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 the 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, September 19th, 7 PM, “Confusing Winter Bird Identification”, Ian Batterman, GSLA Board Member and Field Trip Coordinator

Bird watching is a fun and fascinating pastime that connects people with nature and shows off some of the most charismatic and awe-inspiring animals on our planet. Although bird watching is the fastest growing outdoor hobby in North America, it can still be difficult to determine which species is which. This is especially the case in winter when many birds are not in their definitive breeding colors. Ian Batterman has been birding for over 20 years, and he will cover some common winter species found in Utah and how to better determine them from their look-alikes based on morphology and behavior. Afterwards, there will be a quiz to test what you have learned and help improve your bird identification skills.

Tuesday, October 17th, 7 PM, “Birding in southern Brazil”
Sylvia Gray, past Board Member and field trip leader and Karin Kirchhoff, Board Member and Program Chair

Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world. While the US has about 914 species, Brazil has more than 1700. Many of these are endemic. On a two-week trip led by Field Guides, we visited three areas in the south of Brazil. Intervales State Park which protects an area of Atlantic Forest, has more than 103 thousand acres and is listed as a World Heritage Site. In Iguazu Falls, the largest waterfalls system in the world, we stayed on both the Argentinian and the Brazilian sides with different vistas. Lastly we visited the Pantanal, a large wetland area which may be 80% covered in water during the rainy season. We will be showing pictures of exotic and colorful birds seen during this trip but also unique animals, vegetation and scenery.

Hold the date: October 10, 2017, 7PM at Westminster College Gore Auditorium

We are finalizing plans for our annual fall program. We will hear about water needs in our area and plans to meet those needs. Refreshments and social will be in the lobby at 6PM. More details in an email blast later. For questions, call Karin Kirchhoff 801-793-0484.
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

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Submission Guidelines: Original articles and photos are welcomed. The editor reserves the right to choose and edit as needed. Email articles to newsletter@greatsaltlakeaudubon.org.

The Pelican is published 6 times a year. Submission deadline for the Nov/Dec issue is October 10, 2017.

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS JULY/AUGUST
by Heather Griffiths

Our annual fundraiser seed sale is upon us! Orders must be received by Monday, October 9th. Pick up will be Saturday, November 4th. You can find the order form at the end of this newsletter and on our website. This year we are able to provide you with fresh and local black oil sunflower seed from Wheatland Seed in Brigham City, UT. Not only will your order help Great Salt Lake Audubon, but you will also be supporting local farmers and businesses. One note, you should know that GSLA does not cash the checks until after the sale is completed and the seeds are distributed. So don’t interpret that because your check has not yet cleared, that your order has not been received. If you are concerned, call Ray Smith 801-532-7384 to check on the status of your order.

The GSLA Education Committee presented a family program at the Sugar House Farmers Market Family Night on July 5th titled, Nests and Rest. We had great participation from local families and loved being a part of the Farmers Market. We look forward to participating again!

Great Salt Lake Audubon is looking for volunteers. We have positions to fill on the Board and on various committees. Currently the Education Committee and the Conservation Committee have the biggest needs. We are also looking for Board members, as we have several positions to fill before we reach our full complement of 12. GSLA is the oldest conservation organization in Utah and our success depends on our volunteers. Your help and skills are essential to keeping the organization going to conserve the birds and the environment that we love. Working with others in the conservation community can be very interesting and rewarding. Please contact us at president@greatsaltlakeaudubon.org

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.
NATIONAL AUDUBON CONVENTION A SUCCESS!!

National Audubon held its biennial convention in July in Park City, UT. The theme was “Elevating Audubon”. The event was a sellout, with 435 people in attendance. Most were leaders from over 80 chapters around the U.S. and even some from other countries. All were enthusiastic birders. The sessions were excellent and ranged from board building and governance, to solutions for climate change, to strategies focused on keeping western water ecosystems and habitats healthy and able to support birds and people alike. It was wonderful to be surrounded by such high energy people who work in their communities every day to make ecosystems stronger, to educate kids about birds and the environment, and to create the world we want to see for the future.

Great Salt Lake Audubon participated in the planning and execution of the event. These efforts included some very popular field trips organized by Jeanne Le Ber and led by local birders. The team from National Audubon expressed their great appreciation for our help and assured us that our volunteers were a key ingredient in making this convention a success. So, a big thanks to the many local people who volunteered!!

One last note. GSLA President, Heather Dove was honored by National Audubon Society as a 2017 Central Flyway William Dutcher Award winner. William Dutcher was a prominent birder, researcher and scholar of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was appointed the first President of the National Audubon Society in 1905. Dutcher was instrumental in convincing President Theodore Roosevelt to set aside Pelican Island, the first federal wildlife refuge, and he fought for early wildlife laws. Recognizing the need for effective local organizations, Dutcher helped create the first Audubon chapters and oversaw Audubon’s growth from a loose-knit federation to a powerful society. The William Dutcher Award was created in his honor to recognize outstanding volunteer service by Audubon leaders that results in bird conservation.
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.****

Tuesday, September 5, 7AM-2PM—Moderate
Migrant Search at Willard Bay & Willard Spur
Leader: Bryant Olsen
Willard Bay is an excellent migrant trap. After searching the trees for warblers there, we will drive the potholed road to the Willard Spur that is well-known for hosting shorebirds in migration. Contact Bryant if you plan to attend (801-498-0362 or bryant_olsen@yahoo.com). Meet at the Sego Lily Pavilion Parking Lot of Sugar House Park on 13th E. in Sugar House at 7am to carpool.

Wednesday, September 6, 7:30AM—MODERATE
Mountain Dell Rec. Area, Parley’s Canyon
Leader: Jeanne LeBer and Ray Smith
Come and join us for our monthly bird survey. 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 Jeanne or Ray at (801-532-7384) if you plan to attend.

Saturday, September 9, 7:30AM—EASY
PELI Project Pelican Survey
Leader: Janice Gardner/Ian Batterman
The American White Pelican is one of the largest and most iconic bird species in Utah, so it is no wonder why it is the “mascot” of Great Salt Lake Audubon. We are teaming up with Westminster College’s PELI Project to search for banded pelicans as they begin their migration. We will meet at the West Valley Target store at 7:30AM and then we will carpool to Farmington Bay and Bountiful Pond to look for migrating pelicans (and search for other migrants while we are there). Our sightings will be included in research being conducted by the Utah Division of Wildlife and Westminster College. Contact Ian Batterman at 920-360-0805 or at imbatterman@gmail.com if you are interested in participating.

Saturday, September 16, 10AM-4PM—EASY
Hawk Watching at Squaw Peak, Utah County
Leader: Neil Paprocki
Great Salt Lake Audubon is teaming up with HawkWatch International for a fun day watching migrating raptors at Squaw Peak. To sign up for this field trip, head to www.HawkWatch.org, click on the Participate tab, and then the Events Calendar tab. Set the calendar to September 2017 and then click on the HawkWatching at Squaw Peak event on the 16th. You can sign up for the trip, see the map to the site, and get more information on the event. Since the meeting place is at Squaw Peak and the leaders at HawkWatch will be meeting there at 10 am, GSLA members attending the trip can set up a carpool at 9 am at the Sego Lily Pavilion Parking Lot of Sugar House Park. If you have any questions, email Neil Paprocki at npaprocki@hawkwatch.org.

Saturday, September 23, 8/9:30AM—MODERATE
Bluebird Box Clean-up
Leaders: Jeanne LeBer and Ray Smith
Meet at Sugar House Park at the Sego Lily Pavilion Parking Lot at 8AM, or at the visitor center in Strawberry Valley by 9:30AM. This is our full trip to clean our nesting boxes in Strawberry Valley, an essential part of preparing the boxes for reuse by the birds in the spring. Dress for possible cool weather. Bring your lunch and GSLA will provide the drinks. Call Jeanne or Ray at (801-532-7384) for details.

Monday, September 25, 7AM—EASY
Inland Sea Shorebird Reserve (Kennecott’s Mitigation Wetlands)
Leader: Bryant Olsen
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 7am to carpool.
PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED as there is limited space on these field trips. Contact Bryant Olsen at (801-498-0362 or bryant_olsen@yahoo.com) to sign up.
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.
I’ve always loved birds. But only in the last few years have I begun to bird in my own backyard, thanks to quick access information on apps like Audubon Birds/Owls, and Merlin Bird ID. As a fan of learning in general, birding came as a natural fit. What other hobby is there where you can enjoy nature AND obsessively learn nearly endless information about different species—their sounds, variations, ranges, habits? And Southwestern Utah is great for birding with its tremendous species variety thanks to our varied habitats.

In early 2015, I was surprised to find a male Costa’s Hummingbird in my backyard. It was still winter so the pending Black-chinned invasion seemed far off. I was mesmerized by his brilliant magenta gorget and loved that he didn’t act wary of me, my camera, or my dogs (who, it’s fair to say, are legitimately no threat). While attempting to absorb everything I could about the Costa’s, he made my yard his home for months. You can imagine my surprise when he showed back up in late fall. A romantic notion or not, I’m convinced it was the same bird; his behaviors and the odds of another finding in my yard seemed to point to a re-visit. He stayed for about five weeks before leaving to overwinter elsewhere, then shocked me again in February 2016 when he showed back up and stayed to battle the Black-chinned nectar warriors in May.

After two years of this trend, you can imagine my surprise when last October I heard my fall hummingbird and just knew it was my favorite little Costa’s. Instead, I saw a black hummingbird. “Wait, what?!” I know leucistic hummingbirds exist, but a black one? He was so fast. Always staying in shadow. It took nearly a week for me to catch a decipherable look at the guy now flitting around my yard day after day. Thanks to the birding apps I love and his habit of being wildly vocal, I was able to confirm that my yard had once again become host to a first—a Broad-billed Hummingbird!

I had been enjoying the affectionately dubbed Mr. BB’s presence for about five weeks when it finally hit me that I needed to report the sightings! I knew from range maps that the little guy was at least a state away from his typical Northern-most summer range and everything pointed to him being in the wrong country altogether given the season—of course real birders would love to know he was in Utah! I don’t think I have ever been so right. The Broad-billed called my backyard home-base until March 8th. In that four month window his whereabouts were public information. I think there must have been 100 or more birders who visited my yard in an effort to catch a glimpse of a lifetime sighting. If only I had a sign-in log to track who visited and from where. It was impressive to have so many passionate people visit from as far as Washington and Alaska and throughout Utah and the Southwest.

The little flying jewel was a treat to watch and listen to. He seemed extra vocal when the feeders got low, so I was trained pretty quickly. I also made sure to have heat lights on feeders to keep him fed through the freezing temps. What he really taught me, though, is how great other birders are. What I quickly came to learn is how respectful and thoughtful everyone was. Though I only met a handful of Mr. BB’s fan club, those I didn’t meet were often extraordinarily kind, reaching out by phone, text, or email to make sure they were following instructions or wouldn’t be in my way. My other yard birds loved working through the sugar that was left for the visitors, given the abundance of seed mixes left for me/them while the winter wore on. I’m still working through the sugar that was left for me to keep the hummingbirds sated. And I was given some really fantastic printed resources on a variety of birding regions and families to keep me busy for many seasons. I cannot think of another group of people that is as conscientious of their surroundings; being aware of wild birds’ needs for space and quiet to be at peace and thoughtfully enjoyed without stress or impact. In my experience birders are a great bunch that more people could take a lesson from.

For all the migratory birds who do what seems impossible year after year as we see their habits shift with climate change, human impact, and habitat loss, I hope those of us who have chosen to learn so much about them share our knowledge. And perhaps Mr. BB overwinters with me again this year. If he does, you’ll hear about it.

September Smith lives and enjoys backyard birding in Hurricane, Utah
GREAT SALT LAKE AUDUBON
FALL 2017 FUNDRAISER SEED SALE –BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED
Support GSLA and help our feathered friends through the winter

Receive one 40 pound bag for each $30.00 contribution

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All proceeds support Great Salt Lake Audubon’s efforts to protect Utah’s wildlife and further our conservation
and education programs.

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INSTRUCTIONS:
Orders must be received by Monday, October 9th.
Complete the order form above and send it with your check to:
Great Salt Lake Audubon
c/o Jeanne LeBer
550 South 400 East, # 3407
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Pick up your order Saturday, November 4th between 10AM and 2 PM at:

GSLA OFFICE
152 West Burton Ave (at 2360 S. West temple)
Salt Lake City, UT

Please plan to pick your seed up on the day of delivery or arrange for someone to do so for you. Note that
GSLA does not cash the checks until after the seed sale is completed. Call Ray Smith at 801-532-7384 if you
have any questions about your order.
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(LOCAL MEMBERSHIP ONLY)  
Please enroll me as a member of GSLA. My membership fee of $30.00 includes a 1-year subscription to THE PELICAN.  
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