



# THE PELICAN

MAY/JUNE 2010

NEWSLETTER OF GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON

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

G R E A T  
S A L T L A K E  
A U D U B O N

PLEASE SAVE THIS DATE

*Thursday, September 16*

Ninth Annual Great Salt Lake Audubon Gala  
Fundraiser

*"Bucks for Birds"*

At the new Episcopal Church Center

75 South 200 East

## GENERAL MEETINGS

Our May general meeting is going to take a slightly different format than usual. We are splitting our May meetings into two meetings, one for business and one for pleasure.

Business first. On May 18, at 7PM at the Sugarhouse Garden Center, we will be hosting a meeting for members to determine the future of Great Salt Lake Audubon.

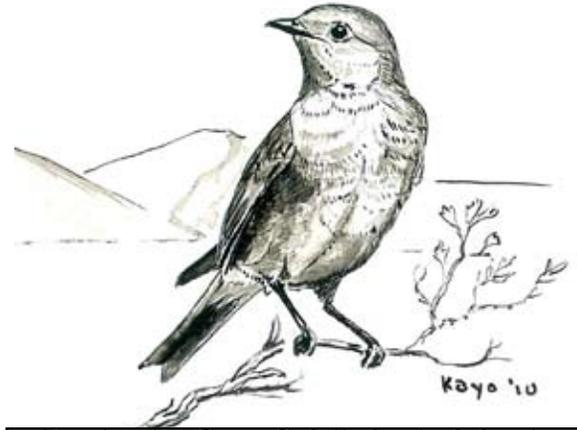
On May 26th, we'll be meeting at a different time and place. Join us at Tracy Aviary at 7 PM to learn about landscaping with native plants and plants that are beneficial to birds. Matthew Utley with Tracy Aviary will give a talk, then we'll take a tour of the Aviary to see the plants in the gardens. This meeting is open to all.

Matthew Utley works at Tracy Aviary where he is in charge of the landscaping. He has worked for Red Butte Garden where he taught many classes on native plants and seed gathering. He recently moved to Tracy Aviary to rejuvenate the landscape.

We'll be having ice cream afterwards so feel free to bring a pint of your favorite to share.



Great Blue Heron rookery, GSL Nature Center  
Photo courtesy of Mark Mossing



## *Don't miss Great Salt Lake Audubon's 28th Annual Basin & Range Weekend Seminar*

**The Site** is Oak Creek; a U.S. Forest Service Campground in the Canyon Range located approximately 16 miles east of Delta, 135 miles from Salt Lake City. Drive time is about 2 hours on freeway and paved roads. Three reserved group sites with water, restrooms; picnic tables and parking will be available. There is a motel and restaurants in Delta for those not wishing to camp.

**Meals** Participants must provide their own breakfast and lunch. Saturday's dinner will be a potluck. Bring an appetizer, side dish, main dish or dessert to share. Great Salt Lake Audubon will provide drinks. Please bring your own plates and utensils. Chairs and small tables will add to your comfort.

**Tuition** for the seminar is \$30, \$20 for seniors over 65. Children under 13 may attend free with parent's supervision.

Please see the insert for details and to register.

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# 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

152 W. Burton, Suite J, 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, .....Open

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Term Ending 2012

Janice Huebner..... 801-550-8181  
Nancy Sakahara.....801-487-4025

#### Term Ending 2011

Tara Poelzing.....801-463-2776

#### Term Ending 2010

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

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Newsletter Editor, Nancy Sakahara.....801-487-4025  
Public Outreach, June Ryburn.....801-576-0103  
Education ..... 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  
Programs, Sarah Nelson.....  
Publicity, Jeff Bilsky..... 801-842-4013  
Conservation, Janice Huebner.....801-550-8171  
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 May/June issue is June 11, 2010.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jen Hajj, GSLA President

Hello, feathered friends.

Our May general meeting is going to take a slightly different format than usual. We are splitting our May meetings into two meetings, one for business and one for pleasure.

Business first. On May 18, at 7:00 pm at the Sugarhouse Garden Center, we will be hosting a meeting to determine the future of Great Salt Lake Audubon. We have a small yet passionate board, a huge restoration project, an Executive Director, and a problem. You might notice that this issue does not include the usual ballot for elections. There is a reason for this. We have no candidates for election this year! I am not seeking an additional term as President, and in the past year, we have lost our Secretary and now our Treasurer. It is understandable, many people do not have the time or they feel they lack the skills needed to do it well. We want to know from you, the membership, about what is important to you in Great Salt Lake Audubon, and what your participation in this group will look like. My goal for the meeting is to present several operation scenarios, and we would like your feedback on which one is the best fit for YOUR vision of GSLA.

And then the Pleasure. The ice cream social and program will take place on May 26 at the Tracy Aviary. We will have a nice tour with their groundskeepers to learn about native plants that attract birds. The setting is wonderful, and there are so many interesting things going on at the Aviary with their construction projects. It truly isn't the place you remember.

I hope that you can join us for both events. Also, please take a look at the other interesting things included in this newsletter, and mark your calendar for the Basin and Range Weekend Seminar and other fun events we are hosting in the coming months.



Dancing Sandhill Cranes, photo by Mark Mossing



GSLA thanks the voters of Salt Lake County for their support of the Zoo, Arts & Parks program.

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL 2010

By Jen Hajj

The April board meeting began as always with the approval of the minutes from the last month. Nancy Sakahara shared deadlines for the May/June Newsletter. This issue of the Pelican will feature an insert for the upcoming Basin and Range Weekend Seminar. Volunteers can help with the mailing of the next newsletter, and the dates will probably be April 26 and 27.

Sylvia Gray and the gala committee have finished reviewing locations for the fundraiser and settled on the Episcopal Church Center downtown. It is a beautiful building and will accommodate up to about 120 people for a sit-down dinner. Look for the announcement in this issue of the Pelican.

Bruce has identified several grants for which we may apply, that will help us fund operations and restoration projects on the Jordan River Wildlife Refuge. Dedicated hunters are starting to apply to do some projects on the site, these will happen in May.

The "Yahoo group" that we have been using to inform people of birdwatching opportunities is being disabled. If you have been receiving updates via this group, we're asking you to sign up for SLBNet, which is another listserv.

The Nominating committee is still searching for prospective board members. Nancy Sakahara was nominated to fill a vacancy on the board, ending 2012, and the members of the board accepted her unanimously.

The Conservation committee updated us on actions with the Parley's Historic Nature Park and Jordan River Blueprint issues.

It was with great sadness that Phillippe Wyffels offered his resignation from the board and his duties as Treasurer. We are sad to see him go, and we wish him the best of luck in the future. He will help us draft the budget for the coming fiscal year, and get our financials in order. He suggested that we find two members to help with financial duties in the future: one to act as Treasurer and one to act as bookkeeper.

As we go into the next fiscal year, with a small board and with many questions about where our efforts should be concentrated, it was suggested that we gather more information from the membership about what they want from GSLA. The board discussed calling a business meeting of the general membership for this purpose. The time slot usually reserved for the May meeting will be used for this purpose, and the May program will be a week later, at the Tracy Aviary.

### SLBNET SIGN-UP INFORMATION FROM JEFF BILSKY

There are a couple of ways you can handle this:

- 1) People sign themselves up here: <http://www.utahbirds.org/connections/E-hotlines.htm> or
- 2) Milt is willing to sign up people direct if I provide him email addresses. Ideally I would think we should have this as an option, then we can simply collect email addresses and sign people up directly - you could maybe tell people to email me at [Greatsaltlakeaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:Greatsaltlakeaudubon@gmail.com) with the subject line "Sign up" or something like that and then I can compile and forward to Milt.

## BRUCE'S BLOG: PARTNERS

By Bruce Heath, Executive Director

One of the most effective ways GSLA extends its sphere of influence is by partnering with many other like-minded people and organizations who help us achieve our mission. With our limited staff and volunteer resources, these partnerships extend our scope by mutually beneficial activities and issues advocacy.

Of course, Chris Cline at **US Fish & Wildlife** and Vaughn Lovejoy at **Tree Utah** continue to be long-term critically important partners supporting our JR Wildlife Habitat Restoration Project. But, you may be less familiar with the work being done by Lynn de Freitas and **Friends of Great Salt Lake**, particularly now on the issues surrounding the GSL Minerals proposal to expand their evaporation ponds, potentially one of the biggest threats to GSL birds ever. I recommend you register to participate in their Issues Forum: **Keeping the Lake Wet: A Water Appropriation for Great Salt Lake** to be held April 28-30, (information at [www.fogsl.org/issuesforum/2010/](http://www.fogsl.org/issuesforum/2010/)). Another important partnership is with **Envision Utah** and it's Jordan River Blueprint process, which gives us the opportunity to help shape the future of the entire Jordan River Corridor.

One of our more recent partnerships is with Jaimi Butler of the **Westminster College Great Salt Lake Institute**. They invite you to attend their **S.A.L.T.Y Summit**, which will be held Saturday May 1, from 2-6 at Westminster's Malouf Hall, (see [www.westminstercollege.edu/great\\_salt\\_lake\\_institute](http://www.westminstercollege.edu/great_salt_lake_institute)).

**Tracy Aviary** has also been a long-term partner. This year we are participating in their Urban Bird Festival by leading Utah Birds Tours May 8-9. (see [www.urbanbirdfest.com/](http://www.urbanbirdfest.com/)).

We also support and belong to the **Utah Audubon Council**. At the UAC Retreat in Springdale, we discussed the Snake Valley water grab, the proposal for 300 trucks to haul coal 24/7 from Alton to be shipped to China, the demise of the Mesquite coal-powered power plant proposal, how to graze cattle to improve habitat for wildlife, the Powell Pipeline proposal, and heard the report from the Legislature from our new **Policy Advocate, Steve Erickson**.

We have many other important partners, including: The Great Salt Lake Alliance; Wayne Martinson, Ella Sorensen, and National Audubon; EPA; DOT; Legacy Nature Preserve; our many donors and supporters, and many more.

As an Audubon member, you are also a valued partner, because none of these partnerships are possible without the membership and volunteer participation of GSLA. So, Thank You, Partner, for your work and contribution towards our common goals.

*Please contact June Ryburn (801-576-0103) to volunteer for Public Outreach events. She has three events scheduled on the current calendar and will undoubtedly have more in the future.*

**AND DON'T FORGET BOOK CLUB MAY 6 AT 7 PM**  
See Calendar for details.

Calendar of Events including Field Trips for May/June 2010

**BEGINNING BIRDERS ARE ESPECIALLY 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.*

**\*\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE: EXPECT FIELD TRIPS TO LEAVE ON TIME SO ARRIVE 5-10 MINUTES EARLY TO ARRANGE CARPOOLS\*\*\*\***

**Saturday, May 1st, 8AM-1PM**  
**SHOREBIRDS and more - ANTELOPE ISLAND CAUSEWAY**

**Leader: Steve Carr**

Shorebird spring migration should be in full swing in early May. Join us for a morning of birding at the most accessible shorebird hotspot in our area! Meet in the SE corner of ShopKo parking lot in Sugarhouse in time to leave by 8AM. Call Steve (801-277-7711) for updated information and to let him know you plan to attend.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 5TH, 8AM**  
**MOUNTAIN DELL REC. AREA, PARLEY'S CANYON**  
**Leaders: Jack Clark and Sylvia Gray**

Come and join us for our monthly bird survey. May should be a good month to see a variety of birds as the Spring migrants are beginning to return. We'll meet by 8AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd South and 3285 East for a morning of birding. Call Jack (801-255-7989) or Sylvia (801-532-3486) if you plan to attend.

**Thursday, May 6 at 7 PM Book Club**

**Join us at Sprague Library**  
**2131 So. 1100 East**

Pick one book by John Muir to read. He was a prolific writer and naturalist who founded the Sierra club.

**Saturday, May 8th, 9AM-5PM**  
**Mother's Day Garden Fair**  
**Jordan River Valley Conservancy District**  
**8215 So. 1300 West**  
Call June 801-576-0103

**Saturday, Sunday, May 8, 9th**  
**Urban Bird Festival**  
**Tracy Aviary, Liberty Park**  
Call Bruce 801-512-7290

**Wednesday, May 12th**  
**Oquirrh Lake at Daybreak, South Jordan**  
**Leader: Pomera Fronce**

Ever wonder how Lewis and Clark felt as they started their journey westward. Join us for an exciting morning of birding as we wade into uncharted territory. Today marks the inaugural Rio

Tinto Kennecott Land survey at Daybreak. Who knows what we might find! To get to Daybreak from I-15, take the 10600 South exit westbound. Continue west until you reach Bangerter Highway and turn south. Go south to 11400 South and turn west into Daybreak. Follow Daybreak Parkway to Kestrel Rise Road (4695 West). Street parking is available. Our walk around the lake will cover 2-3 miles on flat paved trails. Contact Pomera at 801-272-2755 or [pinkstring@xmission.com](mailto:pinkstring@xmission.com) for starting time and to arrange carpools.

**May 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> GREAT SALT LAKE BIRD FESTIVAL**  
**Information at: [www.greatsaltlakebirdfest.com](http://www.greatsaltlakebirdfest.com)**  
**Good field trips still available**

**Tuesday, May 18th, 7PM**  
**GSLA MONTHLY MEETING**  
**IMPORTANT BUSINESS MEETING**  
**ALL MEMBERS, PLEASE ATTEND**  
**SUGARHOUSE GARDEN CENTER**

**Wednesday, May 26th, 7:30/8AM**  
**FARMINGTON BAY WMA & NEARBY AREA**  
**Leaders: Bob Huntington and Deedee O'Brien**

Join us for our monthly half-day of birding. Meet inside the McDonald's just north of the Centerville exit #319 from I-15 at 7:30 AM for breakfast and camaraderie or 8AM to head out. Bring your own water and snacks. Call Deedee (801-272-8060) if you plan to attend.

**May 26<sup>th</sup> – GSLA Program Meeting 7PM**  
Meet at Tracy Aviary.

**Wednesday, June 2nd, 7:30AM**  
**MOUNTAIN DELL REC. AREA, PARLEY'S CANYON**  
**Leader: Jack Clark and Sylvia Gray**

Come and join us for our monthly bird survey. Our summer visitors will be here so come and help us find them. We'll meet by 7:30AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd South and 3285 East for a morning of birding. Call Jack (801-255-7989) or Sylvia (801-532-3486) if you plan to attend.

**Saturday, Sunday, June 5th-6th**  
**BASIN AND RANGE Weekend Seminar**  
**Oak Creek Campground**  
See insert to register and for details

**Wednesday, June 9th**  
**Oquirrh Lake at Daybreak, South Jordan**  
**Leader: Pomera Fronce**

Need a shot of excitement in your life - then join us for our second monthly survey at Daybreak. What we might find is anybody's guess! See information under May 12th field trip.

# Great Salt Lake Audubon, [www.greatsaltlakeaudubon.org](http://www.greatsaltlakeaudubon.org)

(801) 521-2939

## Calendar of Events including Field Trips for May/June 2010

**Saturday, June 12th, 8AM**

**BLUEBIRD NESTING BOXES IN STRAWBERRY VALLEY**

**Leaders: Jeanne LeBer and Ray Smith**

Please join us. We will meet at 8 am in the South-east corner of the Shopko Parking lot in Sugarhouse or 9:15am at the Strawberry Valley Visitor Center. The morning will be spent checking the boxes and recording the species using each box, and if there are eggs or young birds. It's very exciting – you never quite know what you are going to find! Afterwards we will gather for lunch. Please bring your own sandwich; GSLA will provide cold drinks. Call Jeanne or Ray at 801-532-7384 if you have questions or to let them know you'll be there.

**Sunday, June 13th; 7:30AM to mid-afternoon**

**UTAH COUNTY HOTSPOTS**

**Leader: Jeff Bilsky**

Jeff is very familiar with the birding hotspots in Utah County. He'll pre-run this trip a few days before to make decisions of the exact route, but it will likely include Swede Lane, River Lane, the Provo Airport Dike, and Skipper Bay. This time last year some of the birds seen there included Yellow-breasted Chats, Eastern Kingbirds and Gray Catbirds. We'll enjoy whatever is around in this height of breeding season time. Meet in the SE Corner of the ShopKo parking lot (behind the Red Lobster). Call Jeff for updated info and to let him know you plan to attend. 801-842-4013 or [jbilsky@gmail.com](mailto:jbilsky@gmail.com).

**Saturday, June 19th, all day**

**Venture Outdoors Festival**

**Canyon Rim Park**

**3100 So. 2900 East**

Call June 801-576-0103

**Saturday, June 19th, 7:30AM**

**JORDANELLE WETLANDS and MIDWAY**

**Leader: Geoff Hardies**

Join us this morning for a walk along the Provo River at the Jordanelle Mitigation area near Heber. From there we will head to Midway to search for Bobolinks. Bring water and snacks. Meet in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd South and 3285 East in time for a 7:30AM departure.

Call Geoff at (801-273-7841) with any questions.

**Sunday, June 27th, 7:30AM/8AM**

**JEREMY RANCH ROAD, EAST CANYON**

**Leader: Kim Roush**

We will walk a dirt road following East Canyon Creek. Depending on the weather it can be dry and dusty or wet and muddy. Birding habitats include willow, sage, aspen, open rocky areas and riparian. After walking to the ranch and back, we will drive a few miles to a section further down the road. The road is flat, the pace slow. The air is good and the company

MAY/JUNE

fun. Dippers, kingfishers, catbirds, eagles, flycatchers, green-tailed towhees are a few of the hoped for winged inhabitants. If we have nesting woodpeckers, we may drive to my house afterwards to view them. We generally have nesting hairy, downy, sapsuckers and flickers. This is usually a 1/2 day field trip. Meet by 7:30AM in the parking lot just west of REI on 33rd South and 3285 East for carpooling OR take the Jeremy Ranch Exit off I-80, go left under the highway, then left at 4-way stop to the car pool parking lot and be there by 8AM. Call Kim (435-658-2976) if you have questions.

**Wednesday, June 30th, 7AM/7:30AM**

**FARMINGTON BAY AND NEARBY AREA**

**Leader: 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 #319 from I-15 at 7AM for breakfast and camaraderie or 7:30AM to head out. Bring your own water and snacks. Call Deedee (801-272-8060) if you plan to attend.

**Wednesday, July 7th, 7:00AM**

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

**Leaders: Jack Clark and Sylvia Gray**

Come and 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 South and 3285 East for a morning of birding. Call Jack (801-255-7989) or Sylvia (801-532-3486) if you plan to attend.

**Saturday, July 10th from 7:30AM to Noon**

**BRIGHTON BIRD COUNT**

**Leaders: Jeanne Le Ber and Ray Smith**

Please join Great Salt Lake Audubon for our annual Brighton Bird Count. We will meet at 7:30 AM 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. Please bring a dish to share and your own eating utensils, plate, glass. GSLA will provide cold drinks. Call Jeanne LeBer or Ray Smith at (801-532-7384).



**Photo  
courtesy  
of Mark  
Mossing**

**Great Salt Lake Audubon is continuing its annual search for new board members. This year's nominating committee consists of Jen Hajj, Heather Dove and Nathan Darnall.** Please contact Jen, Heather or Nathan if you are interested in serving on the board or if you would like to nominate one or more individuals to serve on the board.

GSLA is looking for people with one or more of the following experience or backgrounds: prior experience with a nonprofit, accounting or financial, attorney or legal, marketing, business, real estate, fund raising, natural resources, biology or environment, teaching or education, public administration, public policy, and event planning.

You do not need to be an expert birder or have lots of money to serve on the board. However, board members are asked to attend monthly board meetings and serve on at least one committee. Some committees meet monthly, some quarterly, and some only as needed which may be once or twice a year. The average time commitment may be as little as two hours per week or could be as much time as you'd like to contribute.

The Audubon name is well-recognized and thought of highly. Because of this, other organizations seek our input and we are able to work with them to influence public policy that benefits wildlife, which in turn will benefit people. In addition, GSLA engages people in learning about birds and nature through field trips, monthly programs, field seminars and various booths. We are also creating valuable bird habitat along the Jordan River.

Please consider helping GSLA achieve even more by volunteering to serve on the board or by asking others to do the same.

**THE GALA/AUCTION PLANNING COMMITTEE NEEDS**

**YOUR HELP NOW** to make our fundraiser a success. Please consider DONATING AND/OR SOLICITING DONATIONS for the auction from friends and businesses you support.

We need interesting, useful, or fun quality items, services or experiences that will attract bidder competition for the fun of it and the benefit of GSLA. [weekend getaways, time shares, event tickets, restaurant gift certificates, outdoor recreational experiences, health & fitness offerings, food items, cooking lessons....your ideas]

We will help you get started with one short meeting to discuss the basics and give you the forms needed. The success of this event depends on the ingenuity and efforts of GSLA's members and supporters.

**BE PART OF IT!**

Contact one of the following:

Nancy Howard @ 801-487-4925; nehoward58@yahoo.com

Nancy Sakahara @ 801-487-4025; nsakahara@earthlink.net

Deedee O'Brien : 801-272-8060; d-dobrien@comcast.net

## MEMBERSHIP

by Heather Dove and Melanie Loucks

### National Audubon New:

Ross Borders, Homer S. Lewis, C. Purkey, Sheilah Jones, J. T. Greene, Marie Walsh, Judy Vanleeuwen, Jay A. Carey, Tom Miller, Mary J. Sweeney, Paul Zitting, William H. Call, Edwin Grose, Jessica Earl, Gary Carlson, Richard Middleton, Melanie Hoffman, Patrick De Freitas, Nancy L. Hadley, Helen Coffey Tomlinson, Margaret Sigler, Boyd Nelson, Lisa Anderson, Sherry Ettinger, Michael Sossenheimer, Wendy Smith, Carolyn Suchala, Lee Brinegar, Nola J. Miller, Stephen Lloyd, Paul W. Solomon, Laura Asman, Thomas Harris, Darlyn Linde, Salt Lake Co Library System, Amelia K. Paulson, Mr. Clayton B. Jones, Nathan Vorwaller, Kathy M. Paulin, Marion Berling, Mr. Robert Tyce, Ann E. Smyth, Jane Painter, Rita Fordham, Lorraine Wilkinson, Ms. Marilyn Gillette, Sean Brixey, Larry Swanson, Robert L. Mc Kellar, Ramona Excell, Connie Montague, Sam & Aline Skaggs, and David Gillilan, Andrea Ashbridge, Marjorie Jensen, Kelly McNulty, Patrick McGean, David Hinz, Ann Johnson, Robert North, P. Toomet, Richard Dougherty, Stephen Smoot, Ms. Ellen E. Jenkins, Cheryl Smith, Mrs. Roxy Ramirez, Elizabeth Loomis, Sue A. Cates, Wayne Martinson, Deborah S. Rounds, Debra Magnuson, Patsy Smith, Dorthy H. Terry, Diana Reiser, Thomas Farkas, Eddie Arriz, Norman J. Porter, Betty V. Pelt, Kathy Nelson, Karen Hall, Larry W. Bastian, Alan & Jacqueline Fogel, Steve Gibbons, John Worlock, Janis Nania, Max Mumford, Patti & Lynn Rasmussen, Carol Pia, Roger Veenendaal, Kathy F. Borshanian, Dennis Lawrence, Deborah Ann & Pameal Z Hill, Barbara B. Whitecar, Raquel Hafen, Vicky Osness, Richard Nowak, Dr. Menno Lont, Matthew A. Riddle, Ella Sorensen, Kathryn Sprague, Daila D. Paxton, Robin Larson, Mr. Gerald Curtis, Mr. Drew Papadakis, Jim Karpowitz, Lynda Brown, Mrs. Debbie Drabner, Joy A. Cluff, Brian Barnard, Ms. Judith Scheffres, Ms. Judith O Day, Ms. Janet M. Frost, Carolyn Buxbaum, Terrie Kenner, Jan Beggs, Laurie Rich, Vanene Mc Shane, G. L. Burns, Suzanne S. Smith, Tom Edwards, Connie Curnow, Travis Snyder, Andrea N. Winbauer, Michael S. Kottler, Phil Sahm, Merline J. Bronson, Mr. Frank L. Stieber, Tetyana Forostyan, Amy Smith, and Caroline Ahart

### New GSLA members:

Bonnie Bauman, Don Neff, Melanie Hoffman, Jodie Rust, Neal Sorensen, Emmy Hartney, Ann Petersen, Joe DeStefano, Thalia Swinyer, Ned Bixler, Judith Short, Karen Youngblood

### Renewing GSLA members:

Roberta Wherritt, Patrick de Freitas, Andy & Leslie White, Karin Kirchhoff, Doug stark, Dixie & Pat Lamping, Karen Nelson, James Stewart, Judy Rollins & Elizabeth Haslam, Janelle Heck, Howard & Barbara Ross, Rosemary McAtee, Hugh Gillilan, IHI Environmental, Joyce Yeagle, Ellen Fisher, Dan & Sheila Barnett, Steve Carr, Bruce & Kathy Waddell, Susan & Jeffrey Saffle, Keith & Kathleen Wallentine, Stan Foutz, Julianne Petersen

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.

**Electronic delivery of the Pelican:** If you wish to receive your newsletter electronically rather than the paper version, please send an email to Heather Dove (hdove@xmission.com.)

# HOME SWEET HOME

BY KEITH EVANS

In addition to information on 150 birding hotspots, the book entitled, “*Utah’s Featured Birds and Viewing Sites*” is full of information on habitat types. Is habitat as important as size, color, wing-bars, and bill shape for bird identification? Probably not, but being habitat aware sure helps. And, for the birds, habitat is everything. This month-by-month series is based on information from the book with a few anecdotes to add interest. *(Please note: we are picking up the series late. The full series is on our website)*

**April in Shrub-Steppe.** I moan loudly when the alarm sounds off at 0-dark-30. However, I look forward to enjoying the sights, sounds, and smells of the early spring sagebrush. The sights and sounds of the courtship dance of the Greater Sage-Grouse are especially rewarding. Utah is 15% Shrub-steppe habitat which is considered a high priority habitat for management. Shrub-steppe habitat is important to many birds which are decreasing in numbers. Human activities like urbanization, grazing, energy extraction, and agriculture have had a negative impact on the quality and quantity of the shrub-steppe habitat throughout the west. Shrub-steppe habitat is usually dominated by sagebrush, but many other associated plant species are present in good condition habitat. High quality habitats include native species like bluebunch wheatgrass, needlegrass, winterfat, dandelion, Indian paintbrush and more. Obligate nesting species in our sagebrush habitats include; Greater Sage-Grouse, Brewer’s Sparrow, Sage Sparrow, and Sage Thrasher. The clear notes of the ubiquitous Western Meadowlark add to the early morning experience. As the Sage-Grouse only dance at the crack of dawn, there’s a lot of daylight left for more birding and to visit nearby reservoirs to count the Common Loons on their migration north. I’m most familiar with the sagebrush areas in northwestern Utah as I’ve visit them often. However, I’m ending this story by talking about the area north of Vernal in the northeast corner of the state. The Diamond Mountain Bird Habitat Conservation Area (BHCA) features sagebrush as a priority habitat type and contains the largest concentration of Greater Sage-Grouse in northeastern Utah. The section of US-191 running from Vernal to Flaming Gorge offers many bird viewing hotspots. The Diamond Mountain Road is approximately 24 miles north of Vernal.

**May in the Riparian.** Birds are not distributed over the landscape haphazardly; therefore, knowledge of habitat preferences greatly increases the odds of finding a target species. The riparian zone is the upland vegetation next to a stream or other water saturated area and is one of Utah’s most productive bird habitats. Riparian areas are dominated by woody vegetation (trees and shrubs) distinguishing them from marsh habitats dominated by rushes, sedges and grasses. Less than one percent of the arid state of Utah is classified as riparian; however, more than 50% of the birds in Utah utilize riparian zones for part of their life cycle. A few of the birds using the lower elevation riparian areas in May include; Lewis’s Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher, Red-naped Sapsucker, and Yellow-breasted Chat. In the Mojave Desert riparian areas (Washington County, Utah) look for Gambel’s Quail, Greater Roadrunner, Bell’s Vireo, and Abert’s Towhee. At higher elevations look for Northern Goshawk, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Mountain Chickadee, Western Tanager, and Lazuli Bunting. One of my favorite riparian hotspot in northern Utah is located just north of Logan in the Cache Valley. North of Logan on US-91, begin looking for the Forest Service sign designating the High Creek Road about 2 miles north of where UT-142 joins US-91. High Creek Road is approximately 7 miles long and is all good birding. The public land beyond the Forest Service boundary line (4.5 miles east of US-91) is more accessible for hiking, picnicking, and other forms of outdoor recreation. Habitats vary from the mountain riparian areas along the road to mountain shrub, aspen, and conifer as the trail elevation rises. The extensive stands of bigtooth maple turn a brilliant red in the fall – a good reason to return in the fall.

**June in Mountain Shrub and Aspen.** Mountain-shrub and aspen forests are often listed as two separate habitat types, but I’ll cover them together as many bird species are found in both. Approximately 7.5% of Utah is classified in these habitat types. Trees and shrubs include: aspen, Gambel oak, big tooth maple, serviceberry, mountain mahogany, chokecherry, elderberry, and snowberry. Depending on the moisture regime the understory can be fairly barren, or very dense. Many early spring flowering plants bloom before June as the sunlight reaching the ground is more intense before the leaves on the trees are fully developed. Many of the birds found here also utilize the riparian areas and include: Red-naped Sapsucker, Mountain Chickadee, Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Virginia’s Warbler, and Western Scrub-Jay. At higher elevations look for American Three-toed Woodpecker and Cassin’s Finch. Back in 1985, John “helped” me add a Williamson’s Sapsucker to my lifelist. John owned a great 4-W, high clearance vehicle, but we decided to take my low riding Plymouth. The roads would be good was our reasoning. We headed to the Daniels Pass area south of Heber City where Williamson’s Sapsuckers had been regularly reported. Well, I did add the sapsucker to my lifelist as well as scraping off the muffler and a few other problems. Due to the distance, this was also an all day trip. At the very next Audubon meeting, a member reported seeing Williamson’s Sapsuckers along the paved road by the Monte Cristo Campground. Oh well, my memories and stories are much better this way.

## MESSAGE FROM CHRIS COKINOS, NEW AUDUBON COUNCIL PRESIDENT

I want to thank Nathan again for his great work--and to express my hope that I can fill his shoes in the coming year. I appreciate the vote of confidence in making me the new state president. It’s been a few years since I headed the council in Kansas, but I’m very much looking forward to serving in this capacity in Utah. Nathan and I will be meeting soon to take care of getting me set straight! I look forward to it. If anyone has any questions or concerns they’d like to share, please don’t hesitate to let me know.



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