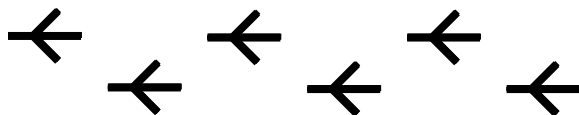
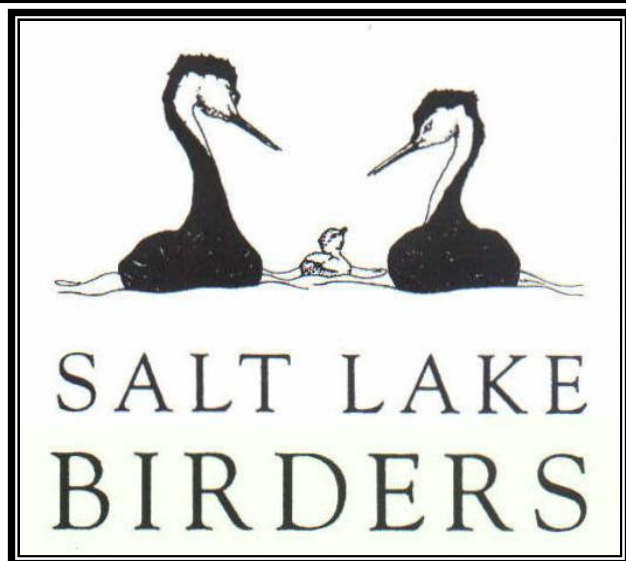


BIRD



TRACKS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SALT LAKE BIRDERS



October 2006

Volume 16, No. 10

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September Surprises — Report of the September Field Trip, Sept. 16, 2006

The Big Chill - But, Oh, What a Day! by Stephen Carlile

It didn't look good. Cold, rainy and more cold and rain in the forecast. On Thursday night I tried to call the Sommerfelds to make sure the Salt Lake Birder's long-anticipated trip to the west side of Willard Bay was still on. They were not home. So I set the alarm, hoped for the best, got up at 5:00 a.m., and arrived at 6:20 a.m. at the traditional Shopko parking lot. It was cold, raining, and nobody there.

Soon Cindy and Steve Sommerfeld arrived, then Merrill Webb, and a few minutes later David Hanscom. After a brief powwow the five of us (apparently the cold, wet weather scared a few off) decided to change our birding plans a little by first heading to the Antelope Island Causeway and Garr Ranch on Antelope Island (in hopes that the storm had forced a few migrants down), then onto our original destination, the west side of Willard Bay. And a great change it was. It was one of the best birding days I've had in a long time, 83 species (if you include our two audibles) for the group and 4 lifers for me!

As we got to the Antelope Island Causeway the rain stopped and it looked like the storm was breaking up from the west. But it was still breezy and cold. At the causeway we met up with Paul Higgins, whose great photographs are enjoyed by all. Some of the causeway highlights were a Bonaparte's Gull, Sanderlings, Pectoral Sandpipers, Baird's Sandpipers, Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes, Long-billed Dowitchers, and 100's of Western Sandpipers, Black-necked Stilts, and American Avocets. No Pacific Golden Plover, nuts! Also, we saw sad evidence of the recent Avian Botulism outbreak; 100's of dead and dying stilts, avocets, Northern Shovelers, and other unidentified species. Hopefully all the cold weather and rain will slow this down. Now, on to Garr Ranch.

Garr Ranch did not disappoint. One of the reasons we changed our original plans was the hope of seeing the Black-and-white Warbler that had been reported from the ranch. As soon as we got to the trees east of the springhouse, Merrill Webb spotted a Least Flycatcher, Lifer number 1, with a Hammond's right by it for a great comparison. Merrill then found a beautiful and cooperative male American Redstart, which we would see throughout our stay. It only got better from there. (Boy was I glad that Merrill and Steve were with us!) Three plus hours later we had repeatedly seen all six *Empidonax* flycatchers known to be seen in or move through Utah (Willow, Least, Hammond's, Gray, Dusky, and Cordilleran), with a Western Wood Pewee and Say's Phoebe thrown in. The great thing was the birds were visible and stayed "put" long enough to allow us to note the subtle identification differences so we could separate these frustrating "little gray birds." I learned a lot.

That would have been a great day if it ended there. But it didn't. Among a total of 34 species seen at the ranch, we saw two Long-eared Owls, Lifer number 2. I know most of you already have this one, but it was a new one for me and a great several minute look in full view and in broad daylight. Those "ears" are long. The Black-and-white Warbler was finally seen, to Merrill and my great excitement - Lifer number 3. I thought I had missed it. I was several yards away from the group when it was spotted. When I got there all I saw was a little bird flying away, a common but not a very enjoyable birder "feeling". Fortunately it came back and I got a great view. I guess another name for it could be the Black-and-white Creeper Warbler. A Great Horned Owl, Hermit Thrush, and an immature Mountain Bluebird were also seen. (Continued on page 3.)

SALT LAKE BIRDERS

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our purpose is to provide recreation and ongoing education for our members, to gather and contribute statistical data, and to emphasize conservation in all our activities.

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MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Salt Lake Birders is open to everyone. Dues are \$15 per year per household if you would like a hard copy of *Bird Tracks*, or \$10 if you opt to receive the newsletter via e-mail. Please make checks payable to Salt Lake Birders and mail to Lyn Christiansen at the P.O. box listed above.

To request a change of address or privacy, please contact Lyn Christiansen, Membership Director.



SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All articles must be received by the 20th of the month for the following month's issue, preferably by e-mail, or as an e-mail attachment, but by letter, hard copy, also.

Upcoming Field Trips



Salt Lake Birders

October 14, Saturday, we'll check out the rare or unusual birds that have been reported on the most recent Hot-lines of Utah BirdNet.

November 11, Saturday, will be the same type of activity.

These months are often good for rare migrants that we don't generally see at any other time. The Antelope Island Causeway very often attracts scoters, Long-tailed Ducks. The Salt Lake Marina featured a female Harlequin Duck a few years ago in early winter.

For both trips, meet at the Sugar House Shopko parking lot, southeast corner, at 7:00 a.m. Be prepared for some questionable weather, and bring water and snacks, as some of the chases could involve much of the day, until mid-afternoon. Call Bob MacDougall, 971-6077, the evening before to find out where we'll be going.

December— we will participate in the annual **Christmas Bird Count**, this year managed by Pomera Fronce. More details will be forthcoming in the next issues.

Along with GSLA, we encourage **carpooling** and **helping with gas costs** — we recommend a \$3 donation per person for trips under 50 miles, and \$5-7 for more than 50 miles roundtrip.

Guests are always welcome! Listen for us on FRS Channel 11-22.

The Wild Bird Center in Layton leads free nature/bird walks. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars.

October 7 USU Botanical Gardens

October 28 Nature Conservancy Great Salt Lake Shore-bird Preserve

Our Nature/Bird Walks begin winter hours starting in November, leaving the WBC at 10 a.m.

1860 N. 1000 West, Layton. For further information, contact Bill Fenimore, Wild Bird Center, 801-525-8400.

Some Great Salt Lake Audubon Field Trips

Oct. 4, Wed., Mountain Dell Recreation Area, Parley's Canyon, 8 a.m. at Sugar House Shopko. Leaders are Jack Clark, 255-7989, and Sylvia Gray, 532-3486.

Oct. 28, Saturday, Antelope Island Causeway and Garr Ranch, 7:15 at Shopko. We may stop at Kay's Creek in Kaysville for possible Wood Ducks. Bring snacks and water and warm clothes. Call Jim Bailey, 274-8034, for details or to let him know you will be attending.

(Continued from page 1)

After leaving the ranch we decided to try again for the Pacific Golden Plover and then head to Willard Bay. On the way we stopped just below the Visitor's Center to check for Chukars and Burrowing Owls. No Chukars or Burrowing Owls, but we did see an exciting new species, once it is properly verified, to add to our Utah list. The Rock Owl is not mentioned in any field guide or Utah list I have, but we are certain that is what we saw. When you visit Antelope Island check it out, because it appears to be a permanent resident.

We went slowly back along the causeway looking for the immature Sabine's Gull that had recently been reported and the Pacific Golden Plover. No Sabine's Gull on the causeway or plover at Mile Marker 5. Then Paul Higgins, who was traveling behind us, caught up with us and said we had passed the plover and it was only 100 yards behind us. Lifer number 4! Thanks Paul. Merrill and Paul left us at this point and we headed to the west side of Willard Bay and Willard Bay Campgrounds.

Road conditions prevented us from getting all the way to the west side of Willard Bay, so no hopes for Black Terns. However, we did add Snowy Egrets, Franklin Gulls, and a Double-crested Cormorant to our list. We also had a great Common/Forster's Tern identification opportunity. Two resting Common Terns in winter plumage, clearly showing their dark carpal bar, were within fifteen feet of two resting Forster's Terns in winter plumage. Willard Bay Campground was unusually quiet. We expected lots of migrants and only saw a few Yellow-rumped Warblers, though we did add Cedar Waxwings, a Belted Kingfisher, a Northern Rough-winged Swallow, and Violet-green Swallows to our list.

A great birding day with great company, it doesn't get any better than this. It also "goes to show you" that flexibility in dealing with a bad weather day can be rewarding. Following is the complete Bird List:

Total species - 83

Antelope Island Causeway and Garr Ranch - 69 species

Willard Bay - 14 additional species

Canada Goose, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Ring-necked Pheasant, Eared Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Virginia Rail (audible), Sandhill Crane (audible), Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, White-faced Ibis, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Pacific Golden Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Willet, Sanderling, Western Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Phalarope, Red-necked Phalarope, Franklin's Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Common Tern, Forster's Tern, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Long-eared Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Western Wood Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Hammond's Flycatcher, Gray Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Say's Phoebe, Loggerhead Shrike, Warbling Vireo, Black-billed Magpie, Common Raven, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Violet-green Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Rock Wren,

Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Mountain Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Sage Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Redstart, Black-and-white Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Western Tanager, Green-tailed Towhee, Spotted Towhee, Vesper sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Lazuli Bunting, Brewer's Blackbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, House Finch, House Sparrow.

TRIVIA TIME

Hummingbirds by Steve Carr

Many people have the mistaken idea that if they leave their feeders up, the poor, tiny creatures will stay around too long, till the weather freezes and they can't migrate. Not true. Hummingbirds, in fact, practically all migrating birds will migrate when their biorhythms tell them to, despite there being an abundance or paucity of food. So, keep filling the feeders with the 1:4 sugar: water solution that you've been using. Then, when you realize that you aren't seeing them anymore, after a week or two, then you can take down the feeders, clean them out good with soap and water and a bottle-brush or bottle-mop, rinse them out well, and put them away.

Then, next year, in late March or early April, when you hang them up, remember to not add the red food coloring that we used to use. There has been some concern that the molecules of red dye may injure the microscopic cells in their itty-bitsy livers and kidneys. It has been shown that most of the hummers that we have in Utah do like red, orange, or purple flowers. But they don't need red liquid. The bases of most feeders are already red, and when the hummer smells the nectar and sees the red base, that's all it needs.

I discovered that independently several years ago. I was camping with the scouts up in the mountains above Wanship. We had our American flag in its stand, and I had slept the night on a cot under the stars. In the morning I was awakened by a buzzing sound. I looked over to see a Broad-tailed Hummer probing the edge of the flag. He started at the bottom edge of the bottom red stripe and probed up till he came to the white stripe. He then jumped across the white stripe to the next red one, and probed up the edge of it. He did this with all seven red stripes, hopping across each of the six white ones. Unfortunately, he didn't find any nectar with his investigation, but it showed that he clearly preferred the red color.

Another interesting aspect about their behavior is that they often (possibly usually) return to the same yard each spring. I discovered this a few years ago in early April when I happened to look out to see a Black-chinned male hovering right at the spot where I hang my feeder, but I hadn't gotten around to putting it up yet. He obviously had remembered the location from the previous fall. How that speck of a brain could remember that after 1000 miles or so, not only to return to the same latitude but the same longitude, is something beyond me.

KRIS'S COLUMN

Canada Geese remain a magnificent sight

By Kris Purdy, October 5, 2005, Ogden *Standard-Examiner*, used by permission.

Long before the Canada Goose became a denizen of municipal parks, the goose was a wondrous bird.

Long before the Canada became a hissing menace on the back nine of golf courses or known for fouling city green belts, the goose was a bird of the cold north.

Migrating geese were harbingers of harvest time and of frosty dawns spent in duck blinds. That evocative honk drew the eyes skyward. Rippling skeins of geese caused watchers to take a deep breath. The Canada Goose was a bird that inspired.

I was transported back in time one morning at dawn. Gray light filled both the room and my foggy head. A cool breeze curled in the crack of the open window as I fought — struggled — to shake the grasp of sleep. And then a sound wafted through the window and haunted my ear.

It was the faraway honk of a Canada Goose . . . and another . . . and another. Three geese were angling along the Wasatch Front in the gray light of dawn. The early morning honking evoked a reverie of a different bird — the Canada Goose of my childhood.

When I was a child, the honking of many Canada Geese at dusk was enough to clear my family's dinner table. We answered the fall chorus with a clatter of dropping forks and the scraping of chairs. The seven of us poured out of the kitchen through the back door with a jostling urgency, for any hesitation might cause us to miss the geese. We scattered onto the darkened lawn and waited. All eyes focused just above a thicket a few hundred yards away as the honking grew louder. The geese skimmed the treetops, low as they descended toward the stubbled cornfields of a nearby farm. Their outstretched necks and flapping wings were silhouetted against the russet October twilight. The geese were oblivious to the silent, almost reverent watchers below.

The Canadas and their discordant honking promised wondrous things. They held a promise of plump orange jack-o'-lanterns glowing evil grimaces. They held a promise of fallen maple leaves made for kicking and jumping and throwing and raking. They held a promise of fragrant Thanksgiving sideboards laden with dressing,

gravy and all things cranberry. And they held a promise of snow.

All these promises came swirling back to me as I lay in bed in the Wasatch dawn and listened to the honking. I'd like to think the geese's migration instincts were still strong. I'd like to think their journey began from some remote northern province. I'd like to think their internal compasses were set to regions of peat moss bogs and tundra and icy lakes hidden within the boreal forest.

The geese finally passed over my house and were silenced by distance. I took a deep breath of that cool morning air curling into my window and was slowly transported back to the present, lingering with the memories.

For just a few moments, those Canadas really were wondrous birds of the cold north -- the Canada Geese of my childhood.

News Bits from Bear River Refuge

By Betsy Beneke, BRNWR

Administrative offices have officially moved into the new James V. Hansen Wildlife Education Center at Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

A new birding report number is (435) 734-6426. Besides hearing all the latest bird sightings, you can leave sightings of your own or a message without having to listen to the entire report. Just press the pound (#) key any time during the recording.

Bird Checklists: We have received a new supply of bird checklists for the Refuge. You can pick them up at the Center, or contact me and I'll be happy to send some to you – Office (435) 734-6436; or cell phone (435) 452-8468; or by e-mail: Betsy_Beneke@fws.gov.

Other Volunteer Opportunities, Environmental Education Committee

The new education center now has an auditorium, research lab and teaching lab indoors, as well as an amphitheater outside the building. We have organized a volunteer "Environmental Education Committee," and hope to expand its membership. Teaching kits are being developed which can be used by these committee members to give presentations to elementary students either in their classrooms or in the new education center teaching areas. Would you like to help out? Call Betsy,

COMEDY CORNER

Many of us buy our bird seed from Owen and Sheri Hogle's Wild Bird Center in Holladay. They also have a good supply of feeders, nesting boxes, books, DVD's, optics, hats, etc. Really, quite a handsome supply of wild bird things. But no wild birds. Usually. However, on two occasions they have had a couple of birds for sale.

One time, Kathy Anderson, who also lives in Holladay, dropped in for some proso millet seed, and heard some beautiful singing. Owen often has a bird song tape going, but this time he didn't. He had a real, wild African canary that he had inherited, but didn't really need, so had it for sale. When Kathy found he wanted only \$10 for it, she bought it on the spot.

When Owen brought the cage down to give her, she exclaimed, "Owen — it has only one leg!!"

To which Owen responded (and you can hear him even now), "Well, what do you want — a singer or a dancer?"

The other time was when Sue Saffle dropped in (Owen was out but Sheri was there). There was a colorful Java Sparrow (the quite striking black-and-white and bluish-gray bird with the huge orangish-pink bill) for sale.

Sue asked, "How much is that Java Sparrow in the cage there?"

Sheri replied, "Fifteen dollars, and that includes the cage."

Sue said, "Great. I'll take it. Will you send me the bill?"

To which Sheri answered, "Sorry, Sue, the bill comes with the bird."

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER'S PUZZLE PAGE

The birds' names that fit the following definitions?

Epitome of zaniness — Crazy as a Loon

Epitome of wisdom — Wise as an Owl

Epitome of elevation — Higher than a Kite

Epitome of slenderness — Thin as a Rail

Epitome of demise — Dead Duck. Dead as a Dodo

Epitome of harmlessness — Harmless as a Dove

Epitome of excellent vision — Eyes like an Eagle

Epitome of cowardice — Chicken

Epitome of denial — Ostrich, with its head in the sand

Epitome of nudity — Naked as a Jaybird

Epitome of dark hair — Raven

Epitome of inordinate excitement — Chicken, running around with its head cut off

Epitome of happiness — Bluebird or Lark

Epitome of smugness — Cat that ate the Canary

Epitome of recompense — Chickens (coming home to roost)



RECENT RARITY REPORTS

(Several of these birds are more unusual than rare.)

Broad-winged Hawk—9/24, 3 individuals seen by Jack Binch and Bob Huntington on Jupiter Peak on the Wasatch Front.

Short-billed Dowitcher — 9/17, Antelope Island Causeway, reported by Joel and Kathy Beyer.

Parasitic Jaeger — 9/16, Antelope Island Causeway, reported by Edson Leite.

Pacific Golden-Plover — 8/29, Antelope Island Causeway, seen by Brian and Jean Dixon and photographed by Keith Evans. Photographed by Paul Higgins on 9/4 and put on the Utah BirdNet, seen and documented by numerous birders, verified by California specialists and others, who are very familiar with this species. These sightings and photos are accepted as the first documented record of this species in Utah.

Northern Waterthrush and Cassin's Vireo — 8/26, Ogden, reported by Kris Purdy; on 8/24, Jordan River Parkway north of 5300 South, reported by Pomera Fronce.

Northern Parula — 8/20, River Lane in Springville, reported by Joel and Kathy Beyer; the same or another on 8/26, reported by Tim Avery.

White-rumped Sandpiper — 8/22, Decker Lake — reported by Steve and Cindy Sommerfeld, Pomera Fronce, and Anne Halley. Another, 9/4, Ant. Island Causeway, seen by Bob Huntingdon, Bob MacDougall, and Jack Binch.

Calliope Hummingbird —

8/22 — Ogden, reported by Kris Purdy;

8/22 — Provo, reported by Cheryl Peterson;

8/18 — Salt Lake, reported by Jack Binch;

8/7 — Provo by Eric Huish.

Common Poorwill — Alta, elevation 10,000 feet (very high for a poorwill), reported by Colby Neuman.

Leucistic White-faced Ibis — West Point, reported by Kris Purdy, photographed by Paul Higgins.

Hermit Warbler — 8/7, Pine Valley, Washington County, reported by Larry Tripp; also on 8/13, Pine Park, SW of Enterprise, reported by David Wheeler.

Ruddy Turnstone, Semi-palmated Sandpiper — 8/5, Antelope Island Causeway, reported by Cheryl Peterson.

American Bittern — 8/5, Bear River Refuge, reported by Cheryl Peterson; also on Provo Airport dike, 8/30 by Cheryl Peterson.

Whimbrel — 7/24, Antelope Island Causeway, reported by Kris Purdy and Paul Higgins.



Birding Blunders

Blunder #2: Trespassing

I've had neighborhood kids climb over my back fence, break shrubs and fencing, and have felt animosity toward them for doing so. Of course, kids will be kids, and when I was that age I did the same thing. The point is that a farmer, rancher, or other type of property owner probably has the same feelings that I had when the neighborhood kids climbed over my fence.

Birders looking through binoculars or a spotting scope at a tree near someone's house raise suspicions. Birders have been reported to the police for their suspicious behavior, and police have questioned birders about what they are doing.

Some landowners won't let birders onto their property because when the word gets out about a rare bird, a horde of people converge on the area—cars everywhere, cattle frightened, gates left open, crops trampled. I've seen that several excellent birding spots in Arizona have been closed largely due to enthusiastic birders. Some birders refuse to report a rare bird because they know crowds of chasers will arrive and sometimes present problems to nearby residents and landowners.

I admire Glenn Barlow for his going up to the owner's house where the Red-headed Woodpecker was found in Washington County. He politely knocked on the front door and received permission to walk through the pecan orchard to search for the woodpecker.

Blunder #3: Not keeping the field guide in the bag

I spend a great deal of my professional time with a book in hand. However, experts advise tucking the field guide(s) away in a bag or leave on a car seat.

When you see an unknown bird, take in as many clues as possible (try for three) before the bird flies. Then, pull out the field guide to identify the bird's name. Too often people take a few seconds looking at an unknown bird and then quickly look for it in a field guide. They should do the opposite—take in all you can while looking at the bird and after the bird flies or after a prolonged view, then pull out the field guide.

Blunder #4: Afraid of making a mistake

A previous Feather Talk discussed this problem which every birder experiences. Examples of hurried errors I've made include mistaking a decoy for a duck or turning a stump of a tree limb into a Barn Owl. Difficulties arise among certain bird families (e.g., sparrows and gulls) posing more identification problems than for other groups of birds. Another problem is that plumage in some families can vary according to age (e.g., gulls) or even time of the year. For most birders, the female poses identification difficulties. Again, expect to make a mistake—all birders have.

Blunder #5: Not using utahbirds.org to find birds

While a telephone hotline is good, the Internet is much better. [Utahbirds.org](http://utahbirds.org) provides good birding locations in all 29 Utah counties. Better still is the hotline reports of rare or accidental birds in the state. Most of the directions to the desired bird are exact and will place you exactly where the bird was sighted. Those belonging to Utah's 300 Club (unofficial name of those recording over 300 species in a single year) will all testify that they couldn't have surpassed 300 without utahbirds.org.

Blunder #6: Not birding the crummy places

My wife often accompanies me while I bird. She jokingly says that I have taken her to some really romantic places—sewage treatment ponds, landfills, barnyards, weedy fields, and swamps. H'mmmm...I wonder if I had done that during our courtship if she would have said 'yes' to my proposal for marriage. Regardless of the smells and the shabbiness, the places described can be conducive for good birding.

Blunder #7: Not going after a lifer

Birders often drive long distances to see a lifer or to add a bird to a county or state list. Sometimes with success and other times without. A lifer appearing on the hotline offers a difficult temptation with which to cope. Obviously, there are times when priorities must be made, and birding may not be at the top.

Blunder #8: Not reporting a rare bird

Sometimes a birder sees a rarity but doesn't report it because there is no photo taken for proof or a field guide shows it being far out of its range or the birder may not feel competent enough to make a positive identification. One of the reasons for reporting rare birds is to get a confirmation from others about it. Many of us are grateful to the person who reported the Purple Gallinule at the Jordanelle Wetlands in Wasatch County. I would never have thought that I would ever see this species in Utah.

Shorebird/Waterbird Facts

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge & Great Salt Lake, Utah

Prepared by Betsy Beneke, Bear River Outdoor Recreation
Planner, and
Bridget Olson, Refuge Biologist

The Great Salt Lake Basin – Bird Facts & Figures

There are an estimated 5 million waterbirds that nest and/or migrate through the Great Salt Lake region each year.

Phenomenal numbers of waterbirds visit the Great Salt Lake area each year, including 1.5 million Eared Grebes; 32,000 Cinnamon Teal; 250,000 American Avocets; 200,000 California Gulls. . . just to name a few.

70% of the world population of Wilson's Phalaropes depend on the Great Salt Lake and associated wetlands as a staging area during spring and fall migrations, leading to its designation as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network site.

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, as part of the Great Salt Lake, can host a spring peak population of 18,000 shorebirds (April-May); and a fall peak population of 69,000 shorebirds (July-September).

Designated as an Audubon Important Bird Area, Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge hosts approximately 18,000 breeding adult White-faced Ibis annually. This represents 12% of the world population of White-faced Ibis.

American Avocet – the Great Salt Lake hosts up to 14% of the continental breeding population and 55% of the continental migration population.

Cinnamon Teal – Northern Utah marshes host up to 60% of the continental breeding population.

Black-necked Stilt – the Great Salt Lake hosts 79% of the Intermountain West's migration population.

Snowy Plover – The Great Salt Lake area hosts greater than 50% of the continental breeding population.

Marbled Godwit – The Great Salt Lake area hosts up to 85% of the Intermountain West region's migrant population and up to 26% of the global population.

American White Pelican – The Great Salt Lake Colony is one of the three largest in North America. Populations can exceed 55,000 at times.

Red-necked Phalarope – The Great Salt Lake often hosts fall migration populations in excess of 100,000 birds,

Long-billed Dowitcher – The Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, as part of the Great Salt Lake, hosts 39% of the Intermountain West population during migration, which is equivalent to 3% of the continental population.

The Great Salt Lake Ecosystem hosts 40,000 to 60,000 Tundra Swans each fall and winter, with most birds occurring in the Bear River Refuge area.

Great Salt Lake & Associated Wetland Facts & Figures

The Great Salt Lake is one of a kind. Utah is the only state with nearly 4,500 square miles of salt flats and saline water. The current Great Salt Lake is the remnant of the 20,000 square mile Lake Bonneville of 18,000 years ago.

With no outlet, the only way for water to exit the Great Salt Lake Basin is through evaporation, leaving behind salt and other minerals.

With no fish in the lake proper, the millions of tons of protein produced each year in the form of invertebrates provide essential food for millions of birds.

The Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, as part of the Great Salt Lake, is designated as a Western Hemisphere Shorebirds Reserve Network site, recognized to be a globally important shorebird area.

All five bays of the Great Salt Lake, including Bear River, will soon be designated as Important Bird Areas of global importance by the National Audubon Society.

ARIZONA BIRDING

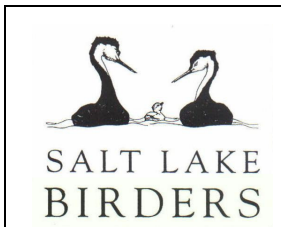
by Geoff Hardies

In early August I had the good fortune to attend the Southwest Wings Bird Festival in Bisbee, AZ. Located right above the Mexican border in the "island in the sky" area with mountains poking up above creating high desert, there is a terrific variety of bird species to be found. I recognized a number of the names of places I visited, but being primarily a local birder, I don't pay a lot of attention to places I don't think I will ever visit.

To name the highlight of the trip is hard, but I would say it was probably the Elegant Trogon. I found this on a day I didn't attend one of the organized trips and I just followed the directions in a book I had picked up on where to go. I spoke with a number of other people who did not find this bird, so I feel quite fortunate.

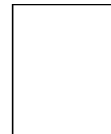
Of special treat were visits to a variety of places that have hoards of hummingbird feeders. The feeders are numbered so that when everyone is looking for that rarity, they can call out where they see it and everyone else has a chance of finding it. When there are series of 9 plus feeder stations and two feeders to a station, this gets challenging. All together I saw 12 species of hummingbirds.

Another thing I saw that really surprised me were people from Salt Lake. Southeastern Arizona is really not that far away and it is a pure delight in the different birds that one can see there. I highly recommend going.



Bird Tracks

Salt Lake Birders
PO Box 58343
Salt Lake City, UT 84158-0343
Website – www.utahbirds.org



FIRST CLASS MAIL



BIRD BYTES-

The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it. There be three things which are too wonderful for me, . . . The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea. . . .
– Proverbs 30:17-19

OCTOBER

PUZZLE PAGE

Match the verb on the left to its bird verb:

To complain –	Crane
To renege from an agreement –	Hawk
To fear exceedingly –	Chicken out
To get money fraudulently –	Jaywalk
To stretch one's neck exceedingly –	Quail
To sell –	Crow
To unhappily retract an opinion –	Rook
To be critical of and to talk sharply to –	Eat crow
To brag –	Duck
To avoid responsibility –	Snipe
To cross a street improperly –	Grouse



Match the word(s) on the left to its bird synonym:

Deglutition –	Coot
Nutty –	Lame Duck
One who heads south for the winter –	Solitaire
Old fuddy-duddy (like your editor) –	Blackbird
The last word –	Stork
A heavy, onerous burden –	Catbird seat
Derisive name for a person different than oneself —	Pigeon
An obstetrician's assistant –	Dipper
Something to bake in a pie –	Knot
Most advantageous and prominent position –	Turkey
An intimate visit –	Albatross around the neck
Card game –	Swan song
A dupe –	Snowbird
An official about to be turned out of office –	Chat
A soup ladle –	Swallow
A node in a rope –	Cuckoo

