OUT ON A LIMB by Mary Ellen Bittorf

CARING FOR WHAT’S IMPORTANT

For seven years in late April or early May summer began with his pretty little song. He was very busy, gathering twigs and building nests all over the place. And, after a while, I realized he was pretty nosy, because when I was outside he was always close to where I was working. He was very cute, always busy, but in late May of this year his song ended. I miss him a lot. This cute little house wren was important and I cared about him a lot.

Nature is beautiful, wonderful, sometimes harsh and heart breaking, but if we are patient, it keeps giving us things to care for that are important. And so, now, at the corner of my porch, a little cordilleran flycatcher sits on her nest. I hope that within a few days we will see cute little cordilleran flycatchers begging with their mouths opened.

The cycle of life exists in my yard. We have white-breasted nuthatches feeding young, American robins caring for young, a hairy woodpecker family, chickadee family, Steller's jays, pygmy nuthatches and juncos, American crows, possibility of a western tanager family, and we’re trying to decide if we have a three-toed woodpecker or a young hairy. We also hear the distinctive call of the plumbeous vireo and other birds that we can’t even identify.

The beautiful sites and wonderful songs and calls gladden our hearts and fill us with happiness. I have learned that every wonderful event should be cherished because it may not always be there. And, that's why it is important to care for what is important. The memories and experiences, the friends, the shared time together are all so important in our lives, and in my life, Audubon has played a huge part in teaching me to care for what's important. I hope you all experience the wonders of nature and all that it has to offer.

Enjoy birding.
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:

Happy Summer. It’s hot! Don’t forget to provide fresh water for the birds in your yard and to scrub the bird baths well and often. (And don’t forget to consume lots of water yourself.) Birding remains enjoyable at sunrise and for the few cooler hours thereafter. Seek spots with water. This is especially obvious during this terrible drought. (Praying for rain!).

I seldom expect to see many species where there is no water nearby. That’s why most eBird hotspots are at places with water and why the field trips I schedule after our Birding the White Mountains series are at places such as Pintail and Telephone Lakes, Big Springs, Rainbow Reservoir, Jacques Marsh and Scott Reservoir.

Hope to see you at our upcoming meetings on the first Wednesdays of the month, at the last Friday classes, at our third Saturday field trips, at the August 7 eBird Seminar for members. Do contact me if you have comments, questions or suggestions. Happy Summer!

Below left: six early risers who enjoyed 28 species at Pintail Lake after our first session on May 28 (Photo by Mary Williams). Below right: WMAS President Mary Williams; Photo by Susie Walker (WMAS Board Member & Memberships Officer)
CALENDAR

All monthly programs 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. The programs are free and open to all. You may call Liz Jernigan (928-532-1511) for more information on monthly programs and special events.

Here’s what’s happening in July & August 2021:

**July 7 6:30 pm Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers:** Rob Bettaso, Field Trips Lead & Newsletter Editor for WMAS, will show slides from his 3 week trip to **Patagonia** (Argentina & Chile) in Oct/Nov of 2019. The trip included a 5 day backpacking trip as well as numerous long day hikes in the National Parks and other protected lands of the region. The birds of the region will also be highlighted.

**July 17 Monthly WMAS 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.

**July 30 Mary Williams, WMAS President, will have the 3rd of her 5 classroom and field trips sessions as part of her Birding the White Mountains series.** The classes are offered at no charge at 6:30 PM at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall. Each contains brief reviews as well as new PowerPoints that focus on birds likely to be spotted on an optional field trip the next morning at 6:30 AM.

**August 4 6:30 pm Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council Chambers:** John Wilson will be the guest speaker. He will talk about the Eagle Watch program and results here in the White Mountains, as well as about the Bald Eagles’ success story in AZ and throughout the US in the past few decades.

**August 7th, 1:00 pm Mary Williams’ eBird Seminar** - A seminar about using eBird - the popular birding tool that is a joint project of the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology - will be offered for preregistered WMAS members at the Show Low Library Computer Lab on Saturday, August 7, at 1:00. The free online program allows birders to track their sightings while scientists and other birders can observe and search information on the site. Attendees will be able to watch how a new account is established as well as see the many ways eBird can be used. Spaces are limited, so please call Mary Williams at 480-235-1792 to reserve.

**August 21 Monthly WMAS 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.

**August 27 Mary Williams, WMAS President, will have the 4th of her 5 classroom and field trips sessions as part of her Birding the White Mountains series.** The classes are offered at no charge at 6:30 PM at the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall. Each contains brief reviews as well as new PowerPoints that focus on birds likely to be spotted on an optional field trip the next morning at 6:30 AM.
Recent Events:

Mary Williams’ Class: Birding the White Mountains - There were 24 attendees who signed in at the first 2021 Birding the White Mountains class on May 28. A small group enjoyed 28 species at the Pintail Lake field trip on May 29. Below are 2 photos by attendee Kenneth Franklin of Red-winged Blackbird & Common Yellow-throat (more photos by Ken in a future edition).

Some Recent Bird Sightings From Around Our Region:

A partial list of birds seen during our two most recent WMAS Field Trips with Rob - May 15 to Show Low Ck includes: Cinnamon Teal (pair), Osprey (probable pair), Olive-sided Flycatcher, Plumbeous Vireo, Purple Martin, Cedar Waxwing, Lincoln Sparrow, Wilson’s Warbler & W. Tanager. And June 19 to the “Old Hatchery Trail”: Red-faced & Yellow-rumped warblers, Lesser Goldfinch & Spotted Towhee.

Photo above by Mary Williams of (Left to Right): Tom, Liz, Rob, Susie, Ginger, Phyllis, Redge at Show Low Ck.
Photo below by Mary Williams of guest speakers at June 2 meeting: Jon Orona, with the AZ Department of Forestry and Fire Management, and Malaina Spillman, with the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside Public Works.

Photo below by Mary Williams of Liz and Tom Jernigan on a birding trip to Greer at one of the many AZ 'Legacy Ponderosas’ that Jon Orona referred to as the previous evening’s WMAS guest speaker.
AUDUBON MEMBER PROFILE – ALAN VICKERS
By Rob Bettaso

In this edition of the White Mountain Newsletter I am beginning a new column entitled Audubon Member Profile. This column will appear as often as I have participants who are willing to let me interview them and will include Board Members and Audubon Members from the general public (hopefully someday, you).

To kick-off this new feature I would like to start with a guy who is used to working behind the scenes: our White Mountain Audubon Web Master – Alan Vickers. So, let’s get to know Alan a bit, as I’m sure very few of you have had the chance to meet him, since he and his family reside in The Valley, although they do spend a significant amount of time in the Show Low area.

Alan is something of a rarity, in that he is an Arizona Native and was born and raised in Globe. While he has lived in many different places in Arizona, Alan enjoys both the countryside and some big cities. In fact, one of Alan’s favorite places to visit (emphasis on “visit”) is New York City. In some years, Alan accompanies his wife to NYC so that she can run in the annual NYC Marathon and do her part to help raise money for the American Cancer Society.

Graduating from ASU with a degree in Technical Communications and Business Admin, Alan now works for a health care company and among his responsibilities are technical writing and website management. When Alan is not working he enjoys hiking with his family, especially in the Grand Canyon where he has successfully hiked the Rim to Rim trail in a single day on a couple of different occasions. While in the Canyon, Alan enjoys watching the area’s various species of raptors. Perhaps on some of the more arduous sections of the trail, he can’t help but wish that he was up there soaring with them.

Another great joy of Alan’s is reading and his interest in the both the natural world and in reading were at least partially fostered by a set of books that he first began exploring as a kid: the Audubon Nature Encyclopedia collection. Thanks to this early inspiration in Alan’s life, he now routinely brings an encyclopedic level of information to all of us, as we peruse the White Mountain Audubon website that he so skillfully runs. Thank you Alan, for volunteering your expertise for the benefit of all of us who use the White Mountain Audubon’s website.
Scholarship Award Recipient ($1000 award)
Excerpt from Essay by Greta

The environment plays a huge role in our lives and most people take that for granted. There are issues that must be solved in order to fix the problems we have placed upon ourselves. If we do not address these issues, then the health and sustainability of the Earth will fail. Becoming an Environmental Engineer is a step I can personally take that can help conserve the planet. The [White Mountain] Audubon Society scholarship would certainly help me achieve this first important step.

Bird Feeder Note:

Mary Ellen Bittorf has been using a 1:1 sugar:water solution placed in a small, shallow bowl filled with gravel to lure bees away from her hummingbird feeders. For best results, she recommends placing the bowl on the ground & directly below wherever you have hung your hummingbird feeders.

For Sale:

Canon Powershot SX 60HS; Lens: 21-1365mm
Case, battery charger, 2 batteries, manual
Camera and lens 2-3yrs old, both excellent condition
Will consider best offers; Call Richard at 928-368-3562

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!
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.
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