History of the Maricopa Audubon Society 1953-1968

The Maricopa Audubon Society most sincerely thanks Mr. Jack Wetmore for his scrapbook compilation of 1953-1968 documents of the early history of our chapter.

Jack, after living in Phoenix for many years, moved to Prescott, Arizona. However, he has recently returned to the valley and lives in Mesa, Arizona. His thoughtful efforts to compile these MAS documents have made this book a treasure for our members.

Original scrapbook contents, including the handsome Roadrunner cover, were the product of Jack Wetmore. Some format changes and the additions of early newsletters were made by Bob Witzeman.

Printed 2006

Copies of this booklet may be obtained from:

The Maricopa Audubon Society
P.O. Box 15451
Phoenix, AZ 85060
HISTORY OF THE MARICOPA AUDUBON SOCIETY

It was in July of 1953 that a group interested in forming a local chapter of the National Audubon Society met at the Phoenix Adult Center. Mr. Malvin Plunkett presided. The official name chosen was The Maricopa Audubon Society.

Officers
Dr. Hugh Hanson, President
Dr. A. S. Margolin, Vice President
Miss Helen Kent, Treasurer
Mrs. Lucy Warner, Secretary

Among the Charter Members were:

Malvin Plunkett  Dr. Hugh Hansen
Dr. A. S. Margolin  Miss Helen Kent
Miss Rachel Buchanan  Mrs. Floy C. Betts
Mr. W. G. Bass  Miss Fannie Pitts
Mrs. Lucy Warner

On August 2, 1953 a group interested in forming a local chapter of the National Audubon Society met at the Phoenix Adult Center with Mr. Malvin Plunkett presiding.

Mr. Plunkett gave a resume of the Constitution and By-laws of the National Society, and suggestions were offered to make it applicable to the new chapter.

There were to be four officers -

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

the tenure of office being one year. The official name of the new society was

Maricopa Audubon Society

Officers were

Dr. Hugh Hanson, President
Dr. A. S. Margolin, Vice President
Miss Helen Kent, Treasurer
Mrs. Lucy Warner, Secretary

Among the charter members were

Mr. Malvin Plunkett  Dr. Hugh Hanson
Dr. A. S. Margolin  Miss Helen Kent
Miss Rachel Buchanan  Mrs. Floy C. Betts
Mr. W. G. Bass  Miss Fannie Pitts
Mrs. Lucy Warner

Above information from Secretary's notes
1954 Officers

Dr Hugh Hanson President
Wm H Patey Vice President
James Werner Secretary
Miss Jane Horwell Treasurer

Roadrunner

The first Roadrunner was published Aug 1, 195
Mr James Werner being editor

Information taken from Secretary's notes

One year old
51 members

Dec 1954
First Christmas Count

Mr. Abe Margolin directed the first Christmas count. It was made in two areas. The first a 7½ mile circle included Tal-Wi-Wi Pond, McDonald's River Ranch, and Williams Dairy Farm. 71 species and 18,727 individuals were seen.

The second area was a 15 mile circle including Coon's Bluff Granite Reef Dam, Blue Point, Stewart Mountain Dam, and points on the Verde including Ft McDowell 58 species were seen.
Wickenburg Field Trip Big Success

by Hal Flunkett

On Sunday afternoon, May 27, nature lovers made the 15-mile round trip out Vulture Road at Wickenburg to study flowers and birds under the leadership of Mr. William G. Bass and Mr. John Kelly. Our first stop was to see the Mariposa Lily, the state flower of Utah, where they call it Sago Lily. A few of the many other flowers we saw were: Desert Phlox, Blue Feloverde, Desert Ironwood, Paper Flower, Locoweed, Desert Senna, Fricly Poppy, Blue Lupine, Purple Lupine, Hummingbird Bush, Fiddleneck, Turpentine Broom, Buckwheat, Desert Marigold, and many other kinds of cacti.

That afternoon Mr. Bass has received a call that someone had killed a parent Red-tailed Hawk and that its young were starving. The nest was our goal and we set out. We saw the dead adult and a dead young bird too. However one fellow was very much alive and with hamburger from Mr. Bass and food from the remaining adult who was flying above us we were assured this friend of man had a chance to continue. (Continued on page 2)
The repeated revisions and admissions of error in the Bureau of Reclamation's figures on the Lassenau National Monument controversy show the absurdity of the argument that this question has been sufficiently studied, that all the facts are in and that the superiority of Echo Park Dam over any alternates has not been conclusively demonstrated. It has not been, and the desperation with which proponents of this highly debatable scheme have been working to push it through congress indicates a well-grounded fear that further examination of the whole matter may prove fatal to their cause.

Only a few days before the House Interior Committee approved by one vote, the authorization bill for the Upper Colorado Basin development, which included Echo Park Dam, Undersecretary of the Interior, Nelson A. Tudor, had admitted that figures he had supplied earlier in the year to prove the desirability of Echo Park Dam were wrong.

The error involved estimates of the greater evaporation loss that would be incurred by an alternate proposal, as compared with the loss at Echo Park and its companion, Split Mountain. This is a matter of great importance in view of Undersecretary Tudor's testimony that "in the final analysis, the increased losses of water by evaporation from alternative sites is the fundamental issue upon which the department has spent it necessary to give any consideration to the Echo Park dam and reservoir."

**REPEATED ERRORS**
Mr. Tudor has already informed the House committee that certain figures supplied in his original testimony had been corrected. Now he states that he has been advised by the bureau of Reclamation that the figures which they supplied me are in error again. In each case the relative advantage of Echo Park over the alternative was cut down. Here is the picture explained by Howard Zahniser, Executive Secretary of the Wilderness Society, one of the many organizations that have been fighting Echo Park Dam as an entirely unwarranted invasion of the National Park system.

"In 1950 the Bureau of Reclamation claimed that a dam at Echo Park would save 350,000 acre-feet of water a year, compared with...the alternate site. By 1953 the alternate site was far better than the Echo Park Dam..." (Continued on page 4)

**Echo Park Dam Bill To Go Before House**
Dr. Gordon Bender, chairman of the committee on Conservation and Education asks that all members review the information on the Echo Park Dam Project (for information see Audubon Magazine, Jan-Feb 1954, pp. 13, 29). After reading these accounts if you feel you can commit yourself, we urge you to write to your representatives and tell them how you feel on the subject.

This bill has passed the Senate and will be on the floor of the House very soon. If you desire to take any action, please hurry!

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**CONSERVATION: ECHO PARK DAM ISSUE**
(Cont. from p. 3)

Bureau's figure had changed to an estimate between 100,000 and 200,000 acre-feet a year. In 1951 the figure was placed...at 150,000 acre-feet, which was claimed in March to 70,000 acre-feet. Now he is compelled to amend it again down to 25,000 acre-feet. It is no wonder that conservationists have found the Bureau's statements contradictory and have surmised that this evaporation argument is being used as a plausible pretext rather than a sound reason.

.....the opposition of conservationists to Echo Park dam does not imply opposition to water and power development for the west. It merely expresses a demand that the National Park system be preserved intact, or at the very least, that every possible alternative be thoroughly explored before a final decision is made to destroy it.

This demand is particularly pertinent in view of the fact that it is the people of all the country who would no longer lose this unique national quality of this great national wonder if the dam were constructed, but also would be paying an enormous price—dollars and cents—of the intangible values—for its destruction!

**Organpipe Cactus Nat Monument Trip**
by Hal Plunkett

Eight adults and one child made the overnight trip to Ajo, Organpipe Nat Monument and Sonora, Mexico. We left Phoenix Saturday at 9:00 PM and returned about 8 PM on Sunday.

It seemed that all the desert plants were blooming except for Senita and Organpipe Cactus. We were a week early for the latter.

This was more of a botany trip (Continued next column)

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**Granite Reef Dam, Coons Bluff Visited**

by Hal Plunkett

At dawn Saturday, April 17, Miss Beulah Beal and I set out for Granite Reef Dam and Coons Bluff. We found the desert in full bloom, especially at the plants we came in very handy.

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**Pres. Hanson Takes Job in Colorado**

Our President, Dr. Hugh Hanson, left June 19 for Mesa Verde Nat. Park at Mesa Verde Colorado, where he will work until September 6. We certainly wish him the best of luck and are sorry that he is not here with us for the summer.
1955 Officers

Mrs Agnew Hawkins  President
Malvin Plunkett    Vice President
Miss Jane Horswell Treasurer
Mrs Hugh Hanson    Secretary

First field trip to Madera Canyon was in May of 1955

Roadrunner chicks in nest.

We leave the shell
Maricopa Audubon Society
Two Years Old; Birthday Meeting To Be July 11th.

Palo Verde Trip Yields Stilt Sandpiper, Va. Rail

Five members of the society met at Phoenix College at 6 a.m. June 12 and made the trip to the Palo Verde Marsh south of Palo Verde, Arizona.

The marsh was very dry, with only a few shallow spots of water. Seen were: 1 Va. Rail, 1 Killdeer, 1 Texas Night Hawk, 1 STILT SANDPIPER, 50 (est) Marsh Wrens, 2 Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and 1 Yellowthroat, to mention only a few.

Following this the group went on to the Arlington Game Refuge, but found it very disappointing, for it was dry except for a few puddles. Seen here were 1 Great Blue Heron, 1 Green Heron, and about 15 Killdeer including 2 juveniles.

The trip was under the direction of temporary Field Trip Chairman, James R. Werner.

Program On Nests Set

This July, 1955, the Maricopa Audubon Society will be two years old. It was just two years ago that interested people got together and formed the society.

Monday, July 11, the second annual Birthday Meeting of the group will be held at the home of Mr. & Mrs. B. B. Hawkins. Mrs. Hawkins is President of the society.

The Hawkins' home is 3/4 of a mile north of Indian School Road on the west side of 75th Avenue (Lateral 20).

The meeting will open at 8 p.m. with business to be handled first. Following this Mrs. Hawkins has an excellent program planned including a talk and explanation of the many bird nests she has.

This will be an excellent program, and an IMPORTANT meeting.

Every member is urged to attend.

Let's have our full membership here to celebrate our second birthday!
Valley Observations:

- Waterfowl Remaining Late; C.T. Crackle Seen

Pied-billed Grebe. Eight at Bennett's Marsh June 3 (J.M. Simpson, J.R. Germer), and 3 juvenals there June 22 (JRW).


Snowy Egret. Five at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), and one there June 22 (JRW).

Green Heron. One at Tal wi wi June 3 (JMS, JRW).

B.C.W. Heron. Four immatures at Tal wi wi June 22 (JRW).

Least Bittern. One found in cattail marsh on the Salt River at Lateral 23 June 25 (JRW).

W.F.G. Ibis. One at Palo Verde June 6 (JRW), four at Bennett's June 9 (JMS, Ben Clark), 16 at Bennett's June 15 (JMS, JRW), and two there June 22 (JRW).

Bald Pate. Two at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), and 11 there June 22 (JRW).

Fintail. Two at New River Pond June 12 (Mal Plunkett), one at Bennett's June 15 (J.T. Bialac, JTB).

G.W. Teal. One at Bennett's June 15 (JRW, JTB).

B.W. Teal. Three at Bennett's June 15 (JRW, JTB), and one male there June 22 (JRW).

Cinnamon Teal. Two at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), two at New River Pond June 12 (MF), and six at Bennett's June 22 (JRW).

Shoveller. Two at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), two at New River Pond June 12 (MF), 12 at Bennett's June 15 (JTB, JRW), and nine there June 22 (JRW).

Redhead. One male at Ramsey-Hazlitt Pond June 15 (JTB, JRW).

Ruddy Duck. Three at Bennett's June 22 (JRW).

An. Roughleg. One in the light phase chased by Western Kingbird over marsh on Salt River at Lat. 23 June 25 (JRW).

G. Gallinule. Several seen on each trip to Bennett's, three juvenals there June 3 (JMS, JRW).

VA. Rail. Palo Verde: Two June 6 (JRW), one June 12 (Maricopa Audubon Society), 6 there June 17 (JMS, JRW).

B.N. Spilt. One at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), and two at Palo Verde June 6 (JRW).

Bl. Tern. One at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW), six immatures at New River Pond June 15 (JTB, JRW).

W.W. Pemee. One at Tal wi wi June 3 (JMS, JRW), and one there June 12 (MF).

Western Bluebird. One at Palo Verde Marsh June 6 (JRW).

Yellowthroat. Two at Palo Verde June 17 (JMS, JRW).


Y.H. Blackbird. Eight at Bennett's June 3 (JMS, JRW) and 30 at there June 22 (JRW).

Great-tailed Grackle. A male was found at Ramsey-Hazlitt Pond June 9 (JMS, BC), and was seen there again June 15 (JRW, JTB).

An unusual May record.

Solitary Sandpiper. One at New River Pond May 3 (R. Roy Johnson). --

Crocketts Show Slides

The June meeting of the society convened at 8 p.m. June 6 at Verde Park in Phoenix.

Agnes Hawkins, President, handled the business matters. It was decided at this time to send $10 to the Audubon Center of Southern California to help with reconstruction of the recently burned-over wildlife sanctuary at El Monte.

Following the business Harry L. and Ruth Crockett showed their collection of color slides on Arizona birds entitled "Kodachromes of Arizona Birds" to the group. Many of the Crockett's pictures have appeared in the Arizona Highways Magazine, and we were certainly fortunate to have this program.
Cold Snap Can Come This Late

By BERT FIREMAN

Every little ol' sweet bird that sings in an Arizona tree helps us sell our attractiveness to the nation. Recently the Maricopa Audubon Society took part in the Christmas Bird Count. When only 22 local bird watchers identified 184 species of birds and 81,592 individuals in daylight hours, they didn't quite match the record of the day set at Cocoa, Fla., with 155 species. But they counted more individual birds with fewer watchers and in much less time.

Local bird fans believe that the Valley of the Sun shouldn't be thrown in direct competition with coastal areas where amphibious birds (geese, terns, etc.) are so numerous. When the national results are compiled we may well stand near the top for number of species in non-oceanic areas.

Comes now Mrs. Frank Heamer, 3437 N. 21st Ave., with information that bird watchers at Youngstown, Ohio, are envious of the greater bird population in our Valley. Her brother, Vincent P. McLaughlin, was among the observers who counted birds there on Dec. 31. Compared to our 104 species they found only 55 species and 42,623 individuals, this total including about 35,000 noisy old crows at two established rookeries.