



# THE PELICAN

JULY/AUGUST 2009

NEWSLETTER OF GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON

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

## UPCOMING HIGHLIGHTS

**Mark your calendars for September 17th and join Great Salt Lake Audubon for our 8th Annual Gala & Silent Auction.** This is our biggest fundraiser of the year in support of our GSLA programs and initiatives. Featured speaker will be Dr. John Cavitt. See insert for details and registration form.

**Sunflower seeds will again be available through GSLA.** It is too early to know the harvest date and the price per bag but the order form will be in the next issue with the usual details.

**Watch for Utah Ornithological Society Fall Conference coming up August 28-29th .** Check their website: [www.utahbirds.org/uos](http://www.utahbirds.org/uos) for more information as the time approaches.

**Wasatch Audubon will host the Fall Audubon Council retreat at Antelope Island on Friday and Saturday, September 26-27.** We can use a room in the visitor center for meeting and a potluck Saturday night. There is a group campground as well as individual sites in a different area. There is an entry fee for the state park with an extra charge for the causeway (\$2?). We'll plan to bird the causeway and Garr Ranch as well as possibly a marsh beyond the Ranch. Contacts: Lynn Carroll at [bradlynnc@comcast.net](mailto:bradlynnc@comcast.net) or Scott Baxter at [scottbaxter@att.net](mailto:scottbaxter@att.net). Both with Wasatch Audubon.

### SPEAKING UP!! ACTION ALERTS

National Audubon Society makes it easy to participate in formulation of policies regarding issues that affect birds. Some of the recent alerts have concerned reauthorization of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, passage of a climate bill, and restoration of the Endangered Species Act. You can have a voice by signing up for the Action Alert! Service. You will receive emails that will advise you of a critical issue and provide you with a link to a pre-written letter that you can sign and send to your members of Congress. Go to [www.audubon.org/audubon/home.html](http://www.audubon.org/audubon/home.html) , click on "Sign up with AudubonAction" and fill out the form. By signing up, you will stay informed of critical issues and initiatives affecting birds, and you will have a voice in the decision-making process.



Common Yellowthroat, Fish Springs NWR  
photo by Earl Nelson

### ANNUAL BRIGHTON BIRD COUNT.

**SATURDAY, JULY 11TH from 8AM until noon** with long-time Audubon members: Jeanne LeBer and Ray Smith

Novice to expert birders are welcome to participate. We will meet at 8AM. at the top of Big Cottonwood Canyon in the parking lot adjacent to the Silver Lake Visitor Center. Birders can select one of three birding options: 1) Silver Lake (easy walk), 2) Lake Solitude (moderate hike), 3) Twin Lake (strenuous hike). A potluck lunch follows at noon after a pleasant morning. Bring a dish to share and your own eating utensils, plate, cup. GSLA will provide cold drinks. To carpool meet in the parking lot at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon by 7:30AM and then proceed to Silver Lake. Please call Jeanne LeBer or Ray Smith at (801-532-7384)

**SPECIAL EVENT: Audubon Night at Dancing in the Park, Tuesday July 21, 7-dark.** Audubon member and Scottish Country Dance teacher Martha Veranth invites Audubon members and friends to join the Salt Lake Scottish Country Dancers at their dancing-in-the-park nights. We meet in the northwest corner of Sugarhouse Park on the hilltop overlooking the pond. For more information, call Martha at 801-278-5826 or email [mveranth@gmail.com](mailto:mveranth@gmail.com). We'll be there every Tuesday from June 16 through the end of August except for July 28th.

President's Message.....	page 2
Board Highlights.....	page 3
Bruce's Blog.....	page 3
Field Trips.....	page 4
High Uinta trip.....	page 6
Membership.....	page 6
Cornell lab of Ornithology.....	page 7

I  
N  
S  
I  
D  
E

# THE PELICAN

NEWSLETTER OF GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON

Printed on recycled paper.

*Mission Statement: Great Salt Lake Audubon is dedicated to protecting and enhancing habitat for wild birds, animals and plants, and to maintaining healthy and diverse environments for wildlife and people throughout the state.*

## GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON DIRECTORY

www.greatsaltlakeaudubon.org

### OFFICE

1800 S. West Temple, Suite A217B, SLC, Utah • (801) 521-2939  
Send correspondence to P. O. Box 520867, SLC, UT 84152-0867

### OFFICERS

President, Jen Hajj.....801-671-9505  
Vice President .....Open  
Secretary .....Open  
Treasurer, Philippe Wyffels.....  
Past President, Nathan Darnall.....801-755-4480

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Term Ending 2011

Paul Lombardi.....801-295-7738  
Tara Poelzing.....801-463-2776

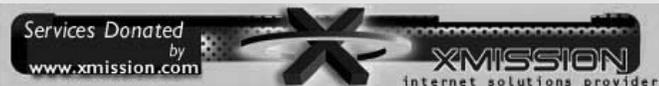
#### Term Ending 2010

Heather Dove.....801-424-0010

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Newsletter Editor, Nancy Sakahara.....801-487-4025  
Co-editor, June Ryburn.....801-576-0103  
Education & Programs. ....Open  
Field Trips, Sylvia Gray.....801-532-3486  
Field Trips, Deedee O'Brien.....801-272-8060  
Field Trips, Kathy Coleman.....801-944-5773  
Jordan River Site, Keith Johnson.....801-467-6497  
Membership, Heather Dove .....801-424-0010  
Executive Director, Bruce Heath.....801-512-7290

*Submission Guidelines:* Original articles and photos are welcomed. The editor reserves the right to choose and edit as needed. E-mail articles to newsletter@greatsaltlakeaudubon.org. *The Pelican* is published 6 times a year. Submission deadline for the Sept./October issue is August 9, 2009.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jen Hajj, *GSLA President*

Hello, Feathered Friends.

It has been a wet spring, hasn't it? The precipitation we have been experiencing must be a record, at least it is for my memory. Nature is rejoicing in the dampness. My garden is lush. Mushrooms are popping up everywhere. There are more plants, more bugs, more prey, more birds. It is a fabulous time for us to go out birdwatching. But it is also a time to use caution, so I'd like to remind you of some things:

- Mosquitos like this weather, too, and they can spread West Nile Virus. This disease can hurt us, but it is also deadly to birds. Help the birds by reducing the likelihood that mosquitos will reproduce in your yard. They like to lay their eggs in still water, so try not to create opportunities for them. If you have a bird bath, change the water every couple of days. Overturn buckets and other vessels that might collect water.
- Stay on the trails with your kids and your pets. There may be nests or fledglings in the brush. Observe restrictions in waterfowl management areas. If you know the locations of nests, try to maintain distance so you do not disturb the occupants. Get a spotting scope so you can feel close, even when you are dozens of feet away.
- Be storm safe. If you are recreating outdoors and can hear thunder, you may be in danger of a lightning strike. If a storm is approaching, don't get caught out in the open, where lightning often strikes the tallest object. Go inside, or if there is nowhere to go, get in your car (avoid touching metal objects) and sit it out.

And, most of all, do your best to avoid summer boredom! I hope that you will take a look at the field trips calendar and resolve to attend at least one trip in the next two months. Our field trip leaders are excellent with folks of all ages and expertise. Join us! You'll be glad you did.

Take care!

*Jen*

Answer to photo quiz in May/June issue : Willet



**What is this bird? Answer in next issue**

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

### MAY/JUNE 2009

By Nathan Darnall

During May and June the board deliberated and approved a budget for the upcoming fiscal year (June 2009 – May 2010). The budget anticipates a substantial increase in the number of local memberships, more grants and an increase in other income streams, and provides a solid commitment to fund the Jordan River Restoration Project.

Bruce reported his efforts on the Jordan River Restoration Project, as well as advocacy and public outreach, fundraising and administrative tasks. We are still waiting on the new cooperative agreement, though we are much closer to installing a fence around a portion of the Jordan River Project. The board reviewed and renewed Bruce's contract for the 2009-2010 year.

We are still looking for office space. The last general program was held in May before the summer break; the next program will be in September. Other recent events have included Basin and Range and the Great Salt Lake Bird Festival. Upcoming events include the annual gala, the Utah Ornithological Society meeting and the Audubon Council of Utah fall retreat which will be hosted by Wasatch Audubon.

GSLA submitted a letter in support of establishing use zones under the Parley's Park Master Plan. The use zones are intended to prohibit and permit uses, to lower conflict, and to protect sensitive areas. The chapter also submitted comments to the Idaho Fish and Game in opposition to killing American white pelicans since doing so could affect the colony on Gunnison Island in Utah.

#### ANNOUNCING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Results of the election conducted last month have been tallied. Please join us in welcoming Paul Lombardi and Tara Poelzing to the Great Salt Lake Audubon Board of Directors. They will fulfill two year terms.

#### GSLM 125 SQUARE MILE PROPOSED EXPANSION !

**Great Salt Lake Minerals Corporation** has submitted an amended permit application to construct the Great Salt Lake Minerals Solar Evaporation Ponds Expansion Project, which has expanded in scope from 33,000 acres to a proposed 80,000 acres of waters of the United States, including wetlands, in or adjacent to the Great Salt Lake in Box Elder County, Utah. The basic project purpose is potassium sulfate extraction/mining. You can download maps and other documents from: <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/organizations/cespk-co/regulatory/PNs/index.html>

Written comments may be submitted to Corps project manager Jason Gipson at the Utah Regulatory Office,  
801-295-8380 x14  
email: [jason.a.gipson@usace.army.mil](mailto:jason.a.gipson@usace.army.mil)

**Comments must be received by July 9, 2009.**

## BRUCE'S BLOG: BASIN & RANGE

By Bruce Heath, Executive Director

Years ago I took my then-young son Steve to a Basin & Range weekend seminar at Simpson Springs. We were engrossed in a Reptiles Identification class, looking at various lizards, when he practically stepped on a rattlesnake! Of course, the whole class switched from looking for lizards to studying the snake. He still vividly remembers that experience.

Basin & Range marks the beginning of summer. It was started as a weekend camping experience somewhere in the high-desert basin and range where experts in a variety of disciplines would share their knowledge and insights, and help attendees experience first-hand the wonders of the desert and mountains. Rattlesnakes, for example. Through the years, untold numbers of people young and old have enjoyed this unique event.

Fortunately, Basin & Range is still an important program sponsored annually by GSLA. For a bunch of years now, Keith Johnson has done most of the work of organizing it and ensuring that it is a worthwhile experience for all participants. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Keith for his work and leadership in carrying on this tradition.

For example, during the past couple of years, Basin & Range has included hands-on classes in identification of Utah birds, analysis of raptors, study of the effects of different habitat, and bird behavior. This year 61 different species of birds were reported at the camp and while driving there.

But, it's about much more than just birds. Margaret Pettis led us on a mind-expanding nature art class, including doing water colors using a stick. Genevieve Atwood showed students how to understand the rocks and geology of the area. One memorable class was an astronomy class where we looked through big telescopes and learned about the overwhelming universe of stars and planets. In another, we made ropes from yucca plants and found Indian artifacts. And, much more.

Besides the classes, this is a wonderful opportunity for families and friends to get together and share something special. Being outdoors, quiet and peaceful. The potluck dinner, sitting around the campfire, the Talking Stick passed around as we tell stories, music, roasting marshmallows. Good times.

Next June, we'll sponsor another Basin & Range. We hope you will attend. We are also already looking for volunteers to help Keith next year with ideas, logistics, and basic grunt work. If you are willing to volunteer, please call or email me. (801-512-7290) or [bruce@greatsaltlakeaudubon.org](mailto:bruce@greatsaltlakeaudubon.org)

**-Bruce.**

By the way - limited numbers and sizes of souvenir T-shirts commemorating this year's Basin & Range and featuring original artwork by Margaret Pettis are still available. \$15 for Xlarge or XXlarge. Please call Bruce(801-512-7290) or Nancy(801-487-4025) if interested.

Calendar of Events including Field Trips for JULY-AUGUST 2009

**BEGINNING BIRDERS AND NONMEMBERS ARE WELCOME**

*We encourage carpooling on our field trips. Contribution towards gas money is always appreciated. Be sure to call the field trip leader to confirm that arrangements are still as published.*

**Wednesday, July 1st, 7AM**

**MOUNTAIN DELL AREA, PARLEY'S CANYON**

**Leaders: Jack Clark and Sylvia Gray**

Join us for our monthly bird survey. Last year we saw 39 species in July. We'll meet by 7AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd So. and 3285 E. for a morning of birding. Call Jack (801-255-7989) or Sylvia (801-532-3486) if you plan to attend.

**Monday, July 6th, 7PM – 9PM**

**BIRDING UTAH in JULY CLASS**

**Hawkwatch Office, 2240 South 900 East**

**Instructor: Tim Avery Cost \$5**

Oh July. Temperatures range into the 100's across Utah, and reach above that mark daily in Washington County... Spring Migration has long passed, and breeding season is well underway... It seems like it could be called the summer time lull--except it's far from a lull. The mountains are alive with song as our montane species are in the midst of their breeding season. Songbirds, woodpeckers, grouse, owls, hawks and hummingbirds are out in force, and readily viewable--as close as 15 minutes from Salt Lake. July is a great time to get up into the mountains and enjoy the cooler temps and many of the specialty birds our state has to offer. But that's not all... July is also the start of south-bound fall migration! I know it seems hard to believe, with spring migration ending at the beginning of June, but July sees loads of shorebirds coming back south, with the highlight being half a million Wilson's Phalarope on the Great Salt Lake. Along with these birds, many other shorebirds are also headed back south, and with them come the occasional rarity. July is truly an exciting month, and a turning point in the year, join me to find out what you could see this July!

**Wednesday, July 8th, 7PM**

**OWLING FIELD TRIP**

**Leader: Tim Avery**

Meet by 7pm in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd So. and 3285 E. for an evening of birding. Tim will announce more details at his class on July 6th.

**Saturday, July 11th from 8AM to Noon**

**BRIGHTON BIRD COUNT**

**Leaders: Jeanne LeBer and Ray Smith**

Please join Great Salt Lake Audubon for our annual Brighton Bird Count. We will meet at 8AM. at the top of Big Cottonwood Canyon in the parking lot adjacent to the Silver Lake Visitor Center. Birders can select one of three birding options: 1) Silver Lake (easy walk), 2) Lake Solitude (moderate hike), 3) Twin

Lake (strenuous hike). Novice to expert birders are welcome to participate. A potluck lunch follows at Noon after a pleasant morning. Bring a dish to share and your own eating utensils, plate, cup. GSLA will provide cold drinks. To carpool meet in the parking lot at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon by 7:30AM and then proceed to Silver Lake. Please call Jeanne LeBer or Ray Smith at (801-532-7384)

**Friday, July 17th, 6AM – 3pm**

**NEBO MOUNTAIN ROAD**

**#41 on the Northern Utah Birding Trails Map\***

**Leader: John Middleton**

The Nebo Loop between Nephi and Payson is a 37 mile "scenic byway" that also offers varied habitats (shrub, aspen, conifers) for good birding. Our target bird is the Purple Martin, but we should also encounter numerous Wasatch mountain species such as Clark's Nutcracker. Meet by 6am in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd So. and 3285 E. or 6:20AM in the REI parking lot in South Towne Mall (106 S exit from I-15). Call John (801-322-2171) if you plan to attend and for updated information. Call June Ryburn (801-576-0103) if you wish to meet at South Towne \* See p. 268 in Utah's Featured Birds and Viewing Sites... by Keith Evans & Wayne Martinson

**Sunday, July 19th, 8:30AM**

**HIKE and BIRD at ALTA**

**Leader: Vivian Schneggenburger**

Meet at Goldminer's Daughter Parking Lot (not Albion Basin) in Little Cottonwood Canyon by 8:30AM. Bring a lunch if you'd like. It's about 1.5 miles up to the birdfeeder we maintain during the ski season with probably a 1200' - 1500' vertical gain. Call Viv at 801-485-7342 for details.

**Saturday, July 25th, 6:30AM – 2PM**

**BEAR RIVER MIGRATORY BIRD REFUGE**

**Leader: Paul Lombardi**

It's time to check on the birds at Bear River. Grebes should have young ones hitching rides on their backs and some shorebirds should already be heading this way for fall migration. According to the current info on the Bear River website the road should be open through July. If not, we'll adapt... maybe doing Causeway and other north areas instead. Bring lunch and water. Meet in the Centerville McDonald's parking lot by 6:30AM. to carpool. Call Paul at 801-295-7738 if you plan to attend.

**Wednesday, July 29th, 7:00/7:30AM**

**FARMINGTON BAY AND NEARBY AREA**

**Leaders: Bob Huntington and Deedee O'Brien**

Join us for our monthly half-day visit to Farmington Bay. Meet inside the McDonald's just north of the Centerville exit from I-15 at 7:00AM for breakfast or 7:30AM to head out. Bring your water and snacks. Call Deedee O'Brien (801-272-8060).

**Saturday, August 1st, 6AM**

**UTAH COUNTY BIRDING**

**Leader: Lu Giddings**

We'll spend 5-6 hours birding some Utah County hotspots. Our leader will choose specific locations depending upon what birds are being seen where at that time. Meet by 6AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33<sup>rd</sup> So. and 3285 E. Call Deedee (801-272-8060) if you plan to attend and for updated information.

**Monday, August 3rd, 7PM-9PM**  
**BIRDING UTAH IN AUGUST CLASS**  
**Hawkwatch Office, 2240 South 900 East**  
**Instructor: Tim Avery Cost \$5**

Summer is starting to wind down and the temperatures are still blazing hot. Shorebird migration is well underway with the Great Salt Lake seeing millions of migrants passing through. Fall songbird migration will start to pick up near the end of the month (with several fall specialty migrants), and raptor migration will also start taking off. August is a lot like early May in Utah, except it's much hotter, and the birds are a bit drabber. If you missed some migrants in the spring, August can be a good time to clean up on those birds. August is also a great time to continue birding up in the mountains, taking advantage of the cooler temps and the young birds out and about. August is a great time to venture east to the Uinta Mountains and search for the elusive White-tailed Ptarmigan, one of the hardest resident species to see in Utah. Not only will we talk about this species and other birds that can be seen where it is found, but you will learn about an opportunity to go see this bird with me! August is quite the month in Utah, and like May usually turns up a great number of eastern vagrants!

**Wednesday, August 5th, 7:00AM**  
**MOUNTAIN DELL AREA, PARLEY'S CANYON**  
**Leader: Jack Clark and Sylvia Gray**

Come and join us for our monthly bird survey. We'll meet by 7am in the parking lot just west of REI on 33<sup>rd</sup> South and 3285 East for a morning of birding. Call Jack (255-7989) or Sylvia (532-3486) if you plan to attend.

**Friday August 7th, 8AM – 1PM**  
**CANYON WALK: SILVERFORK IN BIG COTTONWOOD**  
**Leader: Allene Keller**

This is a beautiful loop walk of moderate difficulty (500 ft elevation gain on uneven trail) in our nearby canyon. Bring snacks and water. Meet in parking lot at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. Call Allene (801-467-3960) if you plan to attend.

**Saturday, August 8th, 8AM**  
**BIRDING in TABIONA**  
**Leader: Pat Jividen**

Pat has invited us to visit the cabin he has recently built. Tabiona is on the south slope of the Uintas and is accessed from the US 40 between Strawberry and Starvation Reservoirs. Pat will provide lunch so reservations are essential. We will meet in the parking lot just west of REI on 33<sup>rd</sup> So. and 3285 E. by 8AM and we will be birding along the way. Pat has seen some interesting birds around his cabin. Call Pat (801-944-5001) or Sylvia (801-532-3486) for more information.

**Wednesday, August 12th, 7:30am-1pm**  
**SNOW BASIN WITH WASATCH AUDUBON**  
**Leader: Mort Somer and Wasatch Audubon birders**  
**GSLA Contact: Deedee O'Brien**

We will join our friends at Wasatch Audubon to bird the Snow

Basin area. We will be walking along an old unused road to the Maple Campground where we expect to see woodpeckers, house wrens, warblers, and vireos. Meet in the McDonald's parking lot just north of the Centerville exit from I-15 by 7:30am to carpool to Ogden and then to Snow Basin. Call Deedee at 801-272-8060 if you plan to attend.

**On The Trail For Ptarmigan, August 14-16**  
**Leader: Tim Avery**

Cost: \$40 to attend -- only \$10 if you volunteer to Drive (High clearance or 4WD Vehicles only - Money for gas will be reimbursed to drivers) **Cost covers** gas for drivers and the main meal for the potluck. Details of the trip are on the following page.

**Friday, August 21st, 7:30AM**  
**PINECREST off EMIGRATION CANYON**  
**Leader: Lindi McIlwaine**

From the trailhead at the end of Pinecrest road we will hike approx. 1/2 mile on a road and then a good trail by a stream to a meadow with aspen and conifer groves. From there the trail steepens and some may continue. Likely montane species are Rufous Hummingbirds, Western Tanagers, Steller's Jays, Mountain Chickadees, crossbills and nuthatches. Meet by 7:30AM at the east end of Ruth's Diner parking lot 4 miles up Emigration Canyon. Contact Lindi at (801-363-1668) after Aug. 12th.

**Wednesday, August 26th, 7:00/7:30AM**  
**FARMINGTON BAY AND NEARBY AREA**  
**Leaders: Bob Huntington and Deedee O'Brien**

Join us for our monthly half-day visit to Farmington Bay. Meet inside the McDonald's just north of the Centerville exit from I-15 at 7AM for breakfast or 7:30AM to head out. Bring your own water and snacks. Call Deedee O'Brien (801-272-8060).

**Monday, August 31st, 7PM-9PM**  
**BIRDING UTAH IN SEPTEMBER CLASS**  
**Hawkwatch Office, 2240 South 900 East**  
**Instructor: Tim Avery Cost \$5**

Summer is over, and fall is here! Fall migrants are everywhere, and the opportunities to see them are endless. In this class we will talk about migrant traps around Utah and how and when to go birding at them. September is a great time for eastern warblers to show up in Utah and migrant traps are the best places to look. Besides the songbirds, shorebirds are still migrating in pretty good numbers, and it's a great time to see species that were missed earlier in the year. September is also the best time to see Broad-winged Hawk in Utah--and in this class you can find out where and when to go look! Perhaps the most exciting thing for me as a birder is the possibility of seeing a Jaeger in Utah, and September is a great time to be on the lookout for these pirates of the open seas--rare in Utah, but almost annual. Join us to learn about what can be one of the most diverse months for birding in Utah. After September things will start to slow as winter works its way back into Utah.

**Wednesday, September 2nd, 7:30am**  
**MOUNTAIN DELL AREA, PARLEY'S CANYON**  
**Leaders: Jack Clark and Sylvia Gray**

Join us for our monthly bird survey. Since we began this survey we have seen over 100 species. Meet by 7:30AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33<sup>rd</sup> So. and 3285 E. Call Jack (801-255-7989) or Sylvia (801-532-3486) if you plan to attend.

## ON THE TRAIL FOR PTARMIGAN, AUGUST 14-16

As part of the 2009 Birding Series for Great Salt Lake Audubon, we will be making a trek to the Uinta Basin, and into the High Uintas in an attempt to seek out Ptarmigan for those trying to reach 300 species, or just anyone interested in a fun weekend of birding. We will leave Friday afternoon at 2PM from a location to be determined. Those driving, we ask that you can take 2-3 passengers in your car. Vehicles must have 4WD or high clearance as we will be traveling deep into the Uinta Mountains on a dirt road. The road is not bad, but can be slick and muddy.

**We will travel** to Vernal as a Caravan possibly stopping along the way if time permits. **WE WILL NOT BE STAYING IN VERNAL.** Since it is a bit of a drive into the mountains we will be camping in a remote camping site at Hacking Lake at the base of Leidy Peak, over 10,000' in elevation. Those who wish to stay at hotels in Vernal may, but will be on their own (with directions of course) to be at Leidy Peak by 8:00AM Saturday Morning. For those camping, you will need to bring a tent, sleeping bag and any other camp gear you would like. We will try and have one large cooler per vehicle to store food.

**Friday Evening** we will arrive and set up camp at Hacking Lake. Everyone will be on their own for meals. We will do some light birding around camp, and may try some owling after dark. Night at Hacking Lake.

**Saturday Morning**, we will hit the trail around 8M for a short hike to the east slope of Leidy Peak. It is about a half mile and up hill, but not very steep. At the peak we will split into groups to traverse different areas looking for signs of the birds. We may bring a dog to help in the search, but that is not a guarantee. Typically along the slopes we have seen BLACK ROSY-FINCH, American Pipit and Mountain White-crowned Sparrow, as well as the occasional flyover or flyby raptor. We will spend most of the morning searching for Ptarmigan before returning to camp for lunch. In the afternoon we will go birding in some of the high elevation conifer habitat and seek out Gray Jay, Crossbills, American Three-toed Woodpecker, Northern Goshawk and other specialty species of the high Uintas

**Saturday evening** we will have a potluck dinner at camp and possibly a presentation or some sort of entertainment. We will again try for owls after dark. Night at Camp.

**Sunday Morning** will be a contingency morning to try for Ptarmigan again if needed. If not we will bird our way down through the different habitat zones all the way to Vernal. If time permits we will venture to Ouray National Wildlife Refuge and Pelican Lake to take in some waterbirds, before heading back to Salt Lake in the afternoon. We will likely encounter around 100 species during the weekend and have an all around good time!

### Things to bring:

Camping gear and a camp chair

Food for Friday night, Saturday breakfast and lunch, and Sunday Breakfast as well as snacks

A side dish for the potluck

And any optics, or other equipment needed

**Please RSVP by August 1st to Tim Avery at 801-440-3035 or checkout <http://www.timaverybirding.com/ptarmiganTrip> to sign up online. Feel free to call if you have any questions.**

## NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS:

*by Heather Dove and Melanie Loucks*

We welcome you and encourage you to join us at our meetings, field trips and other events and lend your talents and time as a volunteer on our many projects.

**New NAS members:** Lavon W. Rudd, Barbara Altum, Danny Nelson, Fred Manuel, Kathy Olsen, Stephen Thatcher, Ruth Tuttle, Susanne Allen, Tolford Young, Pamela Evans, Shorla Hunsakes, A. Bramwell, Robert Brossard, Lesley Hunt, Ethan Smith, David Johnson, Romaldo Tillett, Gerrit Steenblik, Harold Excell, Patrick Hegan, Thomas Polychronis, Mark Resetarits, Kathy Coleman, and John Derinzy. Michael Hoppus, Ray Reed, Lauren Bingham, Tara Poelzing, Steve Sugerma, Jim Bickmore, Fielding Nelson, Bob Hills, Betty Wullstein, Jesse Perry, Brent Hortin, Jeanne Vaughn, Deborah Petersen, Consuelo Nelson, Florence Jane Gillmor, Mildred Dean, Kirk Thomas, Nancy H. Leary, Jane Johnson, Beverly Voitnik, Doris Hardin, Thomas Morrison, Marvin Rallison, and Catherine Spedden

**New and renewing GSLA members:** Tara Poelzing, Florence Shepard, Elaine Wonsavage, John Koorring, Jim Stewart Rosemary McAtee, Claudia Berry, Bill & Debbi Compton, Karen Nelson, Rob Lang & Beverly Lynch, Susan Ogilvie, Heather Dove & David Druker, Mary Ellen Sloan, Bruce & Kathy Waddell, Bill Yates, Howard & Barbara Ross, Steve Carr, William Servoss, Katherine Lake & Don Kauchak, Rita Baden, Marge Neilson, Julianne Peterson, Ann O'Connell, Ellen Bloedel, Pat & Dixie Lamping, Consuelo Nelson, Floyd Johnson, Janelle Heck & Kay Moncla, Suzanne Barnes, Pomera Fronce, Jeanie Boynton, Mary Youngkin, Scott Maddox, Nancy & Donald Bill, Connie Holbrook, Roberta Wherritt

## THREE WAYS TO JOIN OR RENEW WITH AUDUBON:

A new membership with National Audubon Society (NAS) is \$20; a renewal is \$35. Benefits include the quarterly national magazine and automatic membership in Great Salt Lake Audubon (GSLA). Most of your dues support environmental campaigns at the national level. Only \$4.09 go to GSLA to fund a fraction of the costs of newsletter publication, and conservation and education efforts.

A Great Salt Lake Audubon-only membership is \$25 a year; all dues support local education, advocacy, habitat restoration, field trips, newsletter publication, and more.

You can join both NAS and GSLA if you wish to support both national and local activities. Regardless of membership, we welcome you to Audubon and thank you for your support.

A clarification for dual members: some of you who are dual members have asked why your GSLA and NAS memberships expire at different times. The reason is that if you do not renew the two memberships at the same time, they will expire at different times.

## A COUPLE OF THANK YOU'S...

A hearty thanks to two members who have been assisting us with various administrative duties: Susan Oglivie has been helping with the mail and other office duties on a weekly basis. Her efforts have provided a measure of order in the office and some much needed relief for Jen and Bruce. Also, Barbara Pattee's efforts to help us unravel the bulk mailing regulations were much appreciated. We have eliminated "or Current Resident" from our address label so if you are traveling or moving and know the address where you want the newsletter sent, please inform us in advance. When the postal service forwards, they will charge us 50 cents for each occurrence.

## MOCKINGBIRDS IN FICKLE CLIMATES SING FANCIER TUNES

Why are some birds simple singers and others vocal virtuosos? Researchers at the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center (NESCent), the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and McGill University suspect that inconsistent climates may play a role.

A large-scale study of mockingbirds in diverse habitats reveals that species in more variable climates also sing more complex tunes. "As environments become more variable or unpredictable, song displays become more elaborate," said Carlos Botero, a postdoctoral researcher at NESCent in Durham, NC.

Local climate patterns are good indicators of how challenging life is in a given location, Botero said. "Survival and reproduction become more complicated when weather patterns are unpredictable because you don't know when food will be available or how long it will be around," he explains. What's more, the consequences of picking a mediocre mate are magnified in harsher climates. "In really difficult or demanding environments you would expect females to be choosier," he said. Male mockingbirds sing primarily to impress mates, said Botero. Superior singing skills are a cue that a male is a good catch. "Complexity of song display – how many song types a bird sings, how hard the songs are – is a good predictor of the quality of the individual," said Botero. "Males that sing more complex songs tend to carry fewer parasites, and have offspring that are more likely to survive."

Songbirds aren't born knowing their songs, however: they have to learn them over time. Since birdsong is a learned behavior, Botero and colleagues suspect that song-learning ability may also be a display of learning ability in general. The bird equivalent of sparkling conversation, complex songs may indicate which males have not only brawn, but also brainpower. "Birds that sing better are telling others, at least indirectly: Hey, I'm a good learner," said Botero. More importantly, singing skills may be a sign that males are clever enough to cope with iffy environments.

The team's findings were published online in the May 21 issue of the journal *Current Biology*.

## TWO ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY

### ENTER THE FUNKY NESTS CHALLENGE!

Visit the Celebrate Urban Birds website for more information and to read the terms of agreement regarding all entries.

We have some great prizes, including a Leica C-LUX 3 compact camera, bird feeders, shrubs for planting, and more. The first 50 entrants will receive a copy of the "Doves and Pigeons" poster by Julie Zickefoose and we'll post selected images and videos on the Celebrate Urban Birds website.

Here's how to enter:

1. Email your entry to [urbanbirds@cornell.edu](mailto:urbanbirds@cornell.edu). Links are acceptable for videos.
2. Write "Funky Nests" in the subject line.
3. Include your name and mailing address.
4. Explain **why** you submitted your entry-- the story behind it?
5. One entry per person, please.

Deadline for entries is July 31, 2009

Thanks for taking the challenge!

Sincerely,

Karen Purcell, Project Leader  
(607) 254-2455  
[urbanbirds@cornell.edu](mailto:urbanbirds@cornell.edu)

### MAKE SUMMER A BLAST WITH BIRDSLEUTH!

Dear Friend,

Are you looking for new, low-cost activities for your camp, nature center, scouting troop, homeschool, or youth program? I hope you'll consider the BirdSleuth curriculum developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

The first module, BirdSleuth: Most Wanted Birds, contains fun, easy lessons with activities that teach children how to identify birds and collect observations that can be reported to the Cornell Lab and used in scientific studies. The curriculum comes with everything you need to help children make an important connection with nature—perhaps for the first time.

Each flexible, easy-to-use lesson in BirdSleuth is geared toward upper elementary and middle-school students. Youngsters learn how to identify birds and to really appreciate nature's diversity in their own neighborhoods. Your kids will ask and answer their own questions about birds—true scientific inquiry achieved through engaging activities and a healthy dose of fresh air.

Each module comes with lesson plans, a student journal, a resource DVD, and more. To learn more about BirdSleuth: Most Wanted Birds, or any of the curriculum modules, visit [www.BirdSleuth.net](http://www.BirdSleuth.net) or drop me an email. I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have. I hope you'll use BirdSleuth to create a strong bond between children and nature and perhaps spark a lifelong interest in birds. Happy summer birding!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Fee, BirdSleuth director  
(607) 254-2403  
[birdsleuth@cornell.edu](mailto:birdsleuth@cornell.edu)



**THE PELICAN**  
Great Salt Lake Audubon  
PO Box 520867  
Salt Lake City, UT 84152-0867

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SALT LAKE CITY, UT  
PERMIT NO. 2871**

**GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON  
(LOCAL MEMBERSHIP ONLY)**

Please enroll me as a member of GSLA, my membership fee of \$25.00 includes a 1-year subscription to The Pelican

*Please clip and send your application and check to:*

GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON  
P.O.BOX 520867  
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84152-0867

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP +4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

If an email address is provided, look forward to receiving automated updates on classes and field trips offered by our chapter. Great Salt Lake Audubon does not share any of your information with other organizations

**NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Please enroll me as a member of National Audubon Society. Please send Audubon Magazine and my membership card to the address below:

- My check for \$20.00 is enclosed. (Introductory price only)
- My check for \$35.00 is enclosed for membership renewal.

*Please clip and send your application and check to:*

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DATA CENTER  
P.O.BOX 51001  
BOULDER, CO 80322-1001

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP +4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

W50  
LOCAL CHAPTER CODE: 7XCHA