



MAY-JUNE EDITION 2021

Out on a Limb by Mary Freemon (WMAS Board Member):

A whole year has gone by now since we were first isolated in our homes from a virus that I had hoped would be gone earlier. I'm getting used to the mask and social distancing. I may pick my groceries up via the car at Walmart permanently just to avoid the crowds!

But as spring is now upon us again and the cold, bleak days of winter are receding, there are signs of hope! The grass is suddenly green again dotted with yellow dandelions and my lilac is starting to bud out. Tulips and daffodils are everywhere.

The hummingbirds have returned to my yard and most of my spring regulars are back including the robins, house finches and several sparrows all singing from the tree tops. Even the Acorn woodpeckers and the Stellar's jay seem happy at the change of seasons. And so am I!!! I'm starting to feel rejuvenated. It's nice to be able to sit outside with my cup of coffee in the morning and watch the activity in the bird bath again.

Happy Spring and happy birding to everyone!

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 Vickers | |

Board Members:

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

President's Corner:

Our Audubon Society is able to hold general meetings again after a hiatus of more than a year! Do join us at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall at 6:30 on the first Wednesday of each month, beginning May 5.

The council chamber where we meet is a large, well-ventilated room with comfortable chairs and a good AV system. With Covid caution in the now-reopened facility, we will space chairs 6 feet apart. Masks are no longer required in the building, but are recommended. As your guest speaker for the May 5 meeting, I want you to know that I am fully vaccinated - as are most board and active chapter members. We expect only about 20 people for this meeting, but will be ready to accommodate more.

I'll be talking about plans for the year, which includes promoting the Birding the White Mountains classes on the last Fridays of May through September and the guest speakers for our first Wednesdays.

Mark your calendars for the June 2 meeting when Jon Orona, NE District Service Forester for the AZ Department of Forestry and Fire Management, and Malaina Spellman, Assistant to Public Works Director with the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside, will talk about the Woodland Lake Park Project. We asked them to speak after members of the WMAS Board of Directors had a site tour from them on April 1. (See photos) Learn more about bark beetle and dwarf mistletoe eradication, forest thinning, lake dredging and other aspects of projects both there and elsewhere. The Forest Health and Fire Mitigation Town Code will be addressed and, of course, an emphasis will be on how birds in the area are affected by these projects. For a full report, follow the link.

At our May 5 meeting, I'll also promote participation in the Global Big Day on Saturday, May 8, and talk about using eBird. Do plan to record all the birds you see that day so you too can contribute to the science of ornithology - as well as participate in our annual May Birdathon - while you're enjoying beautiful birds in beautiful places.

Looking forward to seeing you on the 5th,

Mary Williams, President
White Mountain Audubon Society

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: Because COVID 19 restrictions have been lifted in our area, we have begun planning our 2021 Programs and Events. Should restrictions be re-imposed, we will need to adjust accordingly. But, for now at least, see below for our upcoming plans:

What's happening in the May?

May 5 WMAS General Meeting Mary Williams reminds us that May 8th is the birding world's annual Global Big Day and it will be the focus of our first meeting. We will look at the best spots in Navajo and Apache Counties to tally the most species on that day as well as year round. There are lots of bird photos to help in identification. We also will be reminded of how to enter them on eBird. It should be especially interesting for those who have never used or seldom use this online program. By using it we become citizen scientists and also keep track of our lists for better birding. Remember, all General Meetings are held at Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall, 325 W. White Mountain Blvd., Pinetop. Meeting time is 6:30 pm. All are welcome.

May 15 Birding Field Trip Rob Bettaso will lead bird watching field trips on the 3rd Sat of every month. If you are interested in attending, please call him at 928-368-8481 and leave a message so that he can return your call to give you the details for the trip(s) that you would like to attend.

May 28 Birding the White Mountains Mary Williams will give her PowerPoint presentation at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall at 6:30. This presentation is the first of five that will be given on the last Friday of the month from May to September.

What about June

June 2 WMAS General Meeting The speaker has not yet been confirmed. Stay tuned.

June 19 Birding Field Trip Rob Bettaso will lead bird watching field trips on the 3rd Sat of every month. If you are interested in attending, please call him at 928-368-8481 and leave a message so that he can return your call to give you the details for the trip(s) that you would like to attend.

June 25 Birding the White Mountains Mary Williams will give her PowerPoint presentation at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall at 6:30. This presentation is the second of five that will be given on the last Friday of the month from May to September.

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!

A RECENT SPECIAL EVENT:

Several Board and general members of WMAS participated in a first ever gathering of local outdoor groups. Ron Miller (White Mountain Nature Center & TRACKS Board member) conceived, organized, and implemented the event which was held on April 21st (John Muir’s birthday) and approximately 25 good folks met at the Nature Center to visit the Memorial Sites for beloved local outdoor enthusiasts.

The group then hiked from the Nature Center to Woodland Lake along the Big Springs & Hitching Post trails to Woodland Lake (which is currently under refurbishment) and then hiked down along Walnut Creek and back to the Nature Center. Along the way individuals from WMAS, the Nature Center, TRACKS, Save Our Park, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department gave short talks about natural history, John Muir, and about their respective organizations. Photos of the walk can be seen directly below.



Some Recent Bird Sightings From Around Our Region:

A partial list of birds seen during our most recent WMAS Field Trip (April 17, 2021) to Alchey National Fish Hatchery included Painted Redstart, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow Warbler, House Wren, Brown Creeper, Rough-winged Swallow, and we frequently heard (but, atypically, could not see) a Belted Kingfisher.

Thank you to all those who attended and to the Hatchery staff and the White Mountain Apache Tribe for allowing and assisting with our visit!

And remember, when it comes to our WMAS field trips, here is the necessary information:

Field Trip Coordinator – Rob Bettaso

Monthly Bird Walks (12 outings per year) – geared for bird lovers of all skill levels and all ages (kids must be accompanied by a parent or guardian). Hiking conditions variable but suitable for participants in reasonably good health interested in walks ranging from 1-3 miles. All welcome; no pets please. Bring binoculars, field guide, and appropriate apparel, gear, snacks and water for outdoor walking in the White Mountains area. All birding field trips are on the 3rd Saturday morning of the month and start times will depend on the time of year. Outings are free. For further information and to reserve a spot for any monthly outing you will need to call Rob at 928-368-8481 and leave a message so that he can call you back to confirm your reservation if you are one of the first 9 callers as outings are limited to a maximum of 10 participants. Thank you and hope to hear from before the next outing!

Website Update:

Have you been to the WMAS website lately (whitemountinaudubon.org)? Our Web Master (Alan Vickers) has greatly improved it in recent weeks so that it has an easier to view and use format and so that it will be much quicker for him to update and modify. If you have suggestions for the WMAS website feel free to email Rob Bettaso at rhilbe739@gmail.com and at the next Board meeting he will bring your suggestions to the Board for consideration. Eventually, any Board-adopted additions, deletions, or changes Rob will bring to Alan for his consideration and, if possible, Alan may incorporate those items.

A BIG thank you to Alan for all the great work he has done over the years for the WMAS website.

SEVEN WAYS TO HELP BIRDS (In this edition of the Newsletter we present the 7th & last tip, as suggested by Cornell University):



Share your bird knowledge. *Photo by Anurag Vishwakarma/GBBC.*

7. Watch Birds, Share What You See

The challenge: The world's most abundant bird, the Passenger Pigeon, went extinct, and people didn't realize how quickly it was vanishing until it was too late. Monitoring birds is essential to help protect them, but tracking the health of the world's 10,000 bird species is an immense challenge.

The cause: To understand how birds are faring, scientists need hundreds of thousands of people to report what they're seeing in backyards, neighborhoods, and wild places around the world. Without this information, scientists will not have enough timely data to show where and when birds are declining around the world.

Enjoy birds while helping science and conservation: Join a project such as [eBird](#), [Project FeederWatch](#), [Christmas Bird Count](#), [Breeding Bird Survey](#), or the [International Shorebird Survey](#) to record your bird observations. Your contributions will provide valuable information to show where birds are thriving—and where they need our help. **Note:** If you don't yet know how to use eBird, [we have a free course](#) to help you get the most out of the project and its tools.

Take it further: Mobilize others in your community by organizing school groups or leading bird walks and submitting your counts to [eBird](#). Support organizations that coordinate monitoring projects.

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**