



MARCH-APRIL EDITION 2021

Out on a Limb by Mary Williams (WMAS President & Board Member):

Greetings Birders and Bird Lovers! As the newly-elected President of the WMAS, I wish to thank those of you who renewed your membership for 2021 and voted for our Board of Directors and officers. Susie Walker, new to our board, also wishes to thank you as do our other returning members and officers.

If you have not yet paid your annual membership dues, please send your check to our treasurer as outlined at the end of this newsletter. Funds are used for minimal operating expenses such as Post Office Box fees, Chamber of Commerce dues, Insurance, Webmaster, and the annual scholarship awarded to an area graduating high school senior who is pursuing a degree in the natural sciences or conservation fields.

We, like most organizations, had to change our plans last year and into this year because of the pandemic. Here are a few things optimistically planned for upcoming months - subject of course to changes again, depending on local health advisories. We're flexible!

We hope to resume our monthly meetings at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM - if the hall again opens to community groups. Right now, we're targeting May 5 when, in addition to our regular business and guest speaker, we will recruit and encourage birders to participate in eBird's Global Big Day on Saturday May 8. Mark your calendars!

The Show Low Library will allow us to use their computer lab for an eBirding seminar and I'm hoping to schedule it as soon as COVID restrictions are lifted. We're limited to 15 participants, each of whom will see information on his or her own computer, so people will need to contact me to reserve a spot in the class. Check upcoming emails for more information.

When they again begin taking reservations, I will reserve the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall for the last Fridays of May, June, July, August and September to present a series of PowerPoint Presentations on 'Birding the White Mountains.' They will start at 6:30 PM and last approximately one hour. A field trip will be offered the next morning to a local hotspot where we are likely to see some of the species featured the previous evening. We plan also to offer birding presentations at other sites such as schools and resorts.

Plans to resume the overnight camp outs that many WMAS members enjoyed in the past are being made. We're looking forward to two outings, with plans to reserve Friday and/or Saturday nights this spring/summer at the group sites at the Winn Campground in the Apache Forest off Hwy 273 on the way to Big Lake and at

the Benny Creek Campground off Hwy 373 in Greer. (Outhouses and picnic tables only, adjacent no-hookup small RV sites available to reserve.) We will not only offer bird tours in the camping areas but also at nearby Sheep Crossing and the Mt Baldy Trailheads and at the many sites in Greer - with options for homeward-bound hotspots such as South Fork and Becker Lake. These two outings will offer excellent opportunities to explore one of the AZ Important Bird Areas - the Upper Little Colorado River Watershed. WMAS members will receive more information with upcoming emails and meetings.

Please contact me at: mary.williams@arizonachristian.edu or 480-235-1792, with comments, questions or suggestions. I look forward to serving you and to helping to protect and enjoy birds!

White Mountain Audubon Society (WMAS) 2021 Chapter Officers:

President: Mary Williams	480-235-1792
Vice-President: Tom Jernigan	928-532-1510
Secretary: Liz Jernigan	928-532-1511
Treasurer: Tom Jernigan	928-532-1510
Field Trips: Rob Bettaso	928-368-8481
Newsletter: Rob Bettaso	928-368-8481
Publicity: Mary Freemon	928-205-8597
Webmaster: Allen Vicker	

Board Members:

Mary Williams, Tom Jernigan, Liz Jernigan, Joan Patrick, Mary Freemon, Rob Bettaso, Mary-Ellen Bittorf, Susie Walker.

Photo below of some of our current 2021 Board Members (Left to Right): Mary Freemon, Tom & Liz Jernigan, Rob Bettaso, Mary Williams (Mary-Ellen Bittorf took the photo; other Board members not in photo are Joan Patrick & Susie Walker). Photo taken at Woodland Lake Park where we had our Dec Board meeting.



CALENDAR

All monthly programs/meetings begin at 6:30 pm on the first Wednesday of the month (except in January and February). Meetings are at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers, 325 W. White Mountain Blvd until future notice.

You may call Liz Jernigan (928-532-1511) for more information on monthly meetings and special events. For information on field trips please direct your calls to Rob Bettaso (928-368-8481) and leave a message.

Please note: With COVID 19 still restricting indoor gatherings we have not scheduled our 2021 Programs and Events. We expect to be able to announce Programs and Events once indoor COVID restrictions are lifted. For field trips, Rob is announcing (via email) the final dates and locations for any given outing within one week prior to the outings. We are limiting field trips to 10 participants and request that people bring and wear masks and properly distance themselves on our field trips.

UPDATES & REMINDERS:

Have you paid your annual membership dues? If not, a friendly reminder that WMAS relies on membership dues for such important Chapter actions as our annual Scholarship Awards to White Mountain area graduating seniors who have expressed an interest in pursuing a career in natural history, conservation, and other related

fields. Thank you for helping us to continue to make such programs a regular part of our Chapter mission. Note that the Donation form is at the end of every Newsletter.

Also, if you are not a member of the National Audubon Society, we encourage all Chapter members to join the national organization. Information on joining the national organization is easy as you only need to type "National Audubon Society" into your internet search engine to obtain the simple instructions for joining.

And remember, you should always feel free to offer your assistance to the Board. For that matter, there are some on the Board who are interested in moving on from the Board to focus on other aspects of their lives, so, we are always interested in hearing from anyone who might want to accept the fun challenges of filling a Board or Officer position!

Christmas Bird Count Results by Mary Williams:

Our Timber Mesa Christmas Bird Count numbers have been submitted to the National Audubon Society. The results from our 15 mile circle - which extends from Pintail Lake to the Old Hatchery Trail and from Porter Mountain to the Buena Vista Trail - included 5,204 birds from 77 species - 2,715 of which were geese, ducks and coot. Canada Geese numbers were high but most other waterfowl numbers were down. Our highest passerine numbers came from Robins (406), Juncos (326), Red-wing and Brewers Blackbirds (350) and Mountain and Western Bluebirds (404). Crows and Ravens numbered 209 on Jan. 2 within the 261 Corvids counted. We logged 30 Raptors - 17 of which were Bald Eagles.

Although the only rarity sighted on 1/2 was the continuing Sora at Big Springs, we were pleased with some less common species such as the Black Phoebe there and 30 Red-breasted Nuthatch off Porter Mountain Road on 1/2. The first CBC Northern Goshawk was sighted along Billy Creek on 1/1. Our count week also included a rare-for-our-county Yellow-breasted Sapsucker at the old Lakeside Campground on 1/1.

Thanks to volunteers: Carla, MaryEllen and Chuck Bittorf, Liz and Tom Jernigan, Skip and Carla Schipper, Nick and Connie Worth, John and Betsy Wilson, Ken McByrd-Bell, Sue Sitko, Ann Hilliard, Jon Orona, Susie Walker, Rob Bettaso. Mary Williams, Compiler.

Some Recent Bird Sightings From Around Our Region:

A partial list of birds seen during our most recent WMAS Field Trip (February 20, 2021) to Rainbow & Edler lakes & Big Springs Pond include the following: Canvasback, Common Merganser, Wood Duck, Ruddy Duck, Common Goldeneye, Lesser Scaup, Double-crested Cormorant, Pied-billed Grebe, Bald Eagle, & Red-winged Blackbirds.

Thank you to all those who attended.

Please Note: appended to this Newsletter is an article providing some valuable bird identification tips and photos compliments of Sue Sitko (thank you Sue!).

SEVEN WAYS TO HELP BIRDS (In this edition of the Newsletter we present the 6th tip, as suggested by Cornell University):



A Laysan Albatross with a stomach full of plastic. *Photo by* [Chris Jordan via U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters](#).

6. Protect Our Planet from Plastic

The challenge: It's estimated that 4,900 million metric tons of plastic have accumulated in landfills and in our environment worldwide ([source](#)), polluting our oceans and harming wildlife such as seabirds, whales, and turtles that mistakenly eat plastic, or become entangled in it.

The cause: Plastic takes more than 400 years to degrade, and 91% of plastics created are not recycled ([source](#)). Studies show that at least 80 seabird species ingest plastic ([source](#)), mistaking it for food. Cigarette lighters, toothbrushes, and other trash have been found in the stomachs of dead albatrosses.

Reduce your plastics: Avoid single-use plastics including bags, bottles, wraps, and disposable utensils. It's far better to choose reusable items, but if you do have disposable plastic, be sure to recycle it.

Take it further: Advocate for bans of plastic bags, styrofoam, and straws. Encourage stores to offer incentives for reusable bags, and ask restaurants and other businesses to phase out single-use plastics.

Get started today: [Eight easy ways to reduce your plastic waste](#)

Membership/Donation Form

White Mountain Audubon Society chapter membership dues are: Individual \$15 or Family \$25 per year. Please renew your membership every January. Your tax-deductible membership supports our on-going programs and activities, as well as future new projects. Your membership and donations do make a difference!

MEMBERSHIP _____ DONATION _____

Individual _____ Family _____

Name _____

Date _____

Mailing Address _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

Send this form and your dues or donation to: White Mountain Audubon Society; P.O. Box 3043; Pinetop, AZ 85935 You may use this form for either your Membership renewal or a Donation to WMAS. Please designate above which you are doing. Thank you very much for your support of White Mountain Audubon Society! LIKE US ON FACEBOOK.

White Mountain Audubon Society is dedicated to the enjoyment of birds and other wildlife by providing environmental leadership and awareness through fellowship, education, community involvement, and conservation programs in the White Mountains and surrounding areas.

**White Mountain Audubon Society
P. O. Box 3043
Pinetop, AZ 85935**