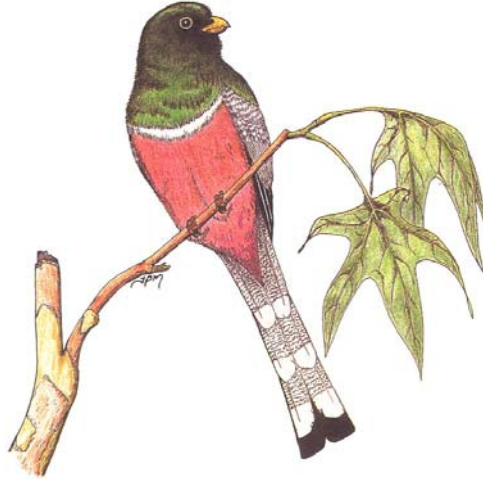


THE TROGON NEWS

HUACHUCA AUDUBON SOCIETY
Post Office Box 63, Sierra Vista, Arizona 85636
Volume XXXII Number 7, September 2004



President's Message

I hope you had a good summer. I've seen many of you at Southwest Wings or on the campaign trail, but our first full gathering will be September 28, to take a virtual visit to Costa Rica. I hope many of you also came to the Alaska Wilderness show on August 27.

As of mid-August as I write this, we're having some delightfully cool nights, reminding us of fall coming. But I can't believe we're completely done with the hot days!

For those who no longer need to keep regular hours at a job, there's an important hearing coming up that I urge your presence at. It will take place at the county buildings on Melody Lane in Bisbee, starting at 3 p.m. on September 8. The county Planning & Zoning Commission will consider a master development plan and application to rezone approximately 1,983 acres from RU-4 (one residence on a minimum lot size of 4 acres) to PD (Planned Development) for the purposes of establishing a master planned community with a maximum of 6,910 homes; 81 acres of mixed-use; 651 acres of open space; on-site wastewater treatment; school, fire station and police sub-station site dedications. Just from a residential point of view, the rezone, if granted, would increase the allowed homes from just under 500 to just under 7000.

If you haven't cast your ballot by mail, please do participate in the primary on September 7. And if for some inexcusable reason you're not registered, do so NOW so you can participate on November 2. There are very depressing (to me) statistics on how few environmentally-minded people vote. Don't let that be true here! After all, we may not have as much money or influence as others, but by golly, every vote is equal in the polling booth!! DO IT. And bring your proof of voting to enter a prize drawing at the September meeting.

Local Programs and Events

Sep 28th - HAS meeting, 7:00 p.m., Mona Bishop Room, Sierra Vista Public Library. Slide show and presentation on the Aula Global (meaning Global Classroom in Spanish) Reserve in the cloud forests of Costa Rica (near Monteverde) by Colin Garland, founder of Global Classroom and the reserve, and Valerie McCaffrey, a recent visitor to the reserve. Colin is a professional wilderness guide, animal tracker and naturalist leading wilderness trips all over the globe. Find out how this small group of American volunteers and students managed to preserve 100 acres of rainforest and its magnificent birds and other creatures, build an eco-lodge and is scrambling to save an adjoining 300 acres of critical wildlife corridor now threatened with development. Birds seen on the reserve include male and female Three Wattled Bell Bird, Resplendent Quetzal, Ornate Hawk Eagle, White Hawk etc. The Global Classroom focuses on education and the preservation of nature with a variety of trips and service projects around the world. Its mission is to help others gain a greater understanding of the natural world and in so doing help create a healthier planet. To find out more about how you can take part in their experiential learning and sustainable living project at Aula Global visit Global Classroom's web site at www.globalclassroom.net or e-mail Colin at globalclassroom@crocker.com."

Field Trips

Sep 8th, Wednesday, 7:00 a.m. FSPR bird walk. Meet at San Pedro House.

Sep 10th, Friday, Sierra Vista EOP. 7:00 a.m. at viewing platform. Let's check out the migrating shorebirds along with the resident birds. Bring your scope, binoculars, bird book, bug spray, water and sharp eyes and we will look for passing sandpipers, avocets, stilts and dowitchers. Limit of 14 participants. Leaders: Harry Bergtholdt (459-4627, he4berg@cox.net) and Nancy Aley.

Sep 12th, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. FSPR bird walk. Meet at San Pedro River Inn.

Sep 18th, Saturday, 7:00 a.m. Carr House bird walk. Meet in Carr House parking lot.

Sep 25th, Saturday, 7:00 a.m. FSPR bird walk. Meet at San Pedro House.

Sep 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th, Sunday's, 8:00 a.m. Sierra Vista Environmental Operations Park bird walks.



Birding and Natural History in Sonora, Mexico

April 25-30, 2005

After a several year hiatus, the Huachuca Audubon Society will be returning to Sonora, Mexico 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 birds we may encounter are green kingfisher, gray hawk, happy and spotted wrens, streak-backed and black-vented orioles, rufous-bellied chachalaca, brown-backed solitaire, blue mockingbird (doing its perfect elegant trogon imitation), orange-billed nightingale thrush, rufous-backed and white-throated robins, black-throated magpie jay, elegant quail, rusty sparrow, white-tipped dove, white-striped woodcreeper, tufted flycatcher, crescent-chested warbler, and with luck, eared quetzal.

The trip will be limited to 8 participants. The all-inclusive, double occupancy cost from Sierra Vista is \$700, which includes a \$50 tax-deductible donation to the Huachuca Audubon Society. For a detailed itinerary or to register, contact Mark Pretti at 803-6889 or mpnaturetours@earthlink.net.

Future HAS Outings

The Outings Committee (Mike Guest, Nancy Aley, Harry Bergtholdt, Sandy Kunzer) has prepared the following monthly outings for the remainder of 2004. Further details will be published as available on our Web site www.huachuca-audubon.org, and in the Fall editions of the Trogon News. If you have ideas for new venues or different times of year for old ones, please contact anyone on the committee.

October 9th, (date to be confirmed) Villa Verde, Sonora. Leader: Sandy Kunzer

November 6th, Whitewater Draw. 8:30 a.m. City Hall. Leader: Nancy Aley

December (date to be determined) Patagonia Lake State Park. Limited to 18 participants. Leader: Mike Guest

Attention Members!

First Alert!

At the July 27th Board of Directors meeting, we decided that paper copies of the Trogon News will cease production after the Dec. 2004 issue, except for those members who are willing to state that they do not have access to the Internet. Those without such access will continue to get a paper copy but the BoD is not sure how long this privilege can continue. This difficult decision was prompted by rising production costs, the difficulty in finding volunteers willing to help in the processing of each issue and the perception that we will be better stewards of the environment by using less paper. Full details of how you will get the electronic copy will follow later this fall.

-Sandy Kunzer, Director, For the Board

2nd Sunday Bird Walk

13 June 2004

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Gray Hawk were the highlights of the 2nd Sunday Bird Walk on a calm, sunny morning. The cuckoo flew over the group along the river. Just a short time later, the Gray Hawk could be heard calling from across the river. It was not long before the hawk was seen perched high in a cottonwood. Presumably, there is a nest in the vicinity.

Owls also featured prominently during the walk. Before departing the San Pedro River Inn, we spied Barn Owl nestlings in a nest box twenty feet up in a cottonwood. On our return, we also saw one of the parents inside with the young. Later, we spotted a Great Horned Owl perched in a cottonwood in the gallery forest of the river. Nearby, Northern (red-shafted) Flickers were seen bringing food to a nest cavity in a cottonwood in order to feed their young.

Plenty of colorful breeding birds were in evidence during the walk including many pairs of Summer Tanagers, Vermilion Flycatchers, Yellow Warblers, and Blue Grosbeaks. Both Gila and Ladder-backed Woodpecker were conspicuous, as were Gambel's Quail, Cassin's and Western Kingbirds, White-breasted Nuthatch, Lesser Goldfinch, Song Sparrow, Bewick's Wren, Black Phoebe, Roadrunner, Kestrel, and Red-tailed Hawk.

The 2nd Sunday Bird Walk is scheduled to depart from the San Pedro River Inn at 7:30 a.m. on August 8, 2004 and the following month at 8:00 a.m. on September 12, 2004. We should start to see fall migrants along with lingering summer breeders and year-round resident birds. Birders of all levels of experience are welcome to join us!

-Robert Weissler

Water Harvesting: Antidote To Dust Bowl Drought

One of National Audubon's critically important conservation initiatives is called "Audubon at Home." Audubon believes "that the greatest untapped force for conservation in the future will arise out of the combined action of individuals to improve the environment in their everyday lives." We see that force in action in Cochise County with a number of residents who have installed water-harvesting systems in their homes. Water harvesting is the capture, storing and using of rainfall. With the seven to twelve inches of annual rainfall available here, they can meet all, or almost all, of their water needs. One family of two adults supplies a washing machine, dishwasher, shower, and bathroom and kitchen sinks by filling 5 water tanks totaling 12,800 gallons. The home has a composting toilet and uses gray water for outdoor plantings.

Water conservation is critical in Cochise County. Recently, three local water companies in the Sierra Vista area implemented strict water restrictions because they were unable to pump enough water from their wells to maintain their holding tanks at 50% capacity. The apparent drop in the water level is due both to significant growth that began prior to and continued into the current drought, which is characterized as a "Dust Bowl Drought." Over the past five years, southeastern Arizona has had deficits of more than a year's worth of precipitation. The decline in precipitation is caused by a configuration of ocean-atmosphere circulation, a pattern that is called the Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation. Local experts do not have a model that will predict how long the drought will last although one expert states we can easily be in drought for another 20 years.

Adding to the decline in precipitation, the Central Arizona Project, which relies on importing water from the Colorado River, is facing depletion of water supplies from that source. Due to global warming, the snow pack in the Rockies, which creates the Colorado River flow, is at 12% of normal. One expert states that the snow pack "is essentially gone." And the flows in the Colorado River are significantly lower.

While it is easier to install water-harvesting systems as a house is built, older homes can be retrofitted for such systems. The simplest system is one in which gutters funnel water from the roof into barrels or directly onto outdoor plantings. For example, a 1500 hundred square foot roof will yield 14,062 gallons of water a year from an annual rainfall of fifteen inches. A metal roof with baked enamel finish is best for the capture of drinking and cooking water. For indoor use, the water is piped from the gutter to large holding tanks. The water is filtered and then pumped into a pressure tank. Families who can successfully supply their own water needs use water efficient appliances, for example, a washing machine that uses 18 gallons per load instead of the usual 40 to 60 gallons. The per capita use of water in these homes is at 12 to 15 gallons or less a day, a significant savings over the one hundred gallons daily use per person reported in Tucson.

While many people do not pay a lot of attention to water as long as it's coming out of the tap, others are becoming acutely aware that water is a finite resource that must be used very carefully. If you are interested in developing a water harvesting system, contact the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association (ARCSA) at www.arcsa-usa.org.

-Sondra Gardner, Conservation Chair

You Missed It!

A journey back in time along the Geronimo Trail, traveled by natives, European settlers, outlaws and lawmen alike. Our destination on Saturday, May 1st was the San Bernardino Wildlife Refuge for a morning of birding and other “crittering” under the tutelage of Refuge Manager Bill Radke. Bill being his usual cordial, informed and amusing self, not only provided guide service to a wide variety of habitats and birds but introduced us to some of the other critters for which the Refuge was established, fish, lizards, frogs, darners and even tiny (1-2mm) Spring Snails found nowhere else. For those interested in the whole web of life in the area, these organisms and Bill’s commentary on them, enhanced the birding experience on an absolutely beautiful Southeast Arizona Spring morning.

BIRD LIST:

Turkey Vulture, Gray, Swainson’s and Red-tailed, Hawks, Scaled and Gambel’s Quail, Am. Coot, Killdeer, White-winged, Mourning and Common Ground Doves, Greater Roadrunner, Black-chinned and Broad-tailed Hummingbirds, West. Wood Pewee, Say’s, Vermillion and Ash-throated Flycatchers, Cassin’s and Western Kingbirds, L-headed Shrike, Bell’s and Plumbeous Vireos, Chihuahuan Raven, Rough-winged and Barn Swallows, Bewick’s Wren, S.E. AZ Mockingbird, Lucy’s, Yellow and Yellow-rumped Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Western Tanager, Canyon Towhee, Lark, Song and White-crowned Sparrows, Pyrrhuloxia, Red-winged Blackbird, Great-tailed Grackle, House Finch and a House Sparrow.

-Sandy Kunzer

Congratualtions to Bill Branan – Recipient of Audubon’s Callison Award

The following is excerpted from the National Audubon Society’s announcement and presentation of the prestigious Callison Award in May 2004 to Dr. Bill Branan: Under Bill Branan’s guidance, the Appleton-Whittell Audubon Research Ranch has become a mighty tool for conservation, research and education. Today, where once there was one science project on the Ranch – there are now more than eighty. The bibliography of studies conducted on the Ranch has grown to include hundreds of publications. Dozens of student researchers and interns acknowledge their time on the Ranch as pivotal in their environmental careers. Existing buildings have been revamped, and a stunning and efficient new Grasslands Center has been built to Bill’s design, incorporating environmentally important features including solar heat, water conservation and resistance to wildfire.

Over the past eleven years, Bill has launched the Ranch into the consciousness of the local community. Under his leadership the Ranch has been able to expand its environmental education efforts, helping area residents learn about and protect ecosystems in the Southwest. His motto of ‘let the data speak’ has established the Ranch as a resource, not a threat, to neighbors. Bill’s efforts don’t stop at the boundary of the 8,000-acre sanctuary or within the Audubon organization...he is involved in local, regional and state issues and serves as a strong, sometimes the only, advocate for the environment, using his humor and consensus building skills to further environmental protection. Bill is a member of the Santa Cruz Planning and Zoning Commission, Chair of the Santa Cruz Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, serves on the Upper San Pedro Partnership, and has been appointed as the environmental representative of the Bureau of Land Management-Resource Advisory Council. He has played a pivotal role in the establishment of Las Cienegas NCA and the development of the Las Cienegas Resource Management Plan, which will guide decisions to protect nearly 96,000 acres of public and private land in the NCA and the Sonoita Valley Acquisition Planning District. No presentation to Bill would be complete without acknowledging his tremendous sense of humor, bad jokes, good nature, and total dedication to birds, wildlife and the Audubon mission.

The following trips are being offered by Huachuca Audubon Society in conjunction with Tucson Audubon. For every member who signs up through Huachuca Audubon, HAS will receive from \$10 to \$150 as the donation portion of the trip price. Full itineraries of the trips are available at www.naturetreks.net and on the Tucson Audubon website, www.tucsonaudubon.org. For questions on any of the trips, please contact Rochelle Gerratt, Nature Treks and Passages, 520-696-2002 or rochelle@naturetreks.net.

Birding and Natural History in Sonora, Mexico

One-day trips September 11 & October 3 with Juan Caicedo of Proyecto Corredor Colibri and either Larry Liese or Gavin Bieber. Join us for an all-day tour of the Proyecto Corredor Colibri in the Upper San Pedro Watershed of Sonora, Mexico. Tucson Audubon Society fiscally sponsors this bi-national collaboration project. We will spend the morning birding the Villa Verde reservoir and adjacent riparian habitat, site of the upper end of the San Pedro Watershed, eat a Sonoran carne asada lunch at a nearby rancher's house, and then visit the oak/pine and montane riparian habitats of Pinalito Creek in the Sierra la Elenita. Over 170 species of birds have been counted in this area. We will see examples of innovative riparian restoration projects. We return to Tucson by early evening. \$109 includes transportation from Tucson, lunch, all entrance fees, and a \$10 tax-deductible donation to Maricopa Audubon. Contact Rochelle Gerratt at 520-696-2002 or at rochelle@naturetreks.net.

Copper Canyon, Mexico

Dates: October 16-24, 2004 & February 5-13, 2005. Copper Canyon offers some of the most breathtaking scenery and fascinating natural history of North America. We will spend part of every day birding. Participants will see many more neo-tropical bird species than can be found in southeastern Arizona. To view the list of birds seen on our Copper Canyon trips, see <http://www.tucsonaudubon.org/travel/copbirds.htm>. We will observe the larger natural history of the canyon, with its many diverse habitats. We'll visit the flora and fauna of the coastal river plain, Madrean conifer forest, piñon-oak woodland, tropical deciduous thorn forest, and tropical riparian forest. This trip offers an opportunity to experience some of the most breathtaking scenery of North America, see exciting neo-tropical bird species, and observe the fascinating mix of Mexican and indigenous cultures present in Copper Canyon. The trip originates in Los Mochis, a two-hour flight from Tucson. We spend two days in the Spanish Colonial town of El Fuerte where we boat down the Rio Fuerte. (On our trips we see almost 60 species from the river in three hours, including Russet-crowned Motmot, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, and both Common and Great Black-Hawks.) The next day we take the world-famous Copper Canyon train from sea level to 7700 feet elevation at the hub town of Creel. We take a short hike to look for Eared Quetzals along the Cusarare waterfall trail on our van trip down to the semi-tropical town of Batopilas at 1450 feet elevation. We bird for two days in this historic, exotic town the bottom of one of Copper Canyon's deepest canyons. We then retrace our steps back to Creel, El Fuerte, and home. This is a birding and sightseeing extravaganza not to be missed. TAS fieldtrip leader and board member Larry Liese, experienced Field Guide with Tucson Audubon, will co-lead the trip with Rochelle Gerratt, trip leader and former Tucson Audubon Board member. The cost of this trip is \$1,999, based on double occupancy. This includes all ground transportation from Los Mochis, round-trip train ride, two guides, all meals, and comfortable hotels. Airfare and alcoholic beverages are not included. The price of the trip includes a \$150 tax-deductible donation to Maricopa Audubon.

Northern Mexico Birding and Mata Ortiz

Dates: October 8-10, 2004 & November 12-14, 2004. With Guides Rochelle Gerratt and Juan Caicedo. Birds and pottery—what a combination! Join us on a trip combining the best of Northern Mexico birds with the best of Northern Mexico pottery at Mata Ortiz. We'll spend the first morning birding and exploring Villa Verde, located in the riparian habitat of the Upper San Pedro Watershed, just 15 miles south of the border crossing at Naco, Sonora. Home to over 180 species of birds, we may see Gray Hawks and Scott's Orioles, along with many species of warblers, waterfowl, and other neotropical migrants. After eating a traditional Sonoran lunch at a local ranch, we'll continue on to the famous pottery village of Mata Ortiz where we'll stay for two nights at the cozy inn of Jorge Quintana, one of the master potters in this village. During the following two days there will be plenty of time to wander around Mata Ortiz to visit potters in their homes and to shop. Jorge Quintana if available will give us an hour-long demonstration of building a pot from scratch. We'll also visit the museum and prehistoric ruins of Paquime in nearby Casas Grandes, as well as spend time birding along the adjoining river. This tour is priced at \$549 and includes all transportation from Tucson, lodging, meals, activities, entrance fees, and guides. \$100 of the tour price is a tax-deductible donation to Maricopa Audubon Society. Group size is limited to 11. For more information and to register, please contact Rochelle Gerratt at 520-696-2002 or rochelle@naturetreks.net.

Birding In Belize & Tikal: Jungle, Ruins & Reef

Dates: January 22 – February 1, 2005 & March 12-22, 2005. Leaders Rochelle Gerratt and Larry Liese. Explore the wild side of Belize and Tikal with us. We'll hike in the rainforest amid howler monkeys and three varieties of Toucans; explore the ancient Mayan ruins of Lamanai and Tikal; snorkel in the aquamarine waters of the Caribbean next to a one-mile long caye (island). We will see several of the diverse bioregions of Belize: a palm-fringed offshore island bordered by crystal waters with tropical fish, dolphins, and coral formations; the mangrove swamps along the coast; and the interior tropical rainforest, the heart of diversity of birds, exotic plants, flowers, and animals. Belize teems with wildlife: jaguars, pumas, tapirs, iguanas, monkeys, and hosts of exotic birds. Nearly 550 species of birds are found in Belize and 350 have been recorded at Tikal alone. We will have two days to explore Tikal, most of that time with a local naturalist versed in archaeology. Tikal was built between AD 250 and 900, and is among the most impressive of the Mayan archaeological sites. It is truly one of the most unforgettable sites of world travel. The list of birds that can be seen on this trip is long. Tinamous, hawk-eagles, forest-falcons, crakes, parrots and parakeets, four kinds of trogons, puffbirds, woodcreepers, potoos, and becards . . . all of these and others await us there. You can view the trip list from our last Belize trip on <http://www.tucsonaudubon.org/travel/belizebirds.htm>. This trip is designed for folks who enjoy moderate physical activities. We'll be staying at comfortable inns and "jungle lodges" for the most part. This tour is limited to a maximum of 12 participants. The price of \$2,899 per person includes all accommodations, meals, guides, and transportation from Belize City. \$150 of the tour price is a tax-deductible donation to Maricopa Audubon Society.

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

Return service requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage PAID
Sierra Vista, AZ
Permit No. 38

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE EXPEDITE

HUACHUCA AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

President, Tricia Gerrodette 378-4937
<triciag@outb.com>
Vice President, Bob Luce 459-2404
Secretary, Mike Guest 378-0667
Treasurer, Phil Tucker 803-8440
Field Trips, Mike Guest 378-0667
Programs, Tricia Gerrodette 378-4937
Conservation, Sondra Gardner 458-6030
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@mindspring.com>
Historian, Nancy Aley 803-7689
Hospitality, Eloise Bergtholdt, Heather Guest
Director, Sandy Kunzer 803-8490
Director, Sandy Anderson 458-0542
Director, Kate Scott
AZ Audubon Council Rep.
Tricia Gerrodette 378-4937
Webmaster, Mike Guest 378-0667

Huac Aud Soc
B03
7XCH

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

New Member - \$20, two years \$30, basic rate - \$35, senior citizen or student rate - \$15, non-subscribing rate (membership without magazine) - \$20. Please contact the treasurer if you are interested in this option. Make check to National Audubon. Send to Huachuca Audubon Society, PO Box 63, Sierra Vista, AZ 85636. For membership changes and status call 1-800-274-4201. Trogon News subscription only - \$10 USA, International - \$15 (Make check to Huachuca Audubon Society.)

Please notify the Membership Chairman if you stop your mail and again when you restart it.