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PROGRAMS

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month, September-April, at the Phoenix Zoo Auditorium. Meetings start at 7:30, and feature a speaker, book sales, refreshments, and a chance to socialize with fellow MAS members. Non-members welcome!

Join us for a pre-meeting dinner at Pete's 19th Tee, 1405 N Mill Avenue, Tempe (at the Rolling Hills Golf Course) starting at 6:00 p.m. **Note:** For our first meeting of the year on September 4th, there will be no pre-meeting dinner at Pete's. It is our annual potluck. Each attendee is invited to bring a platter of his or her favorite hors d'oeuvres, sufficiently large enough to serve at least six people. We'll provide the eating utensils, the plates, and the drinks (non-alcoholic, of course). Bring a friend. Festivities will start at 6:30 p.m., when we'll be able to tell one another where we had an opportunity to do birding this past summer, and what lifers we got. The regular meeting will get underway at 7:30 p.m.

**PROGRAM TOPICS**

**September 4:** Scott Anderson of the Gilbert Riparian Institute speaking about the Gilbert Riparian Institute and The Preserves at Neely Ranch and Water Ranch.

**October 2:** Kenn Kaufman topic: TBA

**November 6:** Bob Stewart on the butterflies of Arizona.

**December 4:** Roseann Hanson from the Sky Island Alliance.

**January 8:** Doug Alexander topic: TBA

**February 5:** Gunnar Engblom, a biologist and scientific coordinator for a Peruvian NGO called Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN). His passion is bird conservation and is trying to raise funds for the conservation of Andean forests, especially Polylepis forests near Cusco.

**March 5:** Dr. David L. Pearson, professor of biology at ASU. His topic will be Why are there more bird species some places than others?

**April 2:** TBA

**May 7:** TBA

**Speakers wanted:** If you have ideas for speakers, or if you would like to make a presentation yourself, please contact Laurie Nessel, Program Chair, at (480) 968-5614 or laurienessel@hotmail.com

**Annual ABA Convention** in Duluth, MN, June 10-16, 2002. Information to follow

**Corrections & Omissions for the last issue.** 1. Mike Baker is the new Field Trip chairperson and Walter Thurner was given credit for Mike's first report. 2. The illustration was left out of Bud Johnson's article on the Gunnison Sage Grouse. 3. The wrong web site was used for the new Representative from District 1. It should have read—Jeff Flake at 512 Cannon House Office Building, the last 4 digits for the fax number are 4386, and e-mail is jeff.flake@mail.house.gov. 4. Thanks to the following people for their help at the annual dinner: Jeanine Baker, Terry Brodner, Cynthia Donald, Karen Kaiser, Laurie Nessel, Andrea Nesbitt, Robin Silver, Phil & Lori Snow, Theonia Vyvial, Bob Witzeman, and the International Crane Foundation.

**Audubon Adventures:** Give the gift of discovery and share your love of the environment. The program is designated for students in grades 4-6. Introduce an entire classroom (up to 32 students) to the wonders of nature for just $35 (plus shipping charges). You can select your favorite school or let Audubon do it for you. For orders: call 800/813-5037.

**Maricopa Audubon T-Shirts** are available for sale at member meetings or by mail. They feature a Barn Owl primary flight feather overshadowing the common and Latin names of birds found in Maricopa County. Long-sleeved shirts are available in Charcoal, Med, Large or XL, for $20.00. Add $4.00 shipping and handling for the first shirt, $1.50 for each additional shirt. Please allow 3 weeks for delivery. Make checks out to: Maricopa Audubon Society, 1128 E Geneva Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282. For info, contact Laurie Nessel at (480) 968-5614 or laurienessel@hotmail.com

Do you have an interesting story to tell about birding? Please forward your submissions to the Editor—Deva Burns. Check the back page for address/e-mail. Actually, attaching an article to an e-mail is the absolute easiest way to submit an article. If you have pictures or slides, you do need to send those to me directly. Remember, all articles may not be published the first month after receipt.

**From The Editor—Deva Burns**

The primary focus of this issue of the Wen-Dition is money, or rather the lack thereof. The Board has taken one step—reducing the number of issues of the Wen-Dition produced each year. However, we need your help. Donations are always welcomed in any non-profit organization and we need your donations now more than ever. In this issue Herb Fibel and Scott Burge have explained the reason why the issue has become so critical.

I would like to make another suggestion—bequests. Bequests are a

**COMMITTEES/SUPPORT**

**Activist Alert:** Shawn Bauer
602-828-3607
shawnbaur@hotmail.com

**Arizona Audubon Council Rep:** Herb Fibel
408-966-5246
herbertsfibel@aol.com

**Bird Alert**

California Condor
photographed by Jim Burns at the South Rim, Grand Canyon, AZ 7/01 with Canyon EOS A2 body, Canon 100-400 zoom lens, and Fujichrome ProVia 100F film
AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

Bequests are an important source of support for the Maricopa Audubon Society. Your chapter has dedicated itself to the protection of natural world through public education and advocacy for the wiser use and preservation of our land, water, air and other irreplaceable natural resources.

You can invest in the future of our natural world by making a bequest in your will to the Maricopa Audubon Society. Talk to your attorney for more information on how this can be accomplished.

magnificent and gorgeous, and the immersion into the Inuit culture certainly expanded our world view. Travelling in a komatiq (Inuit sled) pulled by a snowmobile over the pack ice (cracks and all) was both exhilarating and scary. We saw fresh polar bear tracks but no bears. We saw 3 kinds of whales--bowhead (very rare), narwhal, and beluga. Oh yes, the birds--only two lifers, but what lifers!--Common Ringed Plover and Ivory Gull.

*Thanks to Peggy Wenrick of Tucson Audubon for specific

And, for those of you who thought Audubon was about the birds, Jim Burns writes about an environmental success story witnessed on our visit to the Grand Canyon in July. Our August visit with our 6 year old grandson may have been even “grander.” His “Oh wow” when a condor flew over at about 25 feet will be a lifetime memory. By the end of the trip he could, without binoculars, look up and separate raven from vulture from condor. Maybe, just maybe, we have hooked another birder. Scott and Lee Burge write about all the wonderful birds they saw on the Chiricahua Field Trip. And Alison McGowan poetically celebrates the killdeer.

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FISCAL YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 2001
Report of Income & Expenditures

By Herb Fibel

Our efforts in the past at setting forth our annual financial report in the form of pie charts have had pretty miserable results. This year I thought I would simply lay it out by the numbers, rounded off to the nearest $50. We had to dip into our financial reserves for about $1,700 in order to cover the shortfall. If you have any questions about Maricopa Audubon's finances, if you would like to be on the finance committee, or if you would like to be assistant treasurer, please give me, Herb Fibel, a call. My number is on the back of the Wren•dition.

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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 2001 PHOTO QUIZ

By Jim Burns

This Issue's Clue:
Shorebirds are passing through our deserts now. Here are three species of common, ringed plovers. Be careful. Only two of them were photographed in Arizona.

A) Good Photo, Easy Bird

B) Good Photo, Difficult Bird

C) Bad Photo, Easy Bird
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NATIONAL AUDUBON ADOPTS A PUBLIC LANDS GRAZING RESOLUTION

By Bob Witzman

A Land Ethic changes the role of Homo Sapiens from conqueror of the land community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow members and also respect for the Community as such.

Aldo Leopold’s "Sand County Almanac"

The Board of Directors of the National Audubon Society on June 10th adopted a livestock grazing resolution pertaining to all public lands, which belong to all the people of the United States. Some 23 of the 29 state-listed threatened birds in Arizona have grazing listed as one of the causes of their imperilment by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. By comparison only three states are listed as having logging impacts. Hence, one quickly realizes how significant government management of cattle grazing is upon bird survival throughout the western U.S.

There are about 260 million acres of BLM and USFS land in the U.S. This is the equivalent of 14 eastern seaboard states plus Missouri. Roughly 90% of BLM land and 70% of western USFS land is grazed. 53% of Arizona is public land (42% is federal and 13% state land). The low rainfall of most western states makes grazing a marginal enterprise. But grazing is an ecologically devastating factor in desertification, riparian and watershed destruction, soil erosion, and exotic plant invasion.

This resolution should not be seen as an issue to most U.S. beef and livestock producers. 97% of U.S. beef is raised on private lands and only 3% on public lands. For example, Iowa, on private land, produces more pounds of beef than all the cattle produced on all the western states' public (BLM and USFS) lands. The Audubon resolution will be a helpful policy guideline for husbandry of these public lands, which belong to all the citizens of this nation.

Our Arizona Audubon chapters and our Arizona Audubon Council are particularly grateful to our regional intermountain states representative on the Audubon National Board, John Bellmon, of Salt Lake City, who

Pinciples

The public lands are our nation's greatest remaining repository of natural wildlife and wild places.

All users of public lands have the potential to cause significant disturbance to natural ecosystems and habitats. Land managers have a particular responsibility for this stewardship. All users of these public lands have a responsibility to act as stewards of these lands. Most uses of these public lands are privileges, not legal rights, and must be recognized as such.

No users should enjoy a special privileged access to public lands and public resources.

Some uses of public lands for commodity resources are granted at below-market economic costs. This practice discourages environmental sustainability and should be reformed.

A sustainable ecosystem approach to public land management affords the best prospect of assuring the economic viability and stability of these lands.

The National Audubon Society ("Audubon") believes that the restoration and conservation of natural biological diversity on public land ecosystems must become a fundamental principle guiding all multiple uses of public lands. All public land management must be designed to restore and maintain healthy, functioning ecosystems in balance with human uses. Any policy relating to grazing on public lands must embrace this perspective.

Specifically, public agencies should seek to recover and maintain:

a) Natural richness and abundance of native plant and animal species;

b) Natural structure, dynamics and resilience of communities of native plant and animal species;

c) Natural retention of rainfall in soils, riparian and wetlands ecosystems and aquifers;

d) Natural conditions of soil

ARIZONA SPECIAL SPECIES: EARED TROGON

By Jim Burns

Although Eared Trogon is still officially considered accidental in Arizona, and although anyone coming to Arizona to look for Eared Trogon, the call, if you find an Eared Trogon nest, leave quietly, rejoice privately, and do not call the hotline.

This species' common name derives from its inexpressive postocular (extending behind the eye) plumage. Though similar in color and shape to the highly sought and much more common Elegant Trogon of Arizona's southern mountains, Eared Trogon belongs to a different genus and is more closely related to the quetzals of Central and South America. Indeed, in Mexico this bird is called Eared Quetzal like the Elegant Trogon. Eareds subsist primarily on fruits and insects. They are known to flycatch from exposed perches and hoverpluck berries from fruiting trees.

Eared Trogons have a variety of vocalizations, none of them anything like the coarse, almost raven-like two syllable "kwah" of Elegant. Several sightings of Eareds have occurred because birders have heard the strange calls first and gone hunting the source. The most common of these calls is the "squeal-chuk" which sounds like a grackle with hiccupps. Another is one reminiscent of Northern Pygmy-Owl, though louder and more ringing, with a faster cadence.

Anyone who has spent a morning following the voice of an Elegant Trogon through creekside sycamores without glimpsing the bird will be well prepared for the frustrations of looking for Eared Trogon. Eareds are much more skittish than Elegant and they are more likely to hop over a ridge and disappear than to follow a drainage. They tend to forage at mid to upper story and they often vocalize in flight as they leave an area.

Since 1977, Arizona sightings of Eared Trogon have come every two to three years. The two most recent, the Haunted Canyon bird in the eastern Superstition Mountains in the winter of '96 and the Cave Creek Canyon bird at Thanksgiving of '97, rather atypically continued in a relatively small area for several weeks and several days respectively. Is this a trend? Probably not. It seems the only pattern for Eared Trogon in Arizona is that there is no pattern. But, it's about time again. Wait until the monsoon is officially over. Then go to the Chiricahuas and hike upper Cave Creek above the turnstile or go to the Huachucas and hike down from Ramsey Vista in upper Carr to Hamburg Meadow. If you don't see Eared Trogon you'll see some beautiful country.

The accompanying photograph was taken at Stewart Campground along the South Fork of Cave Creek, November 27, 1999. I wasn't able to photograph the Hamburg Meadow bird in '91. The three doctors thought their ten second look so special they started whooping and high-flying. The trogon hopped the ridge and never
ably assisted in bringing this resolution to fruition. Here is the resolution:

**National Audubon Society**
**Policy on Livestock Grazing**
**State & Federal Lands**

**Policy Overview**

The guiding principle governing the administration of public lands where grazing is permitted should be the conservation, restoration and maintenance of their natural biological diversity. Any policy relating to livestock grazing on public lands must be consistent with this objective. Audubon recognizes that there may be alternative strategies for addressing the impact of grazing on public lands. We support effective strategies consistent with the principles and guidelines outlined in this document.

**IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES**

1. Livestock grazing on public lands is a privilege to be integrated with other uses and to assure

(continued on page 13)
WHERE & WHEN - SEPTEMBER THROUGH NOVEMBER 2001

By Mike Baker

Car Pooling:
Maricopa Audubon Strongly encourages carpooling on field trips. Please make every effort to organize your own carpool; consolidate vehicles at meeting places; and/or contact leaders for carpool assistance. It is recommended that passengers reimburse drivers 5 to 10 cents per mile.

Legend:
Limit: Maximum number of participants per field trip. Please call early to make your reservations.
Difficulty Levels 1 through 5: 1 equals very low level of exertion, short walking distance, considerable birding from vehicle and possible multiple birding stops. 5 equals very high level of difficulty with respect to exertion. Longer hiking distances are expected with possible steep trails.

Reminders:
• Wear neutral colored clothing and sturdy walking shoes.
• bring sunscreen, sunglasses, head protection and water.
• Avoid wearing bright colors.
• bring your binoculars.
• don't forget to have FUN!!

Wednesday, October 3

Boyce Thompson Arboretum – A unique state park near Superior. Remains one of our premier destinations. Diverse flora and vegetative structure combined with permanent water, appeal to many resident and fall migrating bird species. There is an admission fee at the arboretum. Bring walking shoes and a lunch. Limit: 15 Difficulty: 1. Contact leader for information and reservations.

Leader: Steve Ganley
480-830-5538
sganley@primenet.com

Saturday, October 13

Safford area, including Roper Lake State Park and the Pinaleno Mts (Mt. Graham) – We will search for birds in diverse habitats of upper Sonoran desertscrub, interior chaparral, oak-conifer forest and associated riparian vegetation. Expect an array of migrating waterfowl, a suite of Mexican montane and winter resident bird species. Bring walking shoes, a lunch and water. Possible entrance fee into the state park. Limit: 20 Difficulty: 2. Contact leader for information and reservations.

Leader: John Williams
520-428-1009
petvet@zexes.com

Saturday, October 20

Bumble Bee and Turkey Creek Areas – Join us in search of Black-chinned and Sage Sparrows, Crissal Thrasher, Townsend’s Solitaire, and migrant bird species. We will visit a wide range of plant communities including upland Sonoran desertscrub, interior chaparral, juniper-oak transition and associated riparian habitat. Bring walking shoes and a lunch. Limit: 15 Difficulty: 1. Contact leader for information and reservations.

Leader: Judy Taylor
623-374-0441
carafethers@aol.com

Wednesday, October 27

Tres Rios Wetlands – This constructed wetlands and riparian area ranks among the best places for elusive. Nearby Barfoot Park was our next stop. There treetop birding is possible if you walk along the road. As we stepped out of our cars a large forest aura surrounded us. The low clouds, ferns, moss, and wild flowers created a magical effect. Apache Fox Chickadee was seen. Pygmy and Red-breasted Nuthatch were seen. Mexican Chickadee, however, was not to be found. That evening Scott and I held a gathering at Cave Creek Ranch, were Scott and I was staying.

After a full day of hiking and driving it was pleasant to sit at the feeders and have the birds come to us! We enjoyed the noisy antics of Acorn Woodpecker, and the repeated nasal “yank” made by the White-breasted Nuthatch. Lesser Goldfinch and Blue-throated Hummingbird were seen by most of the group and some say Ladder-backed Wookpecker, Rufous and Magnificent Hummingbird. Later that night some heard Whiskered Screech-Owl. A sunny day greeted us the next morning and a feeling overtook me that this would be the day. The group missed on Saturday. I hoped this would prove to be true! Our group walked along a trail (suggested by Gisela and Bill Kluvin) that began near the park headquarters and ended near Sunny Flats campground. In the trees along the dry stream Bridled Titmouse was common. What was that squeaky noise (similar to the “rubber ducky” sound) we were hearing? There, perched high on a tree limb over the stream was the elusive Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher. Still searching for the Elegant Trogon, we walked into a clearing and our persistence paid off as a bright red flash of feathers made its way as it perched on a branch overhead. The entire group had excellent views of at least one of two males in the area. After the success of spotting the Elegant Trogon we said our good-byes and concluded the trip. A special note-of-thanks goes out to the chapter members and one other (from Montana) participating in the trip who gave generous contributions to the Maricopa Audubon Society. They are Joan Barker, Ann Dowling, Georgia Frazier, Gisela & Bill Kluvin, Beth & Larry Lyon, Georgia Nelson, and Linda Peck. Thank you for being so generous! No fee was published for this trip. However, if you were a participant, it is not too late to contribute. Just send
Saturday, September 29
Gilbert Area Ponds -- We will visit the Gilbert vicinity ponds and wildlife habitat areas. Migrating shorebird and waterfowl should be present along with early arriving raptors and passerines. Possible birds include Peregrine Falcon, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Baird’s Sandpiper and teal species. Bring a spotting scope if available. Morning only. Bring water. Limit: 15. Difficulty: 1. Please contact leader for information and reservations.

Leader: Ron Huettner
rollo@primenet.com

Saturday and Sunday November 10 - 11
Rocky Point Mexico Field Trip

Leader: Bob Witzeman
602-840-0052

Tuesday, November 27
Gilbert Library Ponds -- We will visit the Gilbert Library ponds and wildlife area. The ponds and associated marsh vegetation attract a variety of migrating waterfowl, wintering raptor and passerine species. Bring a lunch, water and spotting scope if available. Limit: 15. Difficulty: 1. Please contact leader for information and reservations.

Leader: Cindy West
480-830-5332
cwestbirdri@juno.com

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Remember when Steve Ganley was doing the hotline? Fourth of July would roll around and you’d be thinking about watermelon and fireworks and Steve would be exhorting you to get out and look for fall shorebirds. Huh? Many shorebirds, called waders in England, are long distance migrants, breeding the Arctic and wintering in the southern hemisphere. Arctic summers are short and adult shorebirds leave the breeding ground as soon as they have finished their business there. Sometimes in late May we will know whether an adult shorebirds is going or coming. By the time you read this, most adult shorebirds may have already passed through Arizona.

The plovers, with their plump bodies, large eyes, and short, straight, rather bulbous bills are a typical of the shorebird group in some ways. Many of them are only short distance migrants and most of them can be found at certain times of the year in upland and most of them can be found at them are only short distance migrants

Many of the bands. Snowies’ breast band is incomplete, often described as “breast marks for Snowy Plover, however, are the bands. Snowies’ breast band is incomplete, often described as “breast marks for Snowy Plover, however, are the bands. Snowies’ breast band is incomplete, often described as “breast patches”. There is a forehead band and black auricular patch, but only in breeding plumage, and Snowies never show a band from cheek to cheek across the same as the quiz bird’s. Wilson’s Plover.

Snowy plovers, too, have uniformly dark bills in all plumages and, as their name implies, the contrast between upper and under in a Wilson’s would be about the same as the quiz bird’s, Wilson’s Plover’s uniformly dark bill. Wilson’s Plovers also show a completely dark bill in all plumages. Additionally, through the contrast between upper and under in a Wilson’s would be about the same as the quiz bird’s, Wilson’s Plover’s typically pauses in its feeding in a quite recognizable upright posture, much more vertical and very unlike the horizontal posture of the bird in the photograph. this is not a Wilson’s Plover.

Snowy plovers, too, have uniformly dark bills in all plumages and, as their name implies, the contrast between upper and under is much greater in Snowies than our photograph shows. Snowy Plover upperparts are usually described at “light gray-brown.” The clinching field marks for Snowy Plover, however, are the bands. Snowies’ breast band is incomplete, often described as “breast patches”. There is a forehead band and black auricular patch, but only in breeding plumage, and Snowies never show a band from cheek to cheek across the same as the quiz bird’s. Wilson’s Plover.

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Piping Plovers in breeding plumage will show a bill similar to our bird’s, a two-toned, bright orange at the base, black at the tip. Pipings also have a breastband, a headband, and a white eye stripe like our quiz bird’s.

However, in all plumages they lack the black auriculums and the cheekband, so their face appears much plainer. The
Killdeer do migrate from the northern limits of their range, but here in Arizona they are year-round residents. More will be seen during migration and winter as numbers swell with transient and nonresident birds. This Killdeer was photographed at Painted Rock Dam July 25, 1993.

B) Good Photo, Difficult Bird

Here’s another plover with a single black breastband. It is boldly patterned with well-defined field marks. The breastband is complete but not particularly wide, but is sorting out the small plovers be aware that the breastband can appear either broad or narrow depending on the posture of an individual bird, so width itself is not a good field mark.

The face is marked by two black bands separated by the white forehead. These bands meet in front of the eye and continue on upperparts of the Piping are the lightest of any of our candidates and are described as “dry sand.” Pippings are ghostly little plovers, easy to overlook. This is not a Piping Plover.

Semipalmated Plovers is our most boldly marked and most common migrant plover. It is a long distance migrant which may pass through Arizona quite early in the “fall.” There are Maricopa County records from the second week in July. Semipals breed in the Arctic and winter to southern South America. This didn’t seem such a difficult identification, but if you caught the play on words in the clue, you know we’re not quite finished. My apologies. I just couldn’t help myself. This is not a Semipalmated Plover.

Charadrius Semipalmatus. Ever wonder exactly where that odd work “semipalmated” came from? From Latin, literally “half hand.” Look at the back of your hand. There’s a little webbing between each finger. Look at the quiz bird’s feet. There’s no webbing between the toes. This Common Ringed Plover was photographed in June on Bylot Island in the Canadian Arctic. Father south we had seen a Semi. He had webs. The guidebooks say you can’t see this character in the field. My slides prove otherwise.

C) Bad Photo, Easy Bird

Our third plover looks like it is actually on a shore. Unfortunately it is smaller in the frame and quartered away from us so that we are not getting as clean a look at its diagnostic field marks as we did with our first two birds. We have enough, though. We can see the black headband, the black auriculars, and the black breastband which, if we look closely enough, we can tell is not complete. The bill and legs are uniformly colored and appear as black as the facial markings. There’s no much contrast in body plumage. Certainly not as much as our first two birds show. The back color looks like wet sand. This Snowy Plover was photographed June, 1988 at Wilcox, Arizona ponds.

Snowy Plover is listed as a summer transient and rare breeder in Arizona. There have been no confirmed nestings at Wilcox since the early ’80s, but Snowies nested at Painted Rock Dam in Maricopa county After the floods of ’93. Wilson’s Plover winters as close as the Gulf of California and has been recorded at the Salton Sea. Piping Plover is a threatened and endangered species seen occasionally on the California coast. Common Ringed Plover is Arctic dream. Arctic dreams are good in Arizona’s summer heat.
A Glossy Ibis was discovered with a large flock of 200 White-faced Ibis in a field in Apache County May 19 (B), providing the first record for the county as well as for the state; it remained until May 21.

A Clark’s Grebe was observed at the Maricopa Agricultural Center in Pinal Co. on the late date of May 19 (MB). An early wandering Brown Pelican was seen at the 91st Ave. Ponds June 16 (RDi). A large group of 35-40 Neotropic Cormorants, observed downstream from the 91st Ave. Ponds June 24, included a pair of Red-shouldered Harriers observed in the field in Gilbert on the very early date of July 7 (PM), one on 99th Ave, s. of eight at the 91st Ave. Ponds June 16 1993.  White-faced Ibis, uncommon in May 1993, were counted at the 91st Ave. Ponds June 24 (TC); and over 100 were counted at the 91st Ave. Ponds June 24, 1994.

A Black Vulture, seen with a group of Turkey Vultures at Phon D. Sutton May 28 (RDi), was in a new locality away from the usual area of occurrence in s.w. Phoenix.  An adult Little Blue Heron was observed flying over the 91st Ave. Ponds May 26 (PM, TB); there have been 18 previous county records. Two Cattle Egrets in breeding plumage were seen at the El Mirage Pond June 23 (TC, DY); six, some in breeding plumage were observed downstream form the 91st Ave Ponds June 24 (TC); and over 100 were counted at the 91st Ave. Ponds July 7 (PM). The species has been nesting in the county only since 1993. White-faced Ibis, uncommon in summer, were reported in three areas; eight at the 91st Ave. Ponds June 16 (RDi), six at El Mirage Pond June 23 (TC, DY), one on 99th Ave, s. of Broadway June 24 (TC), and a few still at the 91st Ave. Ponds July 7 (PM).

A male Harlequin Duck, discovered at mile 50 on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon June 7 (CL), provided only the second record for the state. A female scapu (sp?), rare in summer, was observed on the Salt River at 16th St., June 16 (MC).

An adult and a juvenile White-tailed Kite were observed downstream from the 91st Ave. Ponds June 24 (TC). Two N. Harlequins were observed on the very early date of July 28 (SG) there were no previous July records for the county; the species doesn't usually return until early September. The pair of Red-shouldered Hawks at the Hassayampa River Preserve built another nest and were incubating eggs June 1 (NL).

An Eastern Kingbird was discovered May 18 in Cameron, where one was found about this same time three years ago (CL). A pair of Tropical Kingbirds were found nesting at the Hassayampa River Preserve (hereafter HRP) May 19+ (NL, JBe), representing the first county record and the second nesting record for the county. Another Tropical Kingbird was seen at the Maricopa Agricultural Center in Pinal Co., May 19 (MM). An adult male Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was discovered in s.w. Phoenix July 10 and remained at least until July 19 (SG et al).

A singing Yellow-throated Vireo was reported along the Verde River, n. of Rio Verde May 15-16 (JBe); there have been four previous county records. Warbling Vireos, that were first found nesting above Slate Creek Divide two years ago, were found there again May 13 (SG) and June 15 when they were seen in two different places in that area (R&JW). A Steller’s Jay was still in the lowlands at Lee’s Ferry on the late date of May 23 (CL).

A new and unusual nesting place for N. Rough-winged Swallow was found when a nest with young was discovered in a pipe in a wall of one of the buildings at Arizona Mills Mall June 13 (MC). A Purple Martin, a rare transient in the Phoenix area, was seen in central Phoenix May 19 (CB). A Brown Creeper was still at the HRP on the late date of May 26 (RP).

A Male Golden-winged Warbler was discovered in Flagstaff May 19 (CL); there have been about two dozen previous state records. A N. Warbling Blackbird was found at El Dorado Park in Scottsdale May 11 (JBe, PM). A Kentucky Warbler was observed May 19 along West Fork, Oak Creek Canyon (CL) where one was found about the same time a year ago. Several Red-faced Warblers were seen and heard May 13 and June 15 above Slate Creek Divide where the species has been nesting at least since 1998 (SG, R&JW).

A male Indigo Bunting, a rare summer visitor in the Phoenix area, was seen along Arlington Canal Rd., May 19 (TC, MB, SG). Individual Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were observed at the HRP May 19 at least to May 26 (NL, RP) and

We now know the dollars and cents figures on the NAS dues share for our chapter for the current fiscal year. As you can view from my annual financial report published elsewhere in this edition, our dues share for the last fiscal year was approximately $13,150, almost 50% of our total income for the fiscal year. By the same token, publishing and mailing out the Wren-dition was approximately $13,950, almost 50% of our total expenditures for the fiscal year.

In the current fiscal year National Audubon will be paying us our chapter $8,692.97, roughly 66% of what we received last fiscal year. Had the dues share been based on the new formula that Audubon intends to use, we would only be receiving $6,318.91, which is about 47% of what we received this past fiscal year.

It is only because the chapters raised a ruckus that the new formula is being phased in over four years rather than all at once. It is entirely possible under the new system that there would be a time when chapters receive zero in dues share from National Audubon. However, National points out that as an incentive for the chapters to sign up new members, the chapters will receive from National Audubon all the money that they receive from these chapter-generated new members, although that policy is not fixed in stone.

When Audubon Nature Centers and state offices exist in this and other states in the future, these entities, and not the chapters, will get the dues kickback from National Audubon for new members generated by the state offices or by the nature centers. Your board has taken the first step to realign our costs to conform to the anticipated reduced income. It is, regrettably, that after this edition of the Wren-dition, we will be going from a bimonthly publication to a quarterly one.

Obviously, if we are to continue our mission of saving birds, other creatures, and their habitats, we are going to have to find sources of revenue other than National Audubon. Turning the Big Sit! into a fundraiser will help, as will Birdathons. Presently the latter suffers from lack of volunteers to coordinate the activity. We will also be encouraging general donations and bequests. I intend to see to it that in the future anyone who donates $50 or more is given credit for doing so in the Cactus Wren-dition.
Black-necked Stilts nested at the Water Ranch Ponds in Gilbert; at least one young was observed there July 22 (JBU). Am. Avocets nested at El Mirage Pond; young were observed there July 10 (SG). A Caspian Tern was seen flying over the Salt River, upstream from Phon D. Sutton on the late date of May 28 (RDu). Another migrating Caspian Tern was observed downstream from the 91st Ave Ponds on the early date of June 24 (TC).

A Eurasian Collared Dove was heard calling in the town of Palo Verde, w. of Buckeye, May 20 (TC, MB, SG) and four were observed there May 28 (JBU). Borriwing Owls are still inhabiting the area on Lower Buckeye Rd. and 75th Ave. where some were seen May 26 (PM, TB), and along Baseline Rd. w. of 51st Ave. where two were seen June 16 (RDJ).

A female Broad-billed Hummingbird was seen building a nest at Boyce Thompson Arboretum May 6 (TC,NS); the species has been reported breeding there only infrequently. A Magnificent Hummingbird was observed farther north than usual along West Fork, Oak Creek Canyon May 19 (CL).

A male Bobolink was found at the golf course in Page May 23 (CL). A juvenile Red Crossbill, caught by a cat in n. Scottsdale May 8 (fide TC) provided the second nesting record for Maricopa County.

Highlights from s.e. Arizona: A Western Gull was discovered at the Green Valley Sewage Plant July 13 and remained until July 15 (BS et al.); there have been only three previous state records. Individual Elegant Terns were discovered at the Avra Valley Sewage Ponds July 18 at least to July 27 (RT et al.) and at White water Draw July 21 (KK et al.); there have been only three previous state records. A Yellow-throated Vireo was found in Miller Canyon June 24-30 (MS et al.). A yellow-green Vireo was found in Portal June 14 (DJ). The Carolina Wren is still present at Cook’s Lake; it was heard singing there Mar. 16 (TC et al.). A singing Wood Thrush was observed at Stewart Campground in the Chiricahuas May 26-June 1 (DJ, RT). A Tropical Parula was discovered in Miller Canyon June 22 and remained at least until July 14 (MS, JBo), providing only the second record for the site. A Crescent-chested Warbler was discovered near

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VISITORS AT THE BRINK
By Jim Burns

Particularly because our MAS chapter has such a long-standing and outstanding reputation for environmental activism, it is easy for us to become fixated on the negatives in the uphill battle to save the planet from ourselves. We are Sisyphus. The rock is daunting.

The lady on our cover was just one of the hordes of visitors at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon over the 4th of July holiday. As we maneuvered the parking lots on our first day, looking for condors or condor jams, we played the license plate game, missing only DE, HJ and ND from the fifty states. We missed the condors too, but at sundown I caught a rumor from a West Rim shuttle driver. All the Peregrine Fund trucks were out at The Abyss, the first overlook west of Mohave Point.

The Grand Canyon shuttles run early this time of year to accommodate hikers hoping to beat the summer heat. The next morning I was on the West Rim shuttle at 5:30 a.m. Just myself, my tripod and lens, and three backpackers headed for Hermits Rest trailhead. At 5:15 the sun climbed over the horizon and flooded the awe-striking vertical wall of The Abyss with golden light. There was not another human being within five miles. A quarter mile west and a quarter mile straight down along the ledges of the Toroweap, eleven California Condors were on that wall, waking, wingstretching, prening, looking from that distance like Turkey Vultures except for the large, easily readable wing and tail tags securing their radio transmitters.

I hurried along the rim trail seeking a vantage point close enough to the roost for decent camera looks, but by the time I had walked a mile without another sighting I realized the dropoff was too sheer to allow observation of the ledges from directly above. I walked right over the condors. I finally lip reached a point where I could look back to the area I had first seen them. They were gone! Twenty-five pound birds with ten foot wingspans do not fly away like the warblers and other small birds. Timing along the trail. I turned back, crossed the top of a promontory, created a small rise where the path again brought me within yards of the edge, and was brought to an incredulous halt in mid-stride.

Condors were boiling up out of the canyon all around me! It was 7:15. As the rock began reflecting the sun’s heat, they had caught the early thermals, launching upon their daily activities of searching for food and assuaging their innate curiosity about the tiny upright creatures milling about the rim. Some were still below me, circling up the wall. Some were already above me, soaring out of sight around the promontory. Two were drifting right toward me, rim level, too close to focus binoculars or lens. I dropped to my knees, heard them pass within yards, spoke aloud to them, sat for moments unmoving, out of body, out of time, some lone pilgrim to some premodern planet.

The lady on our cover was hatched in the LA zoo in May, 1996. Her father, Mandan, was the second condor ever hatched from captive bred parents, spring of 1989. Her mother, Tama, was captured as an adult in 1985, one of the last nine condors left in the wild. At sundown on our second day she was atop the Orphan Mine tower, between the Powell Memorial and Maricopa Point, with eleven of her kind, half of the wild condors gracing the wilderness of rock and canyon that is northern Coconino County. There are now 160 California Condors in the world, the twenty-four in Arizona two more than the 1982 world total of twenty-two. Releases at the Vermilion Cliff site in northern Arizona began in 1996. This March an egg was found in a Grand Canyon cave, the first egg laid in the wild since 1986.

If you consider yourself an environmentalist and you’ve grown weary pushing the rock, if you’re tired of cows grazing your national forests, or you can’t relate to blind salmoners or tiny flycatchers, go to the Canyon. Condors, even with their reputation as nature’s undertakers and some less than endearing traits such as urohidrosis (you don’t even want to know), are a part of cumulative count total in the U.S., in this the Big Sit’s 8th year, four of which came exclusively from Arizona.

Paul Cooper, Canyon towhee. Brewer’s sparrow, and Bronzed cowbird-the latter three contributed by the Astersiks.

Maricopa Audubon members will be participating in our 6th annual Big Sit at our Granite Reef Recreation Area site this coming October 14th, and again we’ll be raising money for Maricopa Audubon. We’re sorry, but the six regulars who person the Circle pretty well fill up the allocated space, what with our picnic table, barbecue grill, lounge chairs, traditional baklava and champagne coolers, but we welcome your visit and encouragement. We ordinarily record between 45 and 50 species. If you would like to make a per species seen pledge this year, call Herb Fibel at (480) 966-5246. Contributors (we’ll bill you after the event) of $1.00 or more per species, will have their name or their business name, whichever they prefer, listed in an upcoming issue of the Wren- dition. If you would like to establish a Big Sit! Circle of your own, please let me know and I’ll tell you how you can get started. The underlying purpose is to enjoy looking at birds while relaxing with friends. It’s really a lot of fun.

BIG SIT! 2000 WRAP UP REPORT FINALLY ARRIVES
By Herb Fibel

For the second consecutive year Arizona had two Big Sit circles-The Maricopa Audubon “Asterisks” at the Granite Reef Recreation Area, and Matt Brown’s “Squatters” at Sonotina Creek, near Patagonia, in southern Arizona. The two teams recorded a total of 84 species, down from 1999’s total of 97. Nevertheless, we ranked 5th in the continental U.S. for total number of species seen after California, which had 6 circles and 172 species, Connecticut, which had 14 circles and 139 species, Michigan, which had 4 circles and 105 species, and Texas, which had 3 circles and 91 species.

The annual October event is now international in scope (pardon the expression) with circles in England in and in The Netherlands. The circle with the highest count for the second straight year was Jim Royer’s Elfin Forest Circle in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo County, California with 122 species. (I’m going to try to obtain specific directions to this location, because anywhere where that many species can be seen while sitting in hula hoop, there must be a really hot birding spot.)

There were 66 circles altogether, and some 266 individual sitters. Twenty-two new species were added to the (continued on page 13)

VISITORS AT THE BRINK
(continued from page 13)

the 1982 world total of twenty-two. Releases at the Vermilion Cliff site in northern Arizona began in 1996. This March an egg was found in a Grand Canyon cave, the first egg laid in the wild since 1986.

If you consider yourself an environmentalist and you’ve grown weary pushing the rock, if you’re tired of cows grazing your national forests, or you can’t relate to blind salmoners or tiny flycatchers, go to the Canyon. Condors, even with their reputation as nature’s undertakers and some less than endearing traits such as urohidrosis (you don’t even want to know), are a part of telephoto lens and tripod, and grabbed a smaller, lighter zoom. Running the quarter mile to Maricopa Point in the waning light, I realized I had not taken a photograph of a perched bird without a tripod for eight years. In my hand was Canon’s new 100-400 image stabilized zoom. I ran out to the point and looked back. She was fifty yards behind me on the ridge, just below the rim, screened by vegetation.

I set down my pack, circled back, walked toward the edge. At five steps from eternity my knees started to go. I stopped, got down on my belly, and scrunchered forward, pushing Canon’s new
PUBLIC LANDS GRAZING RESOLUTION
(continued from page 6)

2. Inappropriate livestock grazing can be a damaging commercial extractive use of public lands. As such, grazing may not be an appropriate use for all areas defined by many land management agencies as “suitable.” Livestock grazing must be re-evaluated by the public land management agency at the strategic planning level, and defined according to what is both suitable and appropriate.

3. Public lands livestock grazing should be permitted at stocking rates, which are balanced with vegetation production, rangeland restoration, watershed and soils protection, wild ungulate forage needs, and other wildlife habitat values, including those where birds nest. Capacity determinations should include domestic and wild ungulates in a distribution scheme that accounts for populations of wild ungulates and their associated forage needs. Forage utilization standards that reflect this balance should be monitored regularly, including annual mid-point and end-of-season monitoring and trend monitoring over the life of an allotment management plan. Term grazing permits should be modified immediately upon the determination, through aggressive monitoring, that permitted numbers exceed capacity and utilization standards.

4. Economic subsidies to the livestock industry should be reformed to eliminate inappropriate use of public lands and resources.

5. Livestock grazing fees on public lands should be determined by market mechanisms and should cover the cost of administering and monitoring the livestock grazing program, taking into consideration the protection, management and restoration of the lands previously used by livestock.

6. Public land agencies must actively seek the widest possible citizen participation in all decisions regarding livestock grazing on public lands. To that end management agencies must make monitoring, analysis, planning and decision documents, including drafts, freely available by Internet access to the maximum extent feasible.

7. Livestock grazing on public lands must be administered under comprehensive plans that are designed at the ecosystem scale with primary consideration given to ecosystem integrity.

8. The National Wildlife Refuge System, the National Park System and certain National Monuments are not multiple use lands, but were established to protect specific historic and natural resources and values. Livestock grazing should be prohibited on such public lands unless there is solid scientific documentation that livestock grazing is beneficial or at least not detrimental to the legislated purpose of the Refuge, Park or Monument.

9. Predator control on public lands that attempts to reduce livestock depredation should utilize scientific based techniques and livestock management methods that reduce livestock vulnerability to predation. Predator control on public lands must integrate long-term predator population viability and management goals.

10. Public lands livestock grazing programs must re-evaluated by the public land management agency at the strategic planning level, and defined according to what is both suitable and appropriate.

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12. Economic subsidies to the livestock industry should be reformed to eliminate inappropriate use of public lands and resources.

13. Livestock grazing fees on public lands should be determined by market mechanisms and should cover the cost of administering and monitoring the livestock grazing program, taking into consideration the protection, management and restoration of the lands previously used by livestock.

14. In the autumn of 1979, already well into the autumn of their existence, I went on a MAS field trip to Mt Pinos in southern California to see the condors. We saw a huge bird soaring the mountaintops many miles away. It might have been a condor. It might have been a Golden Eagle. It might have been a mirage of wishful thinking. Bob Bradley hiked for an hour in the direction it had flown, but returned with no news. I knew at that moment I would probably never see a California Condor in the wild.

Shortly after sundown, the lady on our cover flew from the mine tower down toward Maricopa Point. After my morning experience I had decided to concentrate on flight shots, left behind my heavy fixed magnification. I also knew I would probably never again be this close to a California Condor in the wild.

As you can see, Canon’s new technology is wonderful. So are the technical advances which have allowed us this occasional environmental success story. Those same advances which have fueled the growth which has made those successes a necessity. The ironies and analogies are fascinating if not terrifying. Proponents of biological diversity plead for saving the DNA that could save our lives. I have seen the lady on the cover in her world. It has renewed my soul.