

WINGTIPS

A Publication of the Prescott Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

April & May, 2016



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The mission of Prescott Audubon Society is to preserve and protect our environment for all who inhabit it. The Society pursues these goals through education, field work, social activities, and activism.

Membership dues are \$20.00 per address. Click [here](#) to go to the Join-Renew-Donate page of the PAS website. Otherwise, make check out to Prescott Audubon Society and mail to:

Membership Chairperson Prescott Audubon Society, PO Box 4156, Prescott, AZ, 86302.

Dues may be paid at Chapter meetings as well.

Meetings

All are welcome to attend Prescott Audubon Society monthly meetings that take place, unless otherwise stated, on the 4th Thursday of each month, September through May, at 7 p.m. at the Trinity Presbyterian Church, on the NW corner of Park Avenue & Copper Basin Rd. (630 Park Avenue), Prescott, Arizona. The November & December meetings are combined with the date to be announced. The Board of Directors meets on the 4th Thursday of each month at the same location, at 5 p.m. Audubon members are always welcome to attend Board meetings.

Wingtips

Wingtips is published five times a year. Prescott Audubon Society members receive *Wingtips* by e-mail. Subscriptions for print copies are \$10.00 for five issues. Click [here](#) to go to the Join-Renew-Donate page of the website to order a print subscription or send payment, name(s) and address to:

Wingtips Subscriptions
PO Box 4156
Prescott AZ 86302

Print subscriptions may also be paid for at Chapter meetings.

Submit items for publication in *Wingtips* any time; the deadline for the next issue is 5 p.m., Friday, 27th May, 2016. Please send submissions to David Moll at: wingtips@cableone.net.

Photographs submitted for publication should be full size, unedited, files.

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Prescott Audubon Society
Website
prescottaudubon.org

Field Trips

Please contact the trip leader to register for a particular trip. (This does not apply to bird walks at the Highlands Center for Natural History.) Weather, road or trail conditions may cause cancellations.

Field trip tips include:

- stay behind the leader
- wear neutral clothing
- bring water, food & sun screen
- avoid loud noises including slamming of car doors
- don't forget binoculars!

Participation in Prescott Audubon Society (PAS) field trips is voluntary; any injury or illness while on an outing is the responsibility of the participant. Food, drink and other items are not provided by PAS. Car pooling is done so fewer vehicles are driven. PAS assumes no liability for accidents, injuries, damage to vehicles or loss of property while on field trips. Suggested compensation for drivers of private vehicles is .20¢ per mile round trip, the total divided among the passengers. This compensation is meant to cover vehicle depreciation, routine maintenance, as well as gasoline.

Cover



Early spring migration is underway: Lucy's Warbler in Fremont Cottonwood. Both have become more rare with the disappearance of southwestern riparian habitat. Photograph by David Moll.

Activities & Announcements



A P R I L

Wednesday, 6th: Field Trip: Date Creek Ranch. Explore this working ranch — an award-winning model of progressive, holistic land management — set along the Sonoran-Mohave ecotone with the rehabilitated Date Creek running through its middle. Bird for a dynamic mix of resident and migratory bird species. Limit 12. Call Bonnie Pranter at (928) 445-7502 for more information and to register.

Saturday, 9th, 8 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk. For our monthly Highlands Center for Natural History bird walks, meet Nancy McMahon & Kathy Wingert in the Highlands Center parking lot, 1375 S Walker Rd., Prescott. Access is easy and all are welcome.

Thursday 21st through Sunday 24th: Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival. www.birdyverde.org

Sunday, 24th: Watson Woods IBA Survey. This is counting birds in the morning followed by debriefing and sustenance at Wildflower Bread Company. Contact Karen O'Neil at jandkoneil@gmail.com for information and to sign up.

Wednesday, 27th: Upper Verde River State Wildlife Area IBA Survey. This is counting birds in the morning followed by debriefing and lunch at Little Thumb Butte B & B. (\$10) Contact Karen O'Neil at jandkoneil@gmail.com for information and to sign up.

Thursday, 28th, 5 p.m.: Board of Directors Meeting; 7 p.m.: Chapter Meeting: “Landscaping for Backyard Habitat” with Steve Morgan. Trinity Presbyterian Church, on the NW corner of Park Avenue & Copper Basin Rd. (630 Park Avenue).

Friday 29th through Monday May 2nd: Prescott Audubon Birdathon Fundraiser. Form a team, join a team, sponsor a team. Donate per bird species or a flat donation (to avoid surprises). Call Russ at (928) 778-6502 and he'll get you going in the direction you want.

M A Y

Thursday, 5th: Field Trip: Birding the Verde Valley. Early May is a great time to explore the Verde Valley, and we're thinking of a long-overlooked destination for PAS—the Jail Trail in Old Town Cottonwood. If we hear of other options, we reserve the right to change plans a bit, so stay tuned. We'll plan on an early start and a return after lunch, so plan to pack your lunch and drinks. For registration and details, contact Cathy LeVine at celex47-glider@usa.net.

Wednesday, 11th: Upper Verde River State Wildlife Area IBA Survey. This is counting birds in the morning followed by debriefing and lunch at Little Thumb Butte B & B. (\$10). Contact Karen O'Neil at jandkoneil@gmail.com for information and to sign up.

Saturday, 14th, 8 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk. For our monthly Highlands Center for Natural History bird walks, meet Nancy McMahon & Kathy Wingert in the Highlands Center parking lot, 1375 S Walker Rd., Prescott. Access is easy and all are welcome.

Sunday, 15th: Watson Woods IBA Survey. This is counting birds in the morning followed by debriefing and sustenance at Wildflower Bread Company. Contact Karen O'Neil at jandkoneil@gmail.com for information and to sign up.

Tuesday, 24th, 7:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.: Birding Kendall Camp and the High Country. Late May gets warm in most places around here, but it often remains cool enough in the mountains to find some good morning birding. We will visit the Kendall Camp area in search of warblers, tanagers and flycatchers who have arrived to nest in the Bradshaw Mountains. For details call trip leader Kathy Wingert at 928-445-5062.

Thursday, 26th, 5 p.m.: Board of Directors Meeting; 7 p.m.: Chapter Meeting: “Beautiful Birds of Belize” with Eric Moore. Trinity Presbyterian Church, on the NW corner of Park Avenue & Copper Basin Rd. (630 Park Avenue). 🐦

PAS Thanks to Contributing Members and Other Supporters!

Prescott Audubon is fortunate to have members and others who not only give generously of their time, but who also contribute financial support to our programs. Thank you so much for supporting our chapter's efforts to educate our communities about birding and conservation, and to help them enjoy our great outdoors!

We are pleased to recognize the following contributors:

Birdathon: Dr. and Mrs. William Hohman, Kathy Malm

General Fund: Rebecca Davis, Ann Kirkwood, Bonnie Pranter.

Thank you to all who contributed in memory of Georgette Sullivan, who

passed away recently. Georgette and Bob Sullivan were very active in Prescott Audubon, and our members have many good memories of times shared with them.

A big hand to our talented Field Trip leaders! They take us to great locations, and in addition to leading the trips, they spend time before-hand to scout (it's a tough job, but somebody has to do it!). We have seen increased participation in the monthly Highlands Center Bird walks, led by Kathy Wingert, Nancy McMahon, Connie Johnson and Sue Arnold; the high count to date is 27 participants! And there are often waiting lists for our other field trips, led by Sue Drown, Norma Jenkins,

Bonnie Pranter, Rich Schooler, Kathy Wingert, and others—so keep an eye on the website and sign up early.

Many thanks to our Tri-City Prep Regional Science Fair judges: Harry & Debbie Allen, Fred Arndt, and Jerry & Corinne Shaw; also to Russ Chappell for all of his assistance in coordinating the awards.

Lastly, we appreciate our supporters who have signed up for the Fry's Community Rewards Program linking their Fry's VIP cards to PAS: we received \$45 from this program for the last quarter. Details about how to link your card can be found near the end of this *Wingtips*. 🐦

Northern Regional Science/Engineering Fair hosted by Tri-City College Prep High School

On February 26, Prescott Audubon judges viewed and evaluated the many projects presented by kindergartners through sixth-graders from schools across northern Arizona. They selected the following students/projects to receive awards from Prescott Audubon:

- Suli Sherman: Kindergarten; Skyview School, Prescott; “Earthworm Habitat”
- Adey Pearson: Third Grade; Eva Marshall Elementary School, Flagstaff; “How Will Habitat Disturbance Affect Swainson’s Hawks?”
- Madelyn Brandon: Fourth Grade; Lincoln Elementary School, Prescott; “Water Filtration”

Winners received a framed personalized Certificate of Excellence, an Audubon Field Guide to the Southwest, a PAS patch, and a check for \$25.00. We are hoping that at least two of the students will accept our invitation to bring their projects to our April 28 meeting—so be sure to take a look at what our young scientists have created! 🐦

Save the Dates: Highlands Nature Festival

Labor Day weekend, Friday, September 2nd – Sunday, September 4th, 2016

Friday Keynote Address: Yavapai College Susan B Hall Community Room

Inspirational Field Trips - Saturday and Sunday mornings

Saturday Open House 1-5pm Highlands Center

[Website](#)



Prescott Audubon Society's Annual Fundraising Birdathon

As the major fundraising event for our chapter's education efforts, four separate teams will participate in Prescott Audubon Society's annual birdathon from Friday, April 29 through Monday, May 2. Each team must stay within its county, and must complete its count within 24 hours. Funds from pledges received will support our \$1,000.00 high school scholarship for students in the quad city area and a second \$1,000.00 scholarship for students in Mojave County (for students with career interests in environmental, ecological and conservation careers), will pay for awards at the Northern Arizona Regional Science/Engineering Fair held at Tri-city College Prep School here in Prescott (\$25.00/grade-level winner and an Audubon Field Guide), and will help with our sponsorship of the Prescott Junior Audubon Nature Club at Abia Judd Elementary School. In addition, monies will pay for Audubon Adventures, National Audubon's elementary school curriculum for local classrooms. We hope you will be generous with your financial sponsorship of the birdathon teams so these efforts can be adequately funded.

The birdathon works like any other "...athon", where teams seek donations either per bird species seen, or as a pre-determined amount. Contributors could expect a given team to find as many as 130 species. You may contribute at the general meeting in April, or at a later meeting, may be asked for a contribution by an eager participant, or you may mail your check to Prescott Audubon Society, P. O. Box 4156, Prescott, Az. 86302. You may also make a pledge of a certain amount per

bird, for a certain team, or just for the birdathon effort by emailing treasurer@prescottaudubon.org. Remember, all contributions are tax-deductible.

The Monday Lady Birders will form one team, Russell Duerksen will lead the team of longest-standing (The original "Sullivan" team), and DeeDee DeLorenzo will lead Mojave County's Chick-A-DeeDees team along the Colorado River. Also, our newest team consists of participants in the Abia Judd Junior Audubon Nature Club lead by their teacher, Sue Lord, and Nancy Silacci. In addition, each team may have a few "backyard birders" adding to their count. Some participants will be in the field from 4:30 a.m. until 8:30 p.m.

For some with good memories, this event is known as the Sullivan Count in honor of the person who began it. While participants have a friendly competition among teams, the primary purpose is that of funding the environmental scholarships and environmental education efforts of our chapter.

If you have any questions, you may contact Doug Iverson at (928) 899-5609, or at altondouglasiverson@gmail.com, DeeDee DeLorenzo at (928) 758-2707 or deedeedelorenzo@yahoo.com, or any one of the Monday Lady Birders.

Thanks for caring,

Doug Iverson, Audubon Secretary 🐢

Volunteer for Prescott Audubon on April 23rd!

PAS will have a team for Prescott Creeks' Granite Creek Cleanup from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM on April 23. All you need is \$10.00 to join the team (all funds collected will be donated to Prescott Creeks) and time. We will meet at Granite Creek Park, pick up our trash bags, t-shirts and snacks, and then head out to beautify our assigned location.

The Granite Creek Cleanup has become a rite of spring for the Prescott community, offering families, groups, adults, kids, and the kid in all of us to get out and get a bit dirty cleaning up our creeks. Share the day and celebrate our creeks and surrounding wild places with our Prescott Audubon team!



If you are interested, please contact Laura Rhoden, treasurer@prescottaudubon.org. 🐢

Mohave County Bird Sightings, Late January - March 2016

Compiled by DeeDee DeLorenzo

All sightings in this report are tentative as they have not been confirmed except by the individual reporting them to DeeDee DeLorenzo. Report Mohave County sightings to DeeDee DeLorenzo at (928) 758-2707 or deeedelorenzo@yahoo.com.

Abbreviations: Arizona Bird Committee (ABC); Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas (Atlas); Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge (BWRNWR); Havasu National Wildlife Refuge (HNWR); Bullhead City (BHC); Lake Havasu City (LHC); Lake Havasu (L. Havasu); State Park (SP); Lake Mohave (L. Mohave); Lower Colorado River Valley (LCRV).

Scanning L. Mohave from a vantage point near Davis Dam, 26 January, Troy Corman found the four species of continuing loons: **three Common, two Pacific, 1 Red-throated, and 1 Yellow-billed**. Melanie Herring visited the area 29 January and found the Yellow-billed Loon near Davis Dam and **a second Yellow-billed Loon** in a cove at Katherine Landing. The Red-throated Loon was last reported near Davis Dam 14 February by Brian Johnson, and the last documented sighting of a Yellow-billed Loon on L. Mohave was made 20 February by Terry Blows.

Troy Corman found a **Red-necked Grebe** and four **Horned Grebes** on Lake Mohave just above Davis Dam the afternoon of 27 January. The Red-necked Grebe has been a casual late fall through winter visitor, though recently it has been reported annually in the LCRV primarily on L. Havasu. The Horned Grebe is a rare, but regular transient from early November to mid-April. It is usually seen on large bodies of water and deep river channels.

At Davis Camp County Park, 27 January, Troy Corman spotted a casual winter visitor, a first winter **Thayer's Gull** roosting with a large flock of Ring-billed Gulls and a second-winter **Herring Gull**.

Melanie Herring reported **Red-breasted and Common Mergansers** above Davis Dam on Lake Mohave and a **Hooded Merganser** in the waters at Katherine Landing 29 January. The sighting of three species of mergansers in the same relatively small area made this report exceptional. Although both the Common and Hooded are seen on a regular basis between November and March, the Red-breasted does not usually appear in the LCRV until mid-February.

A rare, irregular winter visitor to areas along the Colorado River, a **Lark Bunting** was discovered 1 February off Silver Creek Rd, BHC, by Brian Johnson.

The young **Crested Caracara** that was first reported during the Havasu CBC, 29 December, was spotted three times in Pintail Slough, HNWR, 8-11 February, by refuge staff and volunteers. One sighting witnessed the Crested Caracara wrestling a captured duck from a Northern Harrier that had previously taken it from a Peregrine Falcon.

Two young **Trumpeter Swans** were discovered and photographed by Jan Parrott in a pond in Pintail Slough, Havasu NWR, 13 February. With few records of Trumpeters along the LCRV, this sighting is exceptional.

A rare winter visitor from November through late March, an **Eastern Phoebe** was discovered by Rob Klotz in the Pintail Slough/North Dike area, HNWR, 19 February. All records of this species in the LCRV are of lone individuals.

On 25 February, Rob Klotz counted 270 **American White Pelicans** near Pintail Slough/North Dike, HNWR. In recent years flocks of 300-500 have been seen during both fall and spring migration along the Colorado River.

An early **Rufous Hummingbird** appeared in Golden Valley 29 February according to Michelle Brock. This hummer is an uncommon spring migrant from early March through mid-April. The LCRV is the eastern boundary of this species' spring migration route that is primarily along the Pacific Coast.

A First of Season (FOS) **Lucy's Warbler** was found at Site 4, L. Havasu SP. 29 February by Joe Veverka. The first Lucy's Warblers usually arrive in Arizona in early March, so this individual was a tad early.

Jan Richmond and DeeDee DeLorenzo had a FOS **White-winged Dove** at Old South Dike, 9 March. This dove does not usually reach the western parts of the state until the beginning of April.

Since **Bonaparte's Gulls** are regular in the LCRV only in November, the report by Lauren Harter of 12 Bonaparte's Gulls at the north end viewpoint of L. Havasu, 12 March, is noteworthy.

A **Brown Pelican** at Windsor Beach, L. Havasu SP, 12 March was reported by Lauren Harter.

A FOS **Bell's Vireo** was spotted by Jan Richmond in the

Kohen/Mesquite area of the BWRNWR 15 March.

David Vander Pluym reported four **Elf Owls** in Fox Wash, BWRNWR, 15 March. The LCRV is the western edge of its range. This owl is found in areas such as in the BWRNWR where saguaros can be found as well as in cottonwood-willow habitats. They arrive in the lower desert areas in late February with breeding pairs forming by late March.

A bird of desert washes and sparse riparian woodland, a **Bendire's Thrasher** was seen near Safari Dr., Golden Valley by Patrick Brock, 18 March. This species is the most widespread of all thrashers throughout Arizona.

A **Gray Flycatcher** was spotted at Cool Springs, Oatman Hwy in Golden Shores by Michelle Brock, 19 March. This *Empidonax* is an uncommon transient from late March to early May. 🐦



The Havasu Crested Caracara. Photograph by John West.

Field Trip Recap: Bumble Bee Revisited

Since our early-spring 2015 outing to Bumble Bee got rave reviews, we repeated it again this year. This time, we found the weather, the company, and the birds much the same—wonderful! And we learned some unexpected lessons about migration, too. Other than one very flat tire, we logged a perfect day, with a total of 52 species. Those of us who keep lists added some lifers and first-of-year birds.

We recommend this tour to all our PAS members. You start the day in early-morning light at the Sunset Point rest stop on I-17, where you can overlook your destination, Bumble Bee Ranch. Look for Rock Wren and Rufous-crowned Sparrows on the rest stop hillside. Then, you drive the dirt road towards the Ranch, stopping along the way here and there, with birdsong and flowers to savor. Look for Costa's Hummers defending their territories, and check all flickers for the yellow-winged Gilded Flickers, whose favorite real estate is saguaros. The wash below a small bridge can be very birdy. Despite much evidence there of wheeled weekend recreation, we found all was peaceful enough

on a Wednesday. You can picnic and bird the Bumble Bee Ranch (fee area), where they care for cattle and visitors both. We resolved to visit again when we could arrive in time for the early-morning bird activity. But, plenty was happening even at high noon, with Vermillion Flycatchers displaying, Harris's Hawks soaring, and impressive numbers of migrating Lincoln's Sparrows everywhere!

We ended the day by returning northbound towards Mayer/Spring Valley, happy with all our interesting sights and sounds. But, more birding surprises unfolded, including a flock of about 25 migrating Sage Thrashers, whisper-singing on their way north, and a lovely Cinnamon Teal resting at a stock pond, the only water for miles.

All of our PAS field trip participants vowed to return with visiting friends or family, as this loop trip represents Arizona as well as any we've tried. We hope you give it a go, too. 🐦



Clockwise from top left: Variable Checkerspot, Vermilion Flycatcher, male, Anna's Hummingbird, female on nest, and Gray Flycatcher. Photographs by David Moll.

IBA Report - Spring 2016

The PAS Important Bird Area (IBA) surveys for spring in Yavapai County will "rev" up starting in late April and go to mid-May. We will do two surveys each in both Watson Woods and in the Upper Verde Wildlife Management Area in Paulden. We will also survey again during fall migration. Additionally, we hope to do some Yellow-billed Cuckoo surveys (the western US population is threatened) this summer on the Upper Verde. Three people have volunteered to be trained (there is a specific protocol to follow) as team leaders, and the training is in late June in Phoenix. We have two trained leaders now, and three more will be a real boost to our capacity to conduct these surveys.

If you are interested in joining a survey please contact Karen O'Neil at 928-778-3018 or jandkoneil@gmail.com. Being a highly skilled birder is less important (the current volunteers can help those who feel less confident with their skills) than the ability to walk across uneven ground along streams (Granite Creek in Watson Woods and the Verde River in Paulden). Additionally, the Verde River surveys require the ability to hike into and out of the Verde River Canyon. It is not a long hike, but it is steep in places. While this report is brief, by the time the next *Wingtips* is published, we anticipate a full report on sightings during surveys in at least April, and possibly May, from both survey areas.

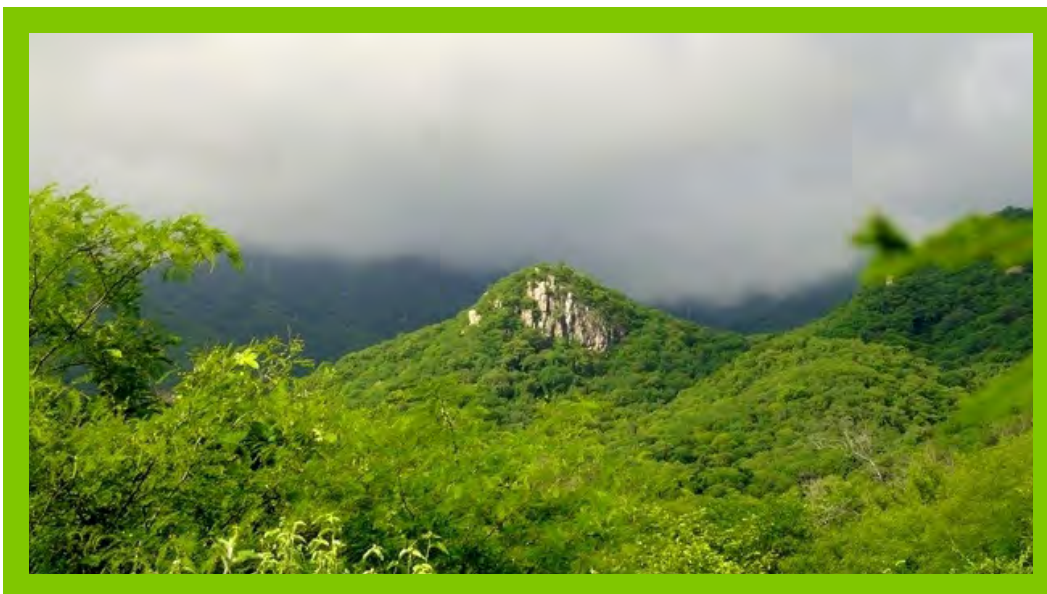
Spring has sprung! It's time to go birding in earnest! 🐦

If you shop with Amazon, go through the AmazonSmile link - another easy way to donate to Prescott Audubon

When you shop at AmazonSmile, you can have a portion of each eligible Amazon purchase donated to our chapter. Simply go to www.smile.amazon.com and designate Prescott Audubon Society as your charity of choice. For eligible purchases at AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to PAS. Same Amazon prices, same shopping experience, but you can support PAS with each purchase when you shop through the AmazonSmile site!



If you have any questions, please contact Laura Rhoden at treasurer@prescottaudubon.org or (928) 776-4514.



Parque La Colorada will be a 280 acre park and greenspace for the community of Alamos, Mexico and its visitors. Check the [website](#) to see how you can help.



Above: from eggs to nestlings, Eurasian Collared-Doves in Paulden by Kati Anderson.

Left: a Ferruginous Hawk photographed by Maxine Tinney on the Jay's Bird Barn Chino Valley hawk field trip led by Ryan Crouse.



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An Easy Way to Donate: Link your Fry's V.I.P. Card to Prescott Audubon

If you have a Fry's V.I.P. card, you can link it to Prescott Audubon: every time you shop at Fry's using your V.I.P. Card, Fry's will donate to us. It costs you nothing except a few minutes to set up the link.

Please note that to link your Fry's V.I.P. card to PAS, you must have an email address and have created an online account for your V.I.P. card using that email address as your Fry's login ID. You will create a unique password for your Fry's account, separate from your email password.

To link your V.I.P. card to Prescott Audubon:

1. Either start at the main Fry's screen (www.frysfood.com) and click on "Community" in the top menu, or go directly to www.FrysCommunityRewards.com.
2. Click on "Sign In" (upper right corner) and enter your email and Fry's password.
3. Click on "My Account" (upper right corner).
4. Scroll down to the Community Rewards section, and click on "Edit".
5. In the Search Box on the "Find your Organization" page, type either "Prescott Audubon" or our number "37295", and click "Search".
6. In the results area, click on the circle to the left of Prescott Audubon Society, and then click "Enroll".
7. When you return to the "Account Summary" screen, you can review your choice; and then Sign out (upper right corner).



That should do it!

If you have any questions, or have difficulty setting up the link, please contact Laura Rhoden at treasurer@prescottaudubon.org or (928) 776-4514.