

# THE TROGON NEWS

HUACHUCA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
Post Office Box 63, Sierra Vista, Arizona 85636  
Volume XXIX Number 9, June 2007



## President's Message

Hello. The promises of March have practically all been fulfilled, only the *Cochise County Birdlist* I spoke of, which has now been expanded to cover all of Arizona is still in preparation. Cell phones and printer cartridges are now being donated on a regular basis and are being recycled. The first, small, checks have been received from our on-line purchasing project. Rick Romea's *Beginning Birding* and *Birding by Ear* classes have been highly successful, and our first Bird/Mammal trunk presentations to local schools were well received. Our monthly evening programs and all of our field trips have been well attended. My thanks to all involved.

Our next event is the annual election of Officers and Board Members at our June 9, picnic potluck/meeting/bird walk at the San Pedro House. Our nominating committee of Alan Blixt and Kerrie Kirkpatrick have succeeded in forming a full slate for us. (Details inside).

Regards, Mike.

### ***Shop at our Marketplace and raise money for Huachuca Audubon!***

Help raise funds for the Huachuca Audubon Society by shopping at our online [Marketplace](#). Just click on the shopping bag banner on the left side of the Huachuca Audubon Society home page ([www.huachuca-audubon.org](http://www.huachuca-audubon.org)) and raise money for us! Please remember that ONLY purchases made online at participating merchants accessed by clicking on our website Marketplace banner first will raise money for us. Otherwise, the merchants will **not** be able to return a portion of the purchase cost to Huachuca Audubon.

### Welcome to New HAS Members!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest HAS (and Friends of HAS) members: Bob and Dee Parks of Hereford, Terry Alleman, Maxine Chalin, Jennifer and Dick Larson, Judith and John Sauter, and Will Troyer of Sierra Vista, Marney Reed of Sonoita, and Virginia Schnell of Klondyke, Arizona.

### Committee News

The chairpersons for the chapter committees are as follows: Conservation Pat and Verna Berry; Education: Ginny Bealer; Programs: Kerrie Kirkpatrick; Membership: Ginny Bealer; and Outings: Rick Romea. Please contact the relevant chairperson if you would like to find out more information about the activities of a particular committee.

### HAS Vacancies

New members in particular may be interested in getting involved with our organization. Currently we have openings for an Historian (previous experience in another chapter would be a plus, but is not necessary. Interest in supporting our goals is more important).

We continue to seek an Editor for the Trogon News. Currently, due to a full time job and his other commitments, Robert Weissler can accommodate only quarterly issues. We would prefer to return to our customary monthly publication schedule if an interested person steps forward.

Help and guidance is readily available for any of these positions. If you have any thought about joining us, please discuss with Mike Guest or any other officer listed on the back cover of this newsletter.

### Local Programs and Events

Check the web site (<http://www.huachuca-audubon.org>) for the latest updates to the schedule of events. HAS monthly meetings are in the Horace Steele Conference Room at Cochise College.

**Hummingbird Banding** on Ft. Huachuca. Check out [Hummingbird Monitoring Network](#) for details.

### Upcoming Field Trips

**June 7<sup>th</sup>**, Thursday, 7:30 am. **HAS field trip to Carr Canyon.** See below for meeting place.

**June 9<sup>th</sup>**, Saturday, 3:30 pm. **HAS Annual Picnic** at SPH.

**Jun. 10<sup>th</sup>**, Sunday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro River Inn.

**Jun. 13<sup>th</sup>**, Wednesday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro House.

**Jun. 23<sup>rd</sup>**, Saturday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro House.

**Jul. 8<sup>th</sup>**, Sunday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro River Inn.

**Jul. 11<sup>th</sup>**, Wednesday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro House.

**Jul. 28<sup>th</sup>**, Saturday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro House.

**Aug. 8<sup>th</sup>**, Wednesday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro House.

**Aug. 12<sup>th</sup>**, Sunday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro River Inn.

**Aug. 25<sup>th</sup>**, Saturday, 7:00 am. **FSPR bird walk.** Meet at San Pedro House.

Note: Due to the high price of gas, car pool passengers are expected to provide adequate compensation to their driver, about 8 cents per mile.

### Weekly events

Every Sunday at 7am during summer months (8:00am October through March). **Bird Walk at Sierra Vista Environmental Operations Park.** Limited to 20 participants with two docents.

Every Monday (at 7:30am April-August) **Bird Walk at Ramsey Canyon Preserve.** Standard admission fees apply. Contact Rick Romea at 803-1160 for further information.

Every Wednesday at sun rise, **SPARC bird banding** at Kingfisher Pond near SPH. Contact Heather Swanson at (520) 720-9508 for more information.

### Monthly events

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday at 7am Apr-Sep, 8am Oct-Mar. **Bird Walk at San Pedro River Inn.**

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 7am Apr-Sep, 8am Oct-Mar. **Bird Walk at San Pedro House.**

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 5:30pm May-Oct. **Evening Natural History Walk at San Pedro House.**

4<sup>th</sup> Saturday at 7am Apr-Sep, 8am Oct-Mar. **Bird Walk at San Pedro House.**

## Huachuca Audubon Society 2007 Field Trips

The HAS Outings Committee, Mike Guest (Chair), Sandy Kunzer, Rick Romea, and Erika Wilson have planned a slate of interesting outings for the summer 2007.

### Ramsey Canyon Preserve Monday morning bird walks

Join us each Monday morning for a 2-3 hour bird walk at The Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve, led by local area birders. Meet at the Ramsey Canyon Preserve parking lot, located at the upper end of Ramsey Canyon Road, starting at 7:30 am (through August). The walk will go about 1 mile up through the preserve at a very relaxed pace; there is some uphill walking, and sturdy shoes are recommended. The walk is free and open to the public, but standard preserve entrance fees apply: \$5/person for a weekly pass, \$3 Nature Conservancy members and Cochise County residents, \$25 for a yearly family pass. For more information, contact Rick Romea (803-1160, rickorcindy@hotmail.com).

### June 7 Carr Canyon

Huachuca Audubon Society field trip to the high Huachucas. June 7<sup>th</sup>. Meet at the perimeter trail parking lot in Carr Canyon road (west off Highway 92; first pullout on the left after the road becomes dirt) for a 7:30 am departure. Be prepared for a 2 mile hike at a relaxed pace; the trail is rough, with some steep sections, so bring water and wear sturdy shoes. We will be looking for high altitude specialties such as Greater Pewee, Virginia's and Olive Warbler, and Buff-breasted Flycatcher. The trip is free and open to the public. Leader: Mike Guest (378-0667).

## SPARC Program: Bird-banding Along the San Pedro River

### Schedule for Summer 2007

The 2007 SPARC program has been bird-banding along the river since February. Banding will continue each Wednesday starting around 6:30 am until 11am at Green Kingfisher Pond. If you are interested in joining the SPARC team, volunteers are most welcome! Please contact Heather Swanson at (520) 720-9508 if you have questions or wish to participate in the SPARC program.

### North America Migration Count: Cochise County, 12 May 2007

Thirty birders, many of them HAS members, participated in the NAMC on 12 May 2007, finding a total of 202 species in Cochise County. This outstanding effort was a new high for the county (2005-165 species; 2006-183 species), putting Cochise County in competition with Maricopa County (which has 1 ½ times more area) for the diversity record in Arizona.

Areas covered this year included Huachuca, Sawmill, Scheelite, Garden, Ramsey, Carr, and Hunter Canyons in the Huachuca Mountains; San Pedro River Inn and San Pedro House sections on the upper San Pedro River; Benson and St. David on the middle San Pedro River; Cochise Stronghold in the Whetstone Mountains; Whitewater Draw WMA and Lake Cochise in the Sulphur Springs Valley; Portal, Cave Creek Canyon, the Southwest Research Station, Paradise, Rustler Park, Barfoot Park, W. Turkey Creek, and lower Chiricahua NM in the Chiricahua Mountains. Several birders went camping in order to get nocturnal birds and to be in position early in the morning in the mountains. Just as important were the feeder watchers who provided some unique species, listed below.

A summary by bird families follows, with unusual birds in italics. Fourteen species of ducks were found, with four times as many “Mexican” Ducks as regular Mallards. A Wood Duck on the San Pedro River near the San Pedro River Inn was a bonus, but the most unusual duck, considering the time of year, was a lingering female *Canvasback* on the ponds in Benson. The most abundant quail were Gambel’s, followed by Scaled, then Wild Turkey; no Montezuma Quail were found.

Waterbirds other than ducks included both Pied-billed and Eared Grebe, Great Blue Heron, White-faced Ibis, and Am. Coot. Shorebirds were confined to the three impoundment areas, with a dozen species recorded. The presence of a *Pectoral Sandpiper* at Lake Cochise and two *Stilt Sandpipers* at Whitewater Draw overshadowed the good counts of 23 Willets, 10 Long-billed Curlews, one Marbled Godwit, and a Red-necked Phalarope among the Wilson’s Phalaropes. Gulls and terns were represented by Franklin’s Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls and a *Least Tern* at Lake Cochise.

Fourteen species of raptor were tallied, with White-tailed Kite, Mississippi Kite, N. Goshawk, Zone-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, and Prairie Falcon being good finds. The expected pigeons and doves were noted, with the exception of Inca Dove, which slipped through the net. Feeders in the Chiricahua Mountains can attract wonderful birds, including 80 Band-tailed Pigeons that ate all the available seed in short order! Thirteen Greater Roadrunner were about and White-throated Swifts were found by several teams. Nine owl species were tallied, mostly by the nocturnal counters, although all four Barn Owls were found during the day. A Flammulated Owl, a Spotted Owl, and several Long-eared Owls were in the Chiricahua Mountains. About a dozen each of Lesser Nighthawk, Common Poorwill, and Whip-poor-will were reported. Six hummingbird species were checked off, none of them rare, while sixteen Elegant Trogons was a most satisfying count. Two Belted Kingfishers, 23 Loggerhead Shrikes, and three Horned Larks were tallied.

Among the eight woodpecker species, the top birds were a *Lewis' Woodpecker* at a Paradise feeder, and a Gilded Flicker at the San Pedro River Inn. Flycatchers were in good numbers, with sixteen species identified, including a Thick-billed Kingbird on Fort Huachuca, Tropical Kingbird along the San Pedro River, plus Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers and Buff-breasted Flycatchers in the mountains. All five expected vireos were seen, with Cassin's and Warbling Vireos still moving through on migration. All five corvids were noted, with 140 of them being Mexican Jays. The usual Violet-green, N. Rough-winged, Cliff, and Barn Swallows were foraging in the air. Counters found all five species of wren that breed in our county, plus Verdin. In the woodlands, Brown Creeper, all three nuthatches, Bridled and Juniper Titmice, and nine Mexican Chickadees were checked off. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern and Western Bluebirds, Hermit Thrush, and American Robin were another suite of woodland birds found during the day.

All four mimids were located, with two Bendire's Thrashers and eight Crissal Thrashers being the least common. European Starlings are still relatively uncommon, with a count of 27 individuals, while only two lingering Am. Pipits turned up. Both Cedar Waxwings and Phainopeplas were found in small numbers. Warblers were represented by sixteen species, including ten Olive, one Orange-crowned, four Virginia's, three Hermit, two MacGillivray's, and four Red-faced Warblers. A huge influx of Western Tanagers was moving through that day, with 96 individuals counted; about two dozen each of Hepatic and Summer Tanagers were noted. Two lingering Green-tailed Towhees meant all four towhees made it onto the list. There were twelve sparrow species on the list, with a very late *White-throated Sparrow* at a Portal feeder being the most unusual. Other interesting sparrow counts included eleven Botteri's, two Black-chinned, and one Lincoln's, plus thirteen Lark Buntings near Whitewater Draw.

A nice list of grosbeaks and buntings included 100+ Black-headed Grosbeaks and two different *Rose-breasted Grosbeaks* seen at Portal, one at a feeder there. N. Cardinal, Pyrrhuloxia, and Blue Grosbeak rounded out the list, while 21 Lazuli Buntings (18 at one feeder) and one Indigo Bunting added spice to the list. Nine species in the icterid (blackbird) family were counted, including the three orioles—Hooded, Bullock's, and Scott's—and both Bronzed and Brown-headed Cowbirds. House Sparrows, House Finches, and Lesser Goldfinches all came to feeders in good numbers. Last, but not least, were 44 Red Crossbills, eleven Pine Siskins, and one American Goldfinch, all located in the Chiricahua Mountains.

Compiler: Erika Wilson

## Spring 2007 HAS Field Trip Reports

### Empire-Cienega RCA, Santa Cruz Co., February 2007

Nine HAS members went by car caravan to the BLM's Empire-Cienega RCA on 15 February 2007. Our first stop was on Upper Elgin Road, overlooking the southeast unit below Route 82. Rick Romea pointed out a singing Vesper Sparrow, a song we don't hear too often because they don't breed in our area. There was also a Red-tailed Hawk at a nest on a utility pole, plus Loggerhead Shrike, Chihuahuan Raven, Brewer's Sparrow, Black-throated Sparrow, and Savannah Sparrow. Next we turned off the main road onto the dirt track leading to a cattle watering station where larks and longspurs had been reported. There were other birders there already, and there were mixed flocks of Horned Larks and longspurs, but the birds were rather distant. We decided to come back later after birding in the north part of the RCA.

Retracing our steps to Route 82, we drove to Sonoita, then north on Route 83 to the west entrance. Driving into toward the old Empire Ranch, we saw N. Harriers, Red-tailed Hawks, and American Kestrels. Next to the stock pens we found a mix of blackbirds and doves. Parking at Las Cienegas, we walked up the creek, seeing the usual woodland birds. At the far end we found a pair of Great Horned Owls perched in a huge cottonwood. Walking back, we added Green-tailed and Abert's Towhees to our list, plus a bright male N. Cardinal. Eating lunch under the trees next to the parking lot, we were surprised to find another Great Horned Owl perched overhead!

Next we drove south through the center of the RCA, adding Merlin and Greater Roadrunner. Back at the southeast unit, the wind had picked up quite a bit, which had the desired effect of bringing the grassland birds closer to us. We found both Chestnut-collared and McCown's Longspurs among the hundreds of Horned Larks. Our final tally was 38 species.

### **Sierra Vista EOP, March 2007**

Leaders Mike Guest and Erika Wilson had the maximum turn-out of twenty HAS members and guests for a weekday walk around the Sierra Vista EOP on 08 March 2007. With such a large group, we split into two parties, working in opposite directions around the ponds. The first difference we noted from the regular Sunday walks here was the noise of the cement plant to the northwest of the EOP, which made hearing the birds more difficult than usual. By morning's end we had tallied 49 species, including ten duck species, and fine views of all four rail species—Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Moorhen, and Am. Coot. The best shorebirds were three Wilson's Snipe, while other outstanding birds were a male Vermilion Flycatcher, a Tree Swallow, many Marsh Wrens (heard more often than seen), Mountain Bluebirds, Am. Pipits, a Common Yellowthroat, and six sparrow species. The several thousand Yellow-headed Blackbirds were voted the most popular bird of the trip.

### **Hummingbird Workshop, Ash Canyon, April 2007**

Over a dozen HAS members had a splendid morning in Mary Jo Ballator's garden on 11 April 2007, learning about hummingbird identification under the tutelage of Rick Romea, David Beaudette, and Mary Jo Ballator. Focusing on females, the leaders emphasized bill shape, body posture, and tail movements, in combination with flank color, as a means of sorting out the different species. Female Black-chinned, Anna's, and Lucifer Hummingbirds were worked thoroughly, but we did not ignore the male Broad-billed, Magnificent, and Rufous Hummingbirds also present.

Nor did we neglect the other wonderful birds in the garden, with a Whiskered Screech-Owl peering out of a nest box, Lazuli Buntings at a seed feeder, and both Scott's and Hooded Orioles coming to the jelly pots being favorites. Close, admiring looks at Acorn, Ladder-backed, and Arizona Woodpeckers were made, and a Bridled Titmouse made a cameo appearance. Our morning total was 37 species, with the last folks out seeing an adult Gray Hawk float over the yard and parking area.

### **Miller Canyon, May 2007**

Seven HAS members spent a windy morning hiking up Miller Canyon on 05 May 2007, followed by a spell watching hummingbirds at Beatty's feeders. Our thanks to the Beatty's for permission to bird their orchard and CAS site, and use of the back gate, making our field trip much more enjoyable.

Due to the wind, the first mile or so of hiking yielded few birds, but things started to pick up after the first stream crossing. In this area we had good looks at several Red-faced Warblers, including one carrying nesting material in its beak. Other warblers seen during the morning were Black-throated Gray, Townsend's, Grace's, Wilson's, and Painted Redstart.

The highlight of our walk, however, was having Dieter Kamm find a Spotted Owl just off the path, perched in recently leafed out Bigtooth Maples, at eye level. We quickly realized there were two birds, and we watched them with delight for some little time.

At the CAS hummingbird feeders we saw Broad-billed, Magnificent, Black-chinned, Anna's, and Broad-tailed Hummingbirds at close quarters. This site is always worth visiting, even if we were just a bit too early for the White-eared Hummingbirds, which were first reported a few days later.

Reports by Erika Wilson

### **Hereford Bridge Bird Walk, May 13, 2007**

With a new Hereford Bridge parking lot and trailhead established by the BLM on the west side of the river, I was curious to see what opportunities there are for exploring the birds and wildlife from that side. While there is only a quarter mile stretch of the river south of the bridge before you reach private property, that stretch was rich with migrant and breeding birds. Many Bullock's Orioles, Western Tanagers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Abert's Towhees, Vermilion Flycatchers, Gambel's Quail, Yellow-breasted Chats, and a Verdin were low and close in the riparian shrubs. Warblers were conspicuous too with Yellow, Wilson's, and Lucy's seen at close range. A female Lazuli Bunting, a Warbling Vireo, Ash-throated and Brown-crested Flycatchers, Cassin's Kingbird, and a Pacific-slope Flycatcher were also conspicuous. Black-lored "oriantha" White-crowned Sparrows were quite numerous as they stopped on their journey to the Rocky Mountains.

Meanwhile, north from the bridge on the west side of the river, the terrain is uneven but open, owing to a fire several years ago. Nevertheless, I saw some terrific birds close to the bridge. Bell's Vireo was singing incessantly from a bushy willow, so I stopped to try to get a decent look at it. With a little squeaking, I managed to see the small, but hooked bill, the light lores, and overall drab, pale gray, diminutive vireo. Its vocalizations are quite unlike that of Gray Vireo or Hutton's Vireo, while the habitat is different as well. Adjacent to the bridge, a pair of Summer Tanagers were cavorting. A commotion drew my attention to a pair of Western Kingbirds attempting to drive off an adult Gray Hawk flying among the cottonwoods nearby.

To round out a very pleasant morning of birding, I stopped by the San Pedro River Inn where a Tropical Kingbird has returned once again.

Report by: Robert Weissler

### **Bird/Mammal Trunk Project**

Huachuca Audubon Society would like to develop its own Bird/Mammal trunk for our school visits and education outreach program. If you have any suitable items, e.g. feathers, bones, claws, skulls you could donate, please contact Alan Blixt at 515-9458 or [alanblixt@hotmail.com](mailto:alanblixt@hotmail.com). We will also welcome further monetary donations for this purpose.

### **More Recycling Opportunities**

Our recycling project (for Ink Jet and Laser printer cartridge discards and old cell phones) offers collection points at San Pedro House, Ramsey Canyon Preserve, and Wild Birds Unlimited. You can also bring them to any HAS monthly meeting, Board meeting, or field trip for collection. All collected items will be sent to recycling centers at no cost to HAS, but we still receive a small rebate for each item. It is a Win-Win project – less waste in our landfills and money for our education outreach programs. Any questions, please call Mike Guest at 378-0667, or email him at [mwguest@juno.com](mailto:mwguest@juno.com).

HAS continues to recycle newspapers for Apache Middle School. We have also started recycling programs at both the Amerind Foundation and at Coronado National Memorial for newspapers, magazines, plastic, and aluminum cans. If you see an opportunity to start a recycling program at a local school, church, or other organization, please consider doing so. Recycling is one of the first steps in local conservation and benefits all of us.

### **Conservation News**

#### **The Reality of Flexible-Fuel Vehicles**

U.S. automakers have announced that they will make half of America's cars ethanol-ready by 2012. President Bush has applauded their commitment to reduce petroleum usage, and large numbers of U.S. drivers have purchased these vehicles in the belief that they are helping to combat global warming. However, BusinessWeek Online (March 28, 2007) reports that this initiative contains a "dirty" secret due to the policies for flexible-fuel vehicles (those using more than 10 percent ethanol).

Automakers are required to meet certain government standards for fuel economy. For flexible-fuel vehicles, fuel economy is calculated based on the assumption that they are operated using a 50:50 mixture of ethanol and gasoline. However, only 1 percent of the flexible-fuel vehicles are actually operated on E85 - 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. The remaining 99 percent are using only gasoline, since E85 is currently available at only a small fraction of U.S. gas stations (only 1,600 of the nation's 176,000 gas stations pump E85). However, automakers are turning out hundreds of thousands of flexible-fuel vehicles. As more of these vehicles are produced, more gasoline is consumed, which dramatically increases both greenhouse gas emissions and America's dependence on petroleum. The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that without the policy in place, the U.S. would have burned 4 billion fewer gallons of gasoline since 1998.

Another major culprit is a 1998 law called the Alternative Motor Fuels Act, which gives automakers extra credit toward meeting fuel-economy standards for making vehicles that can run on alternative fuels. Making a vehicle fuel-flexible only costs about \$50 per vehicle, but actually improving fuel

economy can be much more expensive. Therefore, there's a significant financial incentive for automakers to produce more flexible-fuel vehicles. Since the Alternative Motor Fuels Act has been extended through 2008, U.S. automakers can be expected to continue to ramp up production of flexible-fuel vehicles without worrying too much about fuel economy. In the short term, it's far cheaper for automakers to keep producing cars that seem environmentally friendly, rather than reengineering cars to squeeze out more miles per gallon. Until the U.S. has much broader availability of alternative fuels, gasoline usage will continue to rise into the not-so-green future.

Source: Moira Herbst, BusinessWeek Online, March 28, 2007.

### **Plastic Shopping Bag Ban**

On March 28, 2007 San Francisco became the first city in the nation to ban the typical plastic shopping bag. The ban requires stores larger than 5,000 square feet to present customers with a choice of paper, biodegradable plastic or reusable cloth bags. This measure differs from a 2005 proposal (mirrored after similar and successful legislation in other countries) that would have imposed a 17-cent fee on each plastic bag a consumer took home from a store.

Supporters say the ban will help curb litter on the streets and remove a danger to marine life that choke on the bags. The decrease in production of plastic bags will also reduce petroleum consumption and emission of greenhouse gases. The following statistics regarding the use of plastic bags are somewhat alarming:

Producing 1 million plastic bags generates 13 million pounds of carbon dioxide.

It takes 11 barrels of oil to produce a ton of plastic bags.

Some 950 tons of plastic bags invade landfills, because only 1 percent of them are ever recycled.

The 50 grocery stores most affected by the law lobbied against it. They argued that the ban wasn't reasonable because biodegradable plastic bags made of corn byproducts are a relatively new, expensive and untested product. Some said they might offer only paper bags at checkout.

Hopefully other cities and states will follow San Francisco's lead. This initiative will only have a significant, positive environmental impact when it is expanded to a regional or national basis. Huachuca Audubon is working with other local environment ally-oriented organizations to provide reusable shopping bags for a nominal fee. However, the success of any such effort is dependent on the establishment of financial incentives for large retailers to eliminate plastic shopping bags. We all need to express our feelings on this important issue to our local, state and national representatives, and urge the passage of appropriate legislation.

Source: "San Francisco Officials Approve Plastic Shopping Bag Ban", nbc4.tv, March 28, 2007

## **What You Can Do To Save The Planet**

The major impact of global population growth and industrial expansion is an explosive increase in demand for scarce resources; specifically energy and water. At the same time, the current reliance on petroleum and other fossil fuels is accelerating the production of greenhouse gases and hence global warming. Until these basic underlying issues can be effectively dealt with, the only means to slow their environmental impacts is to reduce per capita consumption of energy and water. Although conservation requires self-discipline and commitment from each individual, it is well worth the modest sacrifice and effort involved. The following are a few examples of voluntary actions that every U.S. citizen can take to help save the planet:

### Conserve Electricity

- Select energy efficient models when replacing household appliances
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with long-lasting, compact fluorescent bulbs
- Turn off lights when you leave a room and turn off computers when not in use
- Minimize exterior lighting
- Turn off your dishwasher's "dry" cycle

### Reduce Petroleum Usage

- Drive 65 instead of 75
- Plan and consolidate trips and errands to reduce total miles
- Car pool whenever possible
- Given a choice, drive the high mpg vehicle
- Eliminate use of plastic shopping bags (use non-disposable or biodegradable bags)

### Conserve Water

- Take shorter showers and don't leave lavatory and sink faucets running
- Install "low-flow" adapters on bathroom fixtures and kitchen sinks
- Wash only full loads of laundry and dishes
- Collect rainwater and use it for watering outdoor plants
- Implement passive water harvesting and xeriscaping in desert environments
- Wash vehicles at facilities that recycle water

Give Voice - Express Your Opinions

Stay informed and support local conservation efforts

Write Letters to the Editor of local newspapers

Send letters and e•mail to local, state and national representatives

Actively support candidates and referenda promoting conservation

Be a community advocate for environmental issues

**Native Plants and Desert Landscaping**

The Arizona Native Plant Society has a terrific website for anyone interested in native plants and the environments they inhabit. This month's website is recommending the following CD: Desert Landscaping: Plants for a Water-Scarce Environment, produced by the University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center. It lists over 600 low-water use plants for the Southwest. Sun and soil requirements, irrigation needs, place of origin, wildlife interactions, invasive species, and plant trivia can also be found.

To order: contact the Water Resources Research Center, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Arizona, 350 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson, AZ 85719; Phone: 520-792-9591 or visit the web site <http://cals.arizona.edu/AZWATER> for a walk through and ordering info. The cost is \$30 per CD including shipping and tax. Call for bulk pricing.

**Endangered Species Act is in Jeopardy**

According to the Birders United website, the intent of the Endangered Species Act is in jeopardy. A posting on the Web site of the Department of Interior announced that it would seek to protect endangered plants, animals, and birds only in areas where they are struggling to survive. The new regulations would allow developers to destroy critical habitat where endangered birds are doing well and thus drive them out of a habitat where they are successfully fighting extinction. Protections would only be given to habitats where a particular species is teetering on extinction.

Notify your congressional representative and senators that you are strongly opposed to this new interpretation of the Endangered Species Act. Let them know that you find it unacceptable and that you expect them to take steps to counter the administration's wreckless approach to conservation.

Pat & Verna Berry - Conservation Chair

**Reminder: Trogon News is now a quarterly newsletter**

With the advent of the web, we have an effective means for reaching our membership in a more timely fashion. As a result, we have moved the schedule of events front and center on the home page of our web site (<http://www.huachuca-audubon.org/>) where it can be updated on a moment's notice. We will continue to offer the newsletter as a vehicle to highlight stories on recent field trips, programs, and other activities of Huachuca Audubon, albeit quarterly instead of monthly.

# Audubon Celebration 2007

Co-sponsored by *Arizona Audubon Council* and *Audubon Arizona*

**You are invited --- let's flock together!**

Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> 2007

Fiesta Inn Resort, Tempe AZ

***Join with friends old and new for a weekend of fun and opportunity to include the following:***

**John Flicker**, President and CEO of the National Audubon Society.

**Jerry Jackson**, renowned ornithologist, author, and popular writer for *Birdwatcher's Digest*.

**César Mazier**, President of César Mazier Landscaping & Consulting and past director of horticulture for the Desert Botanical Garden.

**Homer Hansen**, chairman of the annual "Wings Over Willcox" birdwatching festival and sparrow expert.

**Jim Burns**, wildlife photographer and writer of "Bird Is a Verb," a bimonthly birding column for the *Arizona Republic*.

**Betsy Loyless**, Senior Vice-President for Policy in Audubon's Washington office.

**David L. Pearson**, Research Professor at Arizona State College and author and co-author of books in the Ecotravellers' Wildlife Guide series.

**Rose Ann Rowlett**, of Field Guides- professionally guided bird-watching trips to 100 destinations worldwide.

**Leadership training for Chapter leaders**, such as fund raising, planning and implementing an education program, attracting new members, etc.

**Important Bird Area** training on Friday.

**A variety of Sunday field trips** such as Rio Salado, Gilbert Riparian Preserve, Tres Rios, Boyce Thompson Arboretum and more...

**Silent Auction, Raffle**, more fun...and, of course, **great birding!!!**

**Conference Registration is \$85 per person** (includes box lunch, banquet dinner, attendance for all Saturday workshops and Sunday field trips ~ Friday workshops extra). For further details and to request a registration packet, call **Donna** at **602-468-6470** or email [egret@cox.net](mailto:egret@cox.net). Early registration is encouraged as some events will be limited.

Discover the upbeat charm of Tempe's **Fiesta Inn Resort**. A splendid oasis with more than a hint of Frank Lloyd Wright's design influence, all the Resort's rooms have been recently updated with pillow top mattresses, complimentary wireless internet, and oxygenic showers. The Conference Rate is **\$86 per night** plus tax (conference rate must be booked by phone). Call **1-800-528-6481** ~ [www.fiestainnresort.com](http://www.fiestainnresort.com).

*Register for the Conference prior to August 1<sup>st</sup> and your name will be entered into a drawing for a special prize.*

**16<sup>th</sup> Southwest Wings Birding and Nature Festival  
by Hank Brodtkin**

This year the Southwest Wings Birding and Nature Festival will be held at the Windemere Hotel and Conference Center August 1 – 5. The purpose of the festival, the longest running event of its kind in Arizona, is to promote nature based education and tourism and environmental awareness in southeastern Arizona.

Workshops and seminars, many of which are free, run the gamut of nature related subjects such as wildlife photography, beginning birding, the jaguars on the Arizona - Sonora border, native plants and geology, butterflies and dragonflies, and many more. Scott Weidensaul who has written more than two dozen books on natural history, including one that was a Pulitzer Prize finalist, will be the keynote speaker and will co-lead some of the field trips.

Besides many field trips into the neighboring Huachucas, there will be opportunities to visit most of the other prime bird watching spots in the area including overnight trips to the Chiricahuas, the Atascosas, and a new trip to a ranch in northern Sonora, as well as half and full day trips to a variety of locations.

There will be special free walks and programs for children. Prizes are being awarded to local school children and their teachers for the festival's annual nature-related art and essays contest. Local families are being welcomed this year to attend any of the free seminars without paying the \$15.00 admission fee.

A full compliment of nature-related vendors, artists, and exhibits will be available during the festival.

Registration for the event begins on June 1. For complete information or for a brochure visit the website at [www.swwings.org](http://www.swwings.org), e-mail: [info@swwings.org](mailto:info@swwings.org) or call (520) 678-8237.

## Trip Report: Rio Sonora to the Gulf of California

April 2007

As the van-load of birders hurtled down the highway along the Rio Sonora, the landscape changed inexorably from the colder highlands of the upper San Pedro River Valley to the milder stretches that support cold-intolerant plants and trees. We had joined Mark Pretti's brief 3-day, 2-night trip to San Carlos, Sonora. Soon after crossing from the San Pedro to the Rio Sonora watershed, we encountered Black



Vultures. Gray Hawk was a roadside bird near Bacoachi.

Meanwhile,

Eurasian Collared-Doves have become common in Sonora, a recent phenomenon like that of the western United States. The Zócalo of the town of Aconchi featured a number of flowering trees that attracted hummingbirds like Violet-crowned and Broad-billed Hummingbirds. At Baviácora, elusive Elegant Quail were seen briefly at the trailside

before slipping into the underbrush nearby. Toward late afternoon, we arrived at the Hotel San Martin in Hermosillo where we spent the first night.

One of the highlights of the trip was the dry-season display of flowers. In particular, palo brea (*Cercidium praecox*) and tree ocotillo were covered in yellow and scarlet flowers, respectively. Moreover, columnar cacti were plentiful and striking. Cardón, organ-pipe, senita, hecho, and saguaro were seen during the trip. San Carlos was especially scenic with the stark desert mountains abutting the waters of the Gulf of California, the hillsides dotted with cardón and organ-pipe.



The Paradiso Resort made an excellent base for our brief stay along the coast at San Carlos. Its lagoon provided close views of Osprey, Reddish Egret, and large flocks of terns. Meanwhile, the estuary at Guaymas provided a wide array of shorebirds and waders including American Oystercatcher, Wilson's Plover, Tricolored Heron, and Yellow-crowned Night-

Heron as Magnificent Frigatebirds soared overhead. Laughing Gulls featured the black heads of their breeding plumage as did a Bonaparte's Gull. Brown Pelicans were seen flying just above the surface of the water, often in formation.



Near San Carlos, Nacapule Canyon provided a taste of the tropics with elements of tropical deciduous forest (TDF) including three species of fig tree, one of which gave its (Spanish) name to the canyon. The distinctive call of Nutting's Flycatcher was in sharp contrast to those of Ash-throated Flycatchers nearby. Broad-billed Hummingbirds were enjoying the floral display in their own way. A Gray Vireo was heard behind stark, white-barked palo blanco (*Acacia willardiana*), but could not be coaxed closer for a definitive view. A number of migrant warblers were passing through, including Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers. Before returning home, we spotted a Blue-footed Booby from the beach on our way out of San Carlos.

-Robert Weissler



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**Friends of Huachuca Audubon Society** - Individual - \$10 annually, Household - \$15 annually. Provides no affiliation to National Audubon. Make check payable to Huachuca Audubon Society.

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Mailed copies or monthly email notification is available upon special request to HAS editor and/or secretary.

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