BIRDS ‘n BITES

Join us for our monthly informative and entertaining programs. The meetings are free and open to all and presented in the Education Building at Tracy Aviary in Liberty Park. Doors open at 6:30 PM for refreshments and socializing; the programs begin at 7 PM. Enter Liberty Park at 600 E 900 South.

Tuesday, November 21st, 7 PM, “Saving Wyoming’s Hoback: The Grassroots Movement That Stopped Natural Gas Development”, Florence R. Shepard, Professor Emerita, University of Utah, Department of Educational Studies

Dr. Shepard is Professor Emerita of Educational Studies at the University of Utah, where she teaches educational, environmental and feminist studies. She has published her personal narratives of place in journals, anthologies, and books. Dr. Shepard spends half of the year in a cabin in the Hoback Basin, Bondurant, Wyoming, and winters in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Hoback Basin is a small thumbprint in the mountainous, forested area in western Wyoming south of Yellowstone Park. It is a ranching community with a small town, Bondurant, which, according to the census, has only 100 residents. It is also the home of many summer residents and a favorite hunting, fishing, and camping destination for many visitors from throughout Wyoming as well as bordering states of Montana, Idaho, and Utah. When the Hoback Basin was being formally reviewed for natural gas development, the government received 60,000 comments from citizens from these states, as well as citizens from all U.S. states who had visited the Basin and were opposed to such development. At the November 21 meeting of GSLA, Florence Shepard will describe the outstanding movement that stopped industrial development in this unique basin. The book on this topic by Shepard and Marsh is the 2017 winner of the Wallace Stegner Prize in Environmental Humanities given by the University of Utah.
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.

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER
by Heather Griffiths

Great Salt Lake Audubon would like to welcome new Board Member, Melanie Taylor. Melanie comes to GSLA with a wealth of business experience. In addition, having served on the boards of other non-profits, Melanie has special expertise in policy development and board governance. We welcome her input as we continue to work on making Great Salt Lake Audubon the best it can be. Melanie also plans to work with the Education Committee, possibly the Conservation Committee, and is looking forward to brushing up on her knowledge of birds.

If you are interested in putting your skills to use with GSLA, please contact our president, Heather Dove, at president@greatsaltlakeaudubon.org. We need both board members and committee volunteers to keep our efforts going.

GSLA continues to monitor local conservation and environmental issues such as the preservation of as much habitat and natural space as possible in the Northwest Quadrant, opposing Bear River diversion, advocating for the health of Great Salt Lake, opposing the proposed Promontory Point Landfill, and advocating for public lands. We continue to partner with other conservation groups. So that we may join forces and present a uniform and more powerful voice.

Our annual Sunflower Seed Sale Fundraiser is about to be completed and it appears that this year’s sale was another successful one. Thanks to those who participated. And Many Thanks also to all the generous people who responded to our recent request for donations. We appreciate your support!

Three ways to join or renew your membership:

1. Great Salt Lake Audubon-only membership is $30 a year. All dues support local education, advocacy, habitat restoration, field trips, newsletter publication, and more. (See membership form on page 8 of The Pelican). Local membership is very important, as GSLA is primarily self-supporting.

2. A new membership to National Audubon Society (NAS) costs $25, with renewal of $35 after the first year. Benefits include the quarterly national magazine and automatic membership in GSLA. Most of your dues support environmental campaigns at the national level. As a new NAS member, you will receive a courtesy subscript to our newsletter, The Pelican, for one year. Thereafter, if you wish to continue to receive The Pelican, please join Great Salt Lake Audubon.

3. You can join both GSLA and NAS if you wish to support both local and national activities.
The 2017 Salt Lake Christmas Bird Count
by Anne Terry

It’s that time of year again – Great Salt Lake Audubon is gearing up for the 2017 Salt Lake Christmas Bird Count which will take place on Saturday December 16th.

Between December 14, 2017 and January 5, 2018, scores of volunteer birders and nature enthusiasts will take part in the longest running wildlife census on the planet. The annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is organized by the National Audubon Society and the data compiled are used to track the health of bird populations at a scale that professional scientists could never accomplish alone. CBCs are not just about counting birds. The data collected are at the heart of hundreds of peer-reviewed scientific studies and contribute to decisions made by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior and the EPA.

While the ultimate goal of participating in a count is to tally a representative sample of the birds, the natural competitive spirit of birders is what drives them to do the most thorough job possible. CBCs have become a treasured holiday tradition, a reunion with birding friends and a way to play a small part in a big conservation picture. The growing combined pool of contributed sightings helps researchers understand how birds are faring in a way that ornithologist Frank Chapman could never have conceived of back in 1900 when he organized a small band of twenty-seven dedicated birders to conduct the first-ever CBC!

This event is free and is open to birders of all skill levels. If you are a beginner, you will be able to join a team that includes experienced birders. If you are unable to join a field team and you live within the boundaries of a count circle, you can make arrangements with the coordinator to stay home and report the birds that visit your feeders. Information on over thirty counts held in Utah can be found at www.utahbirds.org. Visit the NAS website, www.audubon.org, for a wealth of information on CBCs.

If you would like to participate in this year’s Salt Lake CBC, contact Ian Batterman at imbatterman@gmail.com or 920-360-0805.

2017 CBC4Kids
by Anne Terry

Do you have a young bird lover in your life? We invite you to bring them (and the whole family) to the Christmas Bird Count for Kids (CBC4Kids) on Saturday December 16th, hosted by Tracy Aviary!

The CBC4Kids is a great way to introduce children to bird identification and is appropriate for ages seven and older. Count results are reported to the official Salt Lake Christmas Bird Count, so kids get to see how they can make an impact through this important citizen science project.

The Christmas Bird Count for Little Chicks will also be offered this year. Designed for ages seven and under, this program features bird-themed stories, games and crafts that you can join with your little one at your leisure. For more details and to register, visit: www.tracyaviary.org/cbc4kids.
Beginning birders and nonmembers are always welcome. We encourage carpooling on our field trips. Contributions to drivers for gas money would be appreciated. Be sure to call the field trip leader to confirm that arrangements are still as published.

**Physical Difficulty:**
- **EASY** - little or no walking, smooth paths.
- **MODERATE** - 1 mile or more, possible rough terrain.
- **DIFFICULT** - extensive walking which could include rough terrain and significant changes in altitude.

Despite our best efforts, ratings for the field trips are still somewhat subjective. Please consult with the leaders.

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

**Wednesday, November 1, 9am-12pm — MODERATE**
**Mountain Dell Rec. Area, Parley’s Canyon**
**Leader:** John Middleton, (801) 322-2171
We are not sure what the weather will be like, so check the forecast and come prepared. We’ll meet by 9am in the parking lot just west of the REI on 33rd South and 3285 East for a morning of birding. Call John if you plan to attend. THIS WILL BE OUR LAST SURVEY OF MOUNTAIN DELL THIS YEAR. Since we’ve experienced difficulties birding here in the winter we will resume our surveys in March.

**Sunday, November 5, 8am-12pm — EASY**
**Wasatch Back Reservoirs**
**Leader:** Bryant Olsen, bryant_olsen@yahoo.com
This is a great time of year to see loons, scoters, swans, unusual geese and gulls, and other waterfowl at our local reservoirs of the Wasatch Mountains. Places to be visited are: East Canyon, Echo, and Rockport. Wear footwear you don’t mind getting muddy. If there is time remaining, we may visit other reservoirs like Jordanelle and Deer Creek. We’ll meet at the Sego Lily Pavilion Parking Lot of Sugar House Park at 8am. Please call or email Bryant if you have questions and to let him know that you will be there.

**Tuesday, November 21st, BIRDS n’ BITES, 7pm, Education Building in Aviary Tracy, “Saving Wyoming’s Hoback: The Grassroots Movement That Stopped Natural Gas Development”, Dr. Florence R. Shepard**

**Monday, November 27, 8am-11am — EASY**
**Inland Sea Shorebird Reserve (Kennecott’s Mitigation Wetlands)**
**Leader:** Bryant Olsen, bryant_olsen@yahoo.com
We have obtained permission to do a monthly bird survey of the Inland Sea Shorebird Reserve from Rio Tinto/Kennecott Utah Copper. This is seldom open to the general public and features all of the familiar Great Salt Lake wetland habitats and birds that we usually have to travel farther north to find. Who knows what new birds we can document for Salt Lake County out there? We will also explore areas around Lee Kay ponds, the International Center and Saltair/Marina, depending on time and where birds are being reported. We meet at the Sego Lily Pavilion Parking Lot of Sugar House Park at 8am to carpool. PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED as the number of cars allowed is limited. Email Bryant if you plan to attend.

**Wednesday, November 29, 7:30/8am-mid-day — EASY**
**Farmington Bay and Beyond**
**Leader:** Bryant Olsen, bryant_olsen@yahoo.com
The duck hunt is on, but that’s okay. Hunters cannot be in the areas we will be birding. We have access to all trails around the nature center and the dikes in the main entrance to Farmington Bay WMA down to the 4-way. Join Bryant to bird further north in Davis County following the Farmington trip, if interested. Meet in the Sego Lily Pavilion Parking Lot of Sugar House Park at 7:30am to carpool or at 8am at the nature center on Glovers Lane in Farmington. PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED as the number of cars allowed is limited. Contact Bryant to let him know you are coming.

Photography by September Smith

The Pelican
Calendar of Events including Field Trips for NOV/DEC 2017

Saturday, December 2nd, 9am–12pm — EASY
Practice field trip in Preparation for Christmas Bird
Count, Liberty Park
Leader: Vivian Schneggenburger, (801) 518-1730
This trip is especially encouraged to involve groups to
take part in the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) — be-
ginning birders and anyone who has never participated in a
CBC. We will stroll the park, counting and identifying all the
birds that we see just like on the official CBC. It’s fun, easy,
and often there are good birds to see up close (but that’s not a
promise). Meet at 9am at the SE corner of Liberty Park (13th
S & 7th E). Call Vivian if you plan to attend.

Saturday, December 16th — EASY-DIFFICULT
Salt Lake City Christmas Bird Count
Leader: Ian Batterman, (920) 360-0805/imbatterman@
gmail.com
’Tis the season to go birding! It is time for the
continuation of the longest running bird survey in North
America. Starting times and locations will be determined
by team leaders. Our potluck social with team reports,
count tally, and door prizes, will begin at 6pm at the
Chase Mill in Tracy Aviary (please bring a dish to share).
Contact Ian Batterman if you plan to participate or to
obtain further information; just make sure you do so well
in advance so we can organize the teams. Fa-la-la-la-la
la-la la la!

Monday, December 18, 8am-11am — EASY
Inland Sea Shorebird Reserve (Kennecott’s
Mitigation Wetlands)
Leader: Bryant Olsen, bryant_olsen@yahoo.com
We have obtained permission to do a monthly bird survey of
the Inland Sea Shorebird Reserve from Rio Tinto/Kennecott
Utah Copper. This is seldom open to the general public and
features all of the familiar Great Salt Lake wetland habitats
and birds that we usually have to travel farther north to find.
Who knows what new birds we can document for Salt Lake
County out there? We will also explore areas around Lee Kay
ponds, the International Center and Saltair/Marina, depending
on time and where birds are being reported. We meet at the
Sego Lily Pavilion Parking Lot of Sugar House Park at 8am to
carpool. PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED as the number of
cars allowed is limited. Email Bryant if you plan to attend.

Wednesday, December 27, 7:30/8am-mid-day —
EASY
Farmington Bay and Beyond
Leader: Bryant Olsen, bryant_olsen@yahoo.com
The duck hunt is on, but that’s okay. Hunters cannot be
in the areas we will be birding. We have access to all
trails around the nature center and the dikes in the main
entrance to Farmington Bay WMA down to the 4-way.
Join Bryant to bird further north in Davis County fol-
lowing the Farmington trip, if interested. Meet in the
Sego Lily Pavilion Parking Lot of Sugar House Park
at 7:30am to carpool or at 8am at the nature center on
Glovers Lane in Farmington. PRE-REGISTRATION IS
REQUIRED as the number of cars allowed is limited.
Contact Bryant to let him know you are coming.

Monday, January 1st, 7am — EASY-MODERATE
Jordan River Christmas Bird Count
Leaders: Jeanne Le Ber and Ray Smith, (801) 532-
7384
Meeting place TBD. Assignments will be distributed
and groups will start birding at 8am. Team reports and
count tally will begin at 6pm at the Sizzler on 9000 S.
& State St. To sign up, or for more information, call
Jeanne or Ray.

Non-birding Bird Survey Opportunities for
Nov and Dec 2017
Tracy Aviary’s Citizen Science Team would
like to invite all interested birders to join us for
weekly visits to our 12 bird monitoring study
areas throughout Salt Lake County. We do field
trips every Wednesday, every Saturday, and
some Fridays and Mondays. Our schedule can
be accessed at www.tracyaviaryconservation.org/schedule
Click the button that says “Sign
Up Here” to access our SignUpGenius page,
view the schedule, and sign up to attend. Please
include an email address when you sign up so
we can contact you to provide directions or
cancel in case of bad weather.
Bluebird Box Trail Readied for Next Year’s Nesting Season
by Jeanne Le Ber

On Saturday, September 23, 2017, Great Salt Lake Audubon folks visited the Per Fluge Langeland Bluebird Box Trail in Strawberry Valley. Great Salt Lake Audubon has maintained the 100 nest boxes since 1987. In the fall, it is essential to remove the old nests from the boxes to ensure a clean box and to make room for next year’s nesters. In addition, we replace worn boxes and damaged metal posts, and update datasheets. Our weather was cool and we encountered some light hail just as we finished eating lunch. Nothing too serious.

Many thanks to our 5 volunteers: Jeanne Le Ber, Nancy Lombardo, Ray Smith, Miles Watson and Patrick Watson who braved the weather to clean out the boxes. We couldn’t have done it without you!

Since there were just five of us, we each took on the task of visiting 20 boxes, although Miles and Patrick, thankfully, did more than their share. The table below displays the number and kind of nests recorded on June 2 and the number and kind of nests removed on September 23.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>June Nests</th>
<th>September Nests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Bluebirds</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Swallows</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Wrens</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see from the numbers, the Tree Swallows are the most successful users of the boxes. The September census indicates that there was an increase from 48 to 56 swallow nest over the summer. At least 5 of the empty boxes from June were subsequently used by swallows; the swallows also built on top of 3 bluebird nests. While this seems like a lot of swallow nests, the numbers are down from last year (42 in June and 77 in September 2016).

The Mountain Bluebird numbers are quite low, with 7 nests recorded in June 2017. There were 10 bluebird eggs and 7 chicks. Anecdotally, we were told by the Strawberry Visitor Center volunteers that they saw lots of bluebirds this summer. Hopefully they found other cavities for nesting.

The House Wrens occupied 5 boxes when we checked in June; by September wrens were recorded in 9 boxes. House Wrens nesting later than June 2 used 5 of the empty boxes and built on top of one swallow and one bluebird nest. As with the swallows, the wren numbers were down this year (11 in June and 15 in September 2016).

Spring 2017 saw 24 of our nest boxes vandalized. The boxes were pried off their backing and left on the ground. This is the first time we faced this situation and we were quite horrified that anyone would do such a thing. The vandalism was brought to the attention of the U.S. Forest Service, who gave us permission to place the boxes in 1987, and we expect that the boxes will be left alone now. We speculate that the high number of empty boxes, 39, is in part a result of this vandalism.

Over the summer, Jeanne and Ray visited Strawberry 5 times rehanging fixed boxes. (Thanks to Ray, Mile and Patrick for the repairs.) While doing this, Jeanne also collected the GPS coordinates for each box and had a map created by GIS Services (Justin Sorensen) at Marriott Library.
The maps show the placement of each box along the road. Ultimately, we look forward to no more missing boxes. (Thanks Justin. Fabulous job!)

**In June 2018, we will return to Strawberry Valley to record the use of the boxes. Please consider joining us! We can use the help.**

![Image of people working]

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**In Memoriam**

*by Heather Dove*

Great Salt Lake Audubon would like to honor the following individuals in whose memory generous donations have been made:

- Harold Lamb, MD
- Ty Harrison, PhD

Dr. Lamb practiced as a general surgeon in Salt Lake City for 35 years. In addition to his medical work, he maintained a lifelong commitment to conservation that extended to leadership positions at the state and national level. He was a founding member and President of the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club, President of the Utah Audubon Society (an earlier iteration of Great Salt Lake Audubon), and served as a Director of the National Audubon Society. By appointment of Utah Governor Rampton, Dr. Lamb served on the Utah State Board of Parks and Recreation, and he was a recipient of the Conservationist of the Year Award from the National Wildlife Federation.

Ty Harrison was a well-known and much loved local botanist, who greatly appreciated plants and nature from a very young age. His passion for plants propelled him to a long and distinguished career, teaching in colleges & universities around the country, most recently as professor and Professor Emeritus at Westminster College of Salt Lake City, Utah. Ty was dedicated to preserving and restoring natural habitat and open space within and near communities.

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**Join our email list**

We regularly send out event reminders, action alerts and legislative updates via email. If you would like to receive this important info, send an email request to Heather Dove at membership@greatsaltlakeaudubon.org. GSLA does not share your email information with any persons or organizations.

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