



## SEPTEMBER EDITION 2022

### Out on a Limb by Tom Jernigan (WMAS Board VP & Treasurer):

#### Eagles of the Pacific Northwest

For me, it's always a thrill to see an eagle, even when there are lots of them around. We travel to the Pacific NW every year to a small fishing harbor situated on the inland sea between Vancouver Island and the mainland. Several bald eagles reside in the tall trees surrounding the dock. Watching them over time has revealed what bullies they are. Fish parts are thrown into the water at the fish cleaning station near the dock and dozens of gulls swirl around picking up those pieces to eat. The eagles could, and once in a while do, swoop down and get a piece for themselves. But frequently, an eagle makes a kamikaze attack on a gull, forcing the bird to give up its prize and the eagle grabs it in the air.

The gulls have become conditioned to this. When one realizes it has been chosen by the eagle for an attack, it simply throws its food away to the eagle rather than try to escape. The gulls do the work and the eagle grows fat and sassy. Away from the campground, up and down the coast, there are other eagles perched in trees, that wait to catch a fish near the surface. Once, while I was reeling in a small fish behind the boat, an eagle saw it from  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile away and flew over to get a meal. It picked up the fish and tried to fly away with it. I had an eagle on the line. I tried to reel it in but it pulled strongly. It was a battle. Finally, the bird dropped the fish but it wasn't happy. Just as I was pulling the fish over the side of the boat, the eagle came at us claws extended. Have you ever seen the business end of their claws aimed at you. Scary. I ducked.



Left: Bald Eagle on the wing. Right: Bald Eagle feeding. (Internet photos from Cornell Lab website)

## **White Mountain Audubon Society (WMAS) 2022 Chapter Officers:**

President: Mary Williams	480-235-1792
Vice-President: Tom Jernigan	928-532-1510
Secretary: Liz Jernigan	928-532-1510
Treasurer: Tom Jernigan	928-532-1510
Field Trips: Rob Bettaso	928-368-8481
Newsletter: Rob Bettaso	928-368-8481
Membership: Susie Walker	480-205-6119
Webmaster: Alan Vickers	

## **2022 Board Members:**

Mary Williams, Tom Jernigan, Liz Jernigan, Mary Freemon, Susie Walker & Rob Bettaso.



### **President's Corner by Mary Williams:**

Would you too like more guided birding? As has been requested, White Mountain Audubon Society has added some.

At our August meeting, Tucson Audubon-trained field trip leader Gerry Hodge and I announced that we would be leading first Thursday bird walks and announced the time and meeting place at Woodland Lake for the next morning.

Weather permitting, our September 8 bird walk will be in Apache County at 9000' at the Sheep Crossing/West Baldy Trail 94 eBird hotspots. Anyone wishing to go can meet at the Nature Center parking lot at 6:30 AM to follow Gerry and my vans. Be sure you have enough gas and look into carpooling. Dress in layers and bring food and water.

Gerry will lead a longer, more challenging, hike through the forest to the Little Colorado River there and I will lead those wanting a level, easier one along the river. Target birds include my nemesis Dusky Grouse as well as the high-elevation specialties such as Canada Jay, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red Crossbill, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Dipper.

I will spend Thursday night at the nearby primitive Winn Campground. Let me know if you have a small RV or tent and would like to spend the night too and bird there with me later on Thursday and on Friday morning. Again, bring plenty of food and water and remember to prepare for a chilly night and no cell phone service.

We will offer an Apache County opportunity after our October meeting also. If you would like to bird in the Greer area on Thursday, 10/6, plan to follow us from the Nature Center. I'll spend the night at the Benny Creek primitive campground. You could stay there or reserve a local cabin or motel room. (Lazy Trout recommended.) Again Gerry will lead longer hikes, while my bird walks will be shorter and less challenging.

And, note the article below for invitations to join some birding class walks. Wishing you good birding and many blessings, Mary

## **September Birding Classes and Walks**

First Thursday bird walk on September 1: meet in the south athletic field parking lot at 7:00 at Woodland Lake Park in Pinetop.

Saturday September 3: Bird Walk at Pintail Lake. Meet at 6:30 AM in the large gravel parking area. Handicap concrete access. Gravel road of one mile is on the east side of Hwy 77, north off Hwy 60 at the Maverick in Show Low.

Thursday, Friday September 8,9: Field Trip to Sheep's Crossing/West Baldy Trailhead 95, with the option to spend the night at the nearby primitive Winn Campground. Meet at 6:30 AM in the Pinetop-Lakeside White Mountain Nature Center parking lot to convoy. Contact Mary Williams for additional information.

Saturday September 10: Last of the ***Birding the White Mountains: Beginning Birding*** summer classes at the Snowflake Library at 12:30. The ~1-hour PowerPoint will focus on species that are passing through our area in migration - some of which will stay for the winter.

Thursday September 15: ***Birding Arizona Icons*** at 6:15 at the Show Low Library. The ~1-hour PowerPoint will focus on the specialty bird species that people come from all over the country to find in AZ, as well as on those high-elevation ones in Navajo and Apache County that birders seek. (This class will be good preparation for the Field Trip to the Greer area October 6/7 as well as for upcoming invitations to convoy to and bird the Phoenix Valley and the sky island areas of Southeastern AZ.)



**Left:** Meadow along the Little Colorado River at Sheep Crossing in Apache County, a Sept 8<sup>th</sup> field trip site with Mary Williams and Gerry Hodge (photo by Mary Williams). **Right:** WMAS President Mary Williams' July photo of her van at the Winn Campground in the Lee Valley Recreation Area of Apache County - September 8 campout site.

***Birding the White Mountains:  
Beginning Birding***



Left to right: W. Bluebirds, Greatblue Heron, Rufous Hummingbird (internet photos)

**You're invited to three *PowerPoint Presentations*  
to learn about our most common species of birds.**

**Presented by  
White Mountain Audubon Society President Mary Williams  
Saturday at 12:30  
Snowflake Public Library**

**September 10: Passing Through**

**For more information contact Mary Williams, 480-235-1792, [mary.williams@arizonachristian.edu](mailto:mary.williams@arizonachristian.edu)  
Visit [whitemountainaudubon.org](http://whitemountainaudubon.org). Follow on Facebook.**

WHITE MOUNTAIN AUDUBON SOCIETY PRESENTS

**BIRDING  
ARIZONA  
ICONS**

THURSDAY  
SEPTEMBER  
**15<sup>TH</sup>**  
6:15 PM

You're invited to a PowerPoint Presentation to  
learn more about the specialty birds of Arizona  
Presented by  
White Mountain Audubon Society President, *Mary Williams*

**SHOW LOW PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
181 N. 9TH ST., SHOW LOW, AZ 85901

For more information contact Mary Williams, 480-235-1792  
[mary.williams@arizonachristian.edu](mailto:mary.williams@arizonachristian.edu)  
VISIT [WHITEMOUNTAINAUDUBON.ORG](http://WHITEMOUNTAINAUDUBON.ORG) AND FOLLOW ON FACEBOOK!

Internet photo of an Elegant Trogon

## WMAS CALENDAR:

For 2022 we expect that **all monthly programs** will continue to start at **6:30 pm on the first Wednesday of the month (except in January, February & March** when there are no meetings). 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. Monthly meetings are **held at the White Mountain Nature Center, 425 Woodland Road, Pinetop-Lakeside.**



**September 7<sup>th</sup>** Lorna McNeil-Cox- “Superhero Wildlife in the White Mountains” (covers keystone species).

**August 20<sup>th</sup> Monthly WMAS Birding Field Trip:** Monthly bird watching field trips on the 3rd Sat of every month and alternate between Rob & Jon Orona. If you are interested in attending, feel free to give me a call (Rob: 928-368-8481) and leave a message so that I can return your call to give you the details for the upcoming trip.

Also, I have added another type of field trip and on the last Sat of each month I will lead a “Fitness Birding” outing that combines more strenuous activities (longer hikes, bicycling, paddling, X/C skiing) with birding. The next **Fitness Birding trip will be September 24<sup>th</sup>**. Feel free to give me a call if you’re interested (Rob: 928-368-8481).

### MOST RECENT FIELD TRIP:

On August 20<sup>th</sup> I filled in for Jon Orona who was enjoying Glacier National Park with his family (will Great Gray Owl or Gray-crowned Rosy Finch photos appear in the next Newsletter?). Because of frequent rains I opted to take the group to one of the less muddy sites and a majority of folks expressed a preference for Pintail Marsh. I attempted to lead the trip in the style of Jon, who gives equal emphasis to natural history and to the more technical aspects of ornithology. However, for me, my ornithology classes were many decades ago so I wasn’t nearly as fluent in the lingo as I used to be or as Jon is currently. But we did fine and below are a couple of pictures taken by **Bill W.** who had a zoom camera with high quality optics. On the left is a **White-faced Ibis** and on the right a **Rough-winged Swallow** (I think, but it was rather a weathered looking bird, at quite a distance, never flew, and the lighting was less than ideal – and, my dog ate my homework!). --Rob



On Aug 27, four of us enjoyed the 2<sup>nd</sup> ever “Fitness Birding” outing as we fully circumnavigated Scott’s Reservoir and observed water, riparian, and forest birds. When Dave C. & I had visited Scott’s on July 27<sup>th</sup> it was nearly dry and the only water was just above the dam & was a stinky cesspool of dead and dying carp (& scavenging vultures, ravens, & herons). Water managers must have noticed because a week later they began letting water flow into the reservoir. By our kayaking trip on Aug 27<sup>th</sup> the reservoir was not only full, it was flowing over the eroded spillway! –Rob



Left: Karen exits her kayak at the boat launch. Right: Judy & Ken birding by boat. Photos by Rob Bettaso

#### **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. Dues are for the year in which they are paid and not good for 12 months following payment (unless you pay in January).

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 can 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 position! And remember, you can be on the Board without being an Officer.

Below: Tom & Liz participate on behalf of WMAS at the Show Low Community Garden’s annual event.



## 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.

Snazzy WMAS T-shirts for sale (money from sales goes exclusively to our WMAS's operating budget). If interested, call Rob at 928-368-8481; supplies limited (a great gift idea).



**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**