 2011: Joel Pearson—The Life of a City Park
January 11, 2012: George Wall—A Month in Kenya, Africa
February 8, 2012: Kendall Kroesen—Gardening for Birds

Other Dates of Interest:
September 7, 2011, 7 p.m. Board Meeting at West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, corner of 59th Ave. and Cholla in Glendale. October 1, 2011, Retreat at Hassayampa River Preserve starting at 9 a.m. All SAS members, friends and guests welcome at both meetings. There is a bird walk prior to the retreat starting at 7 a.m.

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