

# THE TROGON NEWS

HUACHUCA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
Post Office Box 63, Sierra Vista, Arizona 85636  
Volume XXXIV, Number 3, March 2006



## President's Message

Please note that this month's program is being held a week earlier than usual, the third Tuesday. This is to accommodate our speaker Bob Brister, who is the Interregional Outreach Coordinator with the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA). He's coming all the way from Utah to give us a presentation on Utah's Redrock Wilderness. Show up for some beautiful slides!

Hope many of you participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count and had fun doing so. When I walk my dogs, I was noticing meadowlarks flashing their tails in February. It seemed pretty early to me.

Don't forget that HAS is one of the groups deeply involved with showing off the birds at the Sierra Vista wastewater treatment plant. We have a core group of volunteers who do this but we could always use more folks. Perhaps this is a fun way for you to get involved with HAS? Call Mike Guest at 378-0667 to offer to help.

## Welcome to New HAS Members!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest HAS members: Cindy D Bartley and Anne L Cooper of Hereford, Marian D. Mead of Pueblo, Colorado, Dorothy McLaughlin of Safford, Leah T. Foley and Patricia B. Raymond of Bisbee, Edwin Bramel, Lee Sullivan, Patricia H. Faircloth, Mary Schreiber, Larry D. White, Jean A Dages, Diane Levine, Rick and Ricki Thompson, Deanne Kampikas, Joseph Mesch, and Holly M Oncken of Sierra Vista, Diana English of Fort Huachuca, Wayne Gustafson and David Dalrymple of St David, Norman Davis, Gertrude Miranda, Stanley Woodin, Lee Helfrich, Stanley Woodin, Gertrude Miranda and S B Slye of Benson, Ted Scott of Sunsites, Paulette Townsend of Tombstone, Joel Fago of Prescott Valley, Arizona, and Sally Walker and Roberto N. Ramirez of Willcox.

## Local Programs and Events

**Mar 21<sup>st</sup>**, Tuesday; HAS program will be 3rd Tuesday, NOT March 28<sup>th</sup>; Oscar Yrun Community Center. We'll have the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) presenting their slideshow, "Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness".

## Field Trips

**Mar 6<sup>th</sup>**, Monday, Ramsey Canyon, 8:30 a.m. "Early Bird" Walk. Join Rick Romea for a walk up the canyon to revisit our winter residents and welcome new arrival birds. Standard admission fees to Ramsey Canyon apply. Call Rick at 803-1160 for further information. This is the first of monthly "Early Bird" walks.



**Mar 8<sup>th</sup>**, Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. FSPR bird walk. Meet at San Pedro House.

**Mar 11<sup>th</sup>**, Saturday, Bird the EOP on other than a Sunday! Leader: Sandy Kunzer, 803-8490. (Sandy will be out of town until Mar 5<sup>th</sup> - please call after this date.)

**Mar 12<sup>th</sup>**, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. FSPR bird walk. Meet at San Pedro River Inn.

**Mar 20<sup>th</sup>**, Monday, 8:30 a.m. Ash Canyon B & B. Turkey Track Road. Join local area birders from 8:30 - 11:30 am at Mary Jo Ballator's remarkable back yard for a review of the many hummingbirds and other area specialties drawn to her feeders. \$5 suggested donation. Call Rick Romea at 803-1160 for directions and for further information. This is the first of monthly visits to Mary Jo's.

**Mar 25<sup>th</sup>**, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. FSPR bird walk. Meet at San Pedro House.

**Mar 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>**, Sunday's, 8:00 a.m. Sierra Vista Environmental Operations Park bird walks. Tours will be limited to 20 participants plus 2 docents.

## Sir David's Personal Plea for Albatrosses

Already in 2006, thousands of albatrosses will have died needlessly, victims of a longline fishing industry that doesn't mean to kill them. Longtime supporter of the campaign to save these magnificent seabirds, Sir David Attenborough has once again voiced his concern for their plight. "One of my most memorable moments was sitting eyeball-to-eyeball with a wandering albatross chick on the remote Atlantic island of South Georgia. It is possible that this bird may have joined the hundreds of thousands of albatrosses which have died on a fisherman's longline," said Sir David. "For an albatross, taking a fish from a baited hook is no different to a blue tit taking peanuts from a garden feeder. The contrast is that the albatross will pay the heaviest price of all for its meal – its life." His passionate plea for these gentle giants of the oceans to be given a fighting chance can be found in full on the *Save the Albatross Campaign* website ([www.savethealbatross.net](http://www.savethealbatross.net)). Make the most of visiting the site by making a donation to the campaign while you are there, so helping to support important work to save the world's albatrosses.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Bird Walk  
12 February 2006**

Nearly twenty participants enjoyed fine views of a pair of White-tailed Kites among the many winter birds seen on the February 2nd Sunday Bird Walk. But the highlight of the walk was an unlikely species, a very early "Western" Flycatcher. The most likely to migrate along the San Pedro River would be Pacific-slope Flycatcher, but the bird did not vocalize at all. The other possibility is the virtually identical-looking Cordilleran Flycatcher that breeds in the mountains.

The common birds of this walk, namely Gila and Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Curve-billed Thrasher, Northern (red-shafted) Flicker, Pyrrhuloxia, and Green-tailed, Canyon and Abert's Towhees were seen frequently along the route. Among sparrows, White-crowned, Vesper, Lincoln's, Chipping, and Brewer's were quite numerous. Black and Say's Phoebes were both seen along the river. Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Harrier and American Kestrel, the common raptors, were conspicuous hovering and soaring over the fields.

On Sunday, February 19, I hiked up Blacktail Canyon at the far northern end of the Huachuca Mountains on Fort Huachuca in search of montane birds. I was not disappointed! After finding some of the target birds like Stellar's Jay, a flock of Band-tailed Pigeons, and Yellow-eyed Juncos, I reached an open stand of pines not unlike that of Sawmill Canyon, albeit smaller. Near Blacktail Pond, I encountered an adult male Williamson's Sapsucker in an Alligator Juniper. Shortly thereafter, a "cloud" of Bushtits signaled a busy flock that included Golden-crowned Kinglets, along with Ruby-crowned, plus Brown Creeper, Bridled Titmice, and White-breasted Nuthatch. An American Robin turned up at the pond itself. I heard, but did not see, Rock Wrens near where the firebreak crosses a reef formation.

The next 2nd Sunday Bird Walk is scheduled to depart from the San Pedro River Inn at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 12, 2006. Once again, birders of all levels of experience are welcome to join us!

-Robert Weissler

**Spring in Mexico with Huachuca Audubon**

Join the Huachuca Audubon Society this spring as we visit Sonora and Chihuahua at one of the most enjoyable and bird-rich times of year.

**Sonora, April 29 - May 4, 2006**

After two outstanding trips in 2005, the HAS will be returning to Sonora, Mexico, in 2006 for what should be an exciting and bird-filled trip. Breeding birds and migrants should be abundant as we travel along the lush Rio Sonora, through Sonoran Desert and tropical deciduous forest, and into the pines and oaks of the northern Sierra Madre. Among the 180 species encountered in 2005 were green kingfisher, gray hawk, Sinaloa, happy, and spotted wrens, streak-backed and black-vented orioles, brown-backed solitaire, blue mockingbird, orange-billed and russet nightingale thrushes, rufous-backed and white-throated robins, black-throated magpie jay, elegant quail, rusty and five-striped sparrows, white-tipped dove, white-striped woodcreeper, gray-crowned woodpecker, slate-throated redstart, tufted flycatcher, rufous-capped brushfinch, crescent-chested warbler, and mountain trogon. Flowering plants, butterflies, reptiles, and a tremendous diversity of habitats will also be enjoyed.

### **Chihuahua, May 23-26, 2006**

Semi-desert grassland, Chihuahuan desert scrub, oak woodland and mixed conifer forest make up the varied habitats we'll visit on this journey in northwest Mexico. In the vast pine forests and drier foothills we'll likely encounter Madrean species including elegant and mountain trogons, crescent-chested warbler, slate-throated redstart, brown-backed solitaire, Mexican chickadee, buff-breasted flycatcher, white-striped woodcreeper, russet nightingale thrush, and the stars of the show, thick-billed parrots. We'll also look for eared quetzal and striped sparrow and explore the general ecology of the plants and animals of the area. On our way into and out of the Sierra Madre, we'll stop at the excellent museum at the Paquime ruins to learn about the rich human history of the region and also the charming town of Mata Ortiz, made famous by local artist Juan Quezada who, inspired by the pottery of the Paquime people, resurrected the art which has flourished in his home town.

For more information and detailed itineraries, please contact Mark Pretti at (520) 803-6889, [mpnaturetours@earthlink.net](mailto:mpnaturetours@earthlink.net) or [www.markprettinatortours.com](http://www.markprettinatortours.com).

### **Protect Arizona's Roadless Areas**

The PARA campaign (Protect Arizona's Roadless Areas) was launched in 2004 in an effort to stop the Bush Administration from repealing the 2001 Roadless Rule. Unfortunately, since that time, the Rule has been repealed and replaced by a new policy that requires state governors to petition the Secretary of Agriculture for roadless protection in each individual state. Governor Napolitano has publicly indicated that she will petition for restoring roadless protection in Arizona. She is currently working with the U.S. Forest Service to organize and schedule a process whereby the ideas and opinions of the general public, affected local communities, and wildlife managers can be evaluated. It is time for PARA to get active again so that Arizona's remaining roadless areas can finally get the protection they deserve!

PARA has joined a larger, statewide effort to support roadless protection in Arizona. We want to make sure Governor Napolitano has strong statewide support when the petition is filed. Currently, we are working on a number of different projects to support the petition process. Your support will have an enormous impact on the success of the petition process in Arizona and, ultimately, on securing protection for our roadless areas.

If you have any questions or would like more information about the Roadless Rule, please do not hesitate to call me.

I look forward to working with you on this campaign.

**Nicole Urban-Lopez**  
Roadless Campaign Coordinator  
Sky Island Alliance  
520.624.7080 x209  
[nicole@skyislandalliance.org](mailto:nicole@skyislandalliance.org)

## Great Old Broads for Wilderness

If you haven't heard of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness, then perhaps it's time! It's an "old" organization, having been around for many a year, that gets out in wilderness in order to advocate effectively to protect it. Following is an invitation to join them in a local campaign.

Hello Southern Arizona Broads,

This is a heads up that the planning for our Tumacacori Highlands Broadwalk is underway and we hope you will mark your calendar and plan on participating for any or all of our long weekend event.

Dates are afternoon of April 6 through breakfast of April 10.

Cost is \$110 for members and \$130 for non-members - that includes camping fees, 4 catered breakfasts, 4 catered dinners, and great speakers. We can pro-rate costs for folks who want to come for part of the weekend.

Birdie Stabel has generously offered to be the local point person for this event and to help get southern Arizona Broads together so there can be a concerted effort for the Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness Proposal. If you'd like to get together with other area Broads or would like to help out with logistics of the Broadwalk please give Birdie a call 520-398-2266 or send her an e-mail at [birdie@gainusa.com](mailto:birdie@gainusa.com).

We are considering having a "Meet the Broads" gathering on Wed evening April 5 in a location more proximate to Tucson, perhaps at someone's house in Green Valley would be a good location. This would take advantage of the fact that a number of Broads staff, Board members, and general members will be in the area and help with recruitment and getting area Broads who maybe can't come to the Broadwalk together. If you know of someone with a house appropriate for a casual gathering with drinks and light fare please let Birdie or myself know.

We are very excited about Broads coming to Arizona for a Broadwalk. It has been too long since we've had a presence there and there is much work to be done. We hope to be seeing you this spring.

Broadly,  
Rose

Rose Chilcoat, Program Director, Great Old Broads for Wilderness  
PO Box 2924  
Durango, CO 81302  
970-385-9577  
fax 970-259-8303  
[www.greatoldbroads.org](http://www.greatoldbroads.org)

## Cottonwoods

Many people wonder why we don't cut down the cottonwoods because they use so much water. Many also do not believe that they are native to the area. I would like to present the following case in favor of the trees.

First off, the Fremont cottonwoods are native.

- Fossils of cottonwood trees, found in the San Pedro River area, have been dated from 10,000 years ago and cottonwood trees were described by the Coronado expedition, which went through this area in the 1540s.

The cottonwoods offer many advantages.

- The trees provide a comfortable area in the desert for human activities: Picnicking, Camping, Hiking, Bicycling, Horseback riding, Hunting, Bird and Butterfly watching, and Educational field studies.
  - Eco-tourism brings in a couple of million dollars a year to our economy.
- They also provide an area for **MILLIONS** of birds annually by offering abundant food, protection, and nesting opportunities. Many hawks and owls that nest in the cottonwoods help to control the rodent population while other birds take care of insects. The "forest" also offers a reasonable degree of safety for other animals passing through this corridor.
- The cottonwoods provide food for beneficial bugs (i.e. Caterpillars eat the leaves, become moths and butterflies and go on to pollinate our native plants and food crops.) The leaves are also eaten by porcupine, deer, beaver, etc.
- These trees hold the soil together thus preventing erosion. They also hold back flood debris, thereby slowing the velocity of the water and reducing its channeling effect, while at the same time building the soil around it. This slowing action also allows more water to penetrate the earth and recharge our aquifer.
  - It is estimated that the river channeled down 35 feet between 1850 and 1950, probably because in the 1880s almost all the trees along the river had been cut to provide building material and fuel for Tombstone (residential building and heating, the operation of the mines, and powering 8 stamp mills along the river) and cattle grazing, which removed new growth and wore down the banks. This was compounded by an earthquake in the late 1800s.
- The trees provide a food source and building material for Beavers, which build dams on the river. These dams back up the water and allow it to seep back into the ground and recharge our aquifer rather than flow downstream only to eventually evaporate.
- Trees evapotranspire only when in leaf and only in the daytime (at night and when leafless, the trees use practically no water.) This evapotranspiration takes in water and carbon dioxide (bad stuff) and releases water vapor and oxygen (good stuff) which all of us need to survive.
  - A paper in 2000 \*\* on the water use of cottonwoods along the San Pedro River in southern Arizona. For large, mature trees with easy access to groundwater (depths less than 5 feet), during the peak of summer, could use anywhere from 200 - 500 liters of water per day (53 - 132 gallons). Another study done in 2003, which monitored a site

with less access to groundwater (the stream goes dry seasonally at this site), found the water use to be about half that of the site with easy access to groundwater. (These rates are for large, well-watered trees during the peak of summer. Certainly their water use would be less during days that are cloudier, cooler, more humid etc.)

- The cottonwood shades the land and nearby water, which cools the area, providing relief for many plants, insects and animals including fish, birds and humans, and last but not least, reduces evaporation within the shaded area.
  - To make this simple I will assume that the cottonwood tree is shading the river channel. Typical unsheltered open water evaporation rates are about 70% more than cottonwood water usage (90 - 224 gals. per day) or a net water saving of 37 - 92 gals. per day. This is the best case scenario because at least half of the shaded area is land which does not evaporate as much as the water surface, however, even under these conditions, the water loss/gain is negligible.

In the final analysis, the water used by the cottonwoods is more than offset by:

- Aquifer recharge due to reduced floodwater velocity and the beaver dams.
- Reduced evaporation due to their shading effect.
- Additional benefits of aesthetics, air purification, rodent control, plant pollination, educational opportunities, recreational opportunities, eco-dollars, etc.

I hope this gives us a better appreciation of the cottonwoods.

Dutch Nagle, Hereford, AZ.

### **\*\* Spatial And Temporal Properties Of Water Vapor And Latent Energy Flux Over A Riparian Canopy**

D. I. Cooper<sup>1\*</sup>, W.E. Eichinger<sup>2</sup>, J. Kao<sup>1</sup>,

L. Hipps<sup>3</sup>, J. Reisner<sup>1</sup>, S. Smith<sup>1</sup>, S.M. Schaeffer<sup>5</sup>, and D.G. Williams<sup>4</sup>

*1. Los Alamos National Laboratory, MS C300, Los Alamos, NM 87545, USA*

*2. University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA*

*3. Utah State University, Logan, UT*

*4. University of Arizona. Tucson, AZ*

*5. University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR*

Photo courtesy of Dutch Nagle



Mail Correspondence to:  
HUACHUCA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 63  
Sierra Vista, AZ 85636

### HUACHUCA AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

President, Tricia Gerrodette 378-4937  
<triciag2@cox.net>  
Vice President, Bob Luce 458-0542  
Secretary, Mike Guest 378-0667  
Treasurer, Phil Tucker 803-8440  
Field Trips, Mike Guest 378-0667  
Programs, Tricia Gerrodette 378-4937  
Conservation, Conrad & Elaine Moore  
803-7646  
Education, Sandy Anderson 458-0542  
Membership, Ginny Bealer 378-6341  
<vbealer@mindspring.com>  
Publicity, Heather Guest 378-0667  
Trogon Editor, Renell Stewart 378-6318  
<stewartr3@cox.net>  
Historian, Vacant  
Hospitality, Heather Guest  
Director, Sandy Kunzer 803-8490  
Director, Sandy Anderson 458-0542  
Director, Alan Blixt 515-9458  
Director, Robert Weissler 803-0794  
Director, Mark Pretti 803-6889  
AZ Audubon Council Rep.  
Tricia Gerrodette 378-4937  
Webmaster, Mike Guest 378-0667

Huac Aud Soc  
B03  
7XCH

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

**National Audubon Society** - New Member - \$20, two years - \$30, renewals - \$35, Seniors - \$15. Membership includes subscription to *Audubon Magazine*. Make check payable to National Audubon Society. For NAS membership changes and status call 1-800-274-4201.

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

The *Trogon News* newsletter is provided to all members via the HAS web site - [www.huachuca-audubon.org](http://www.huachuca-audubon.org).

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

Send all checks to Huachuca Audubon Society, PO Box 63, Sierra Vista, AZ 85636.