

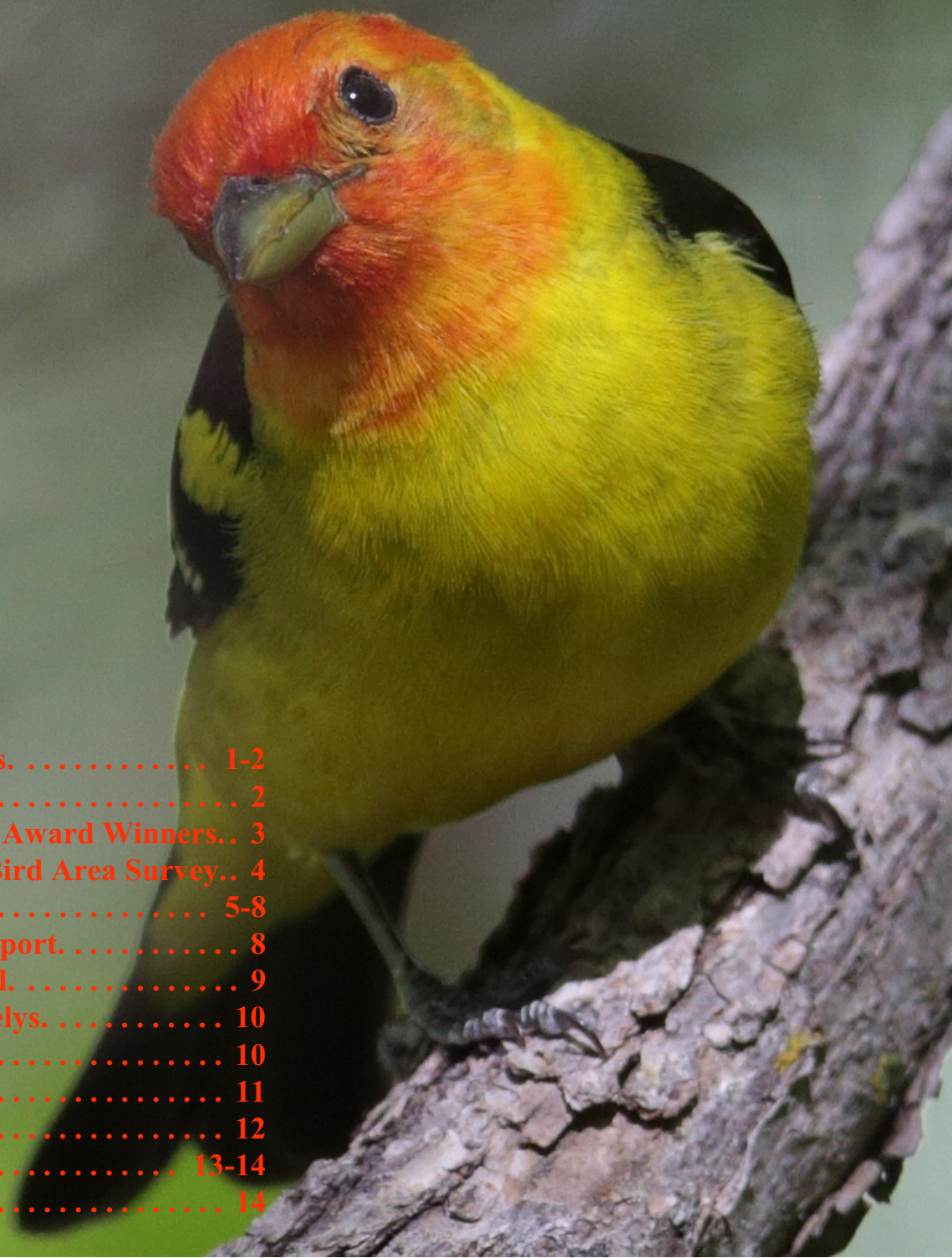
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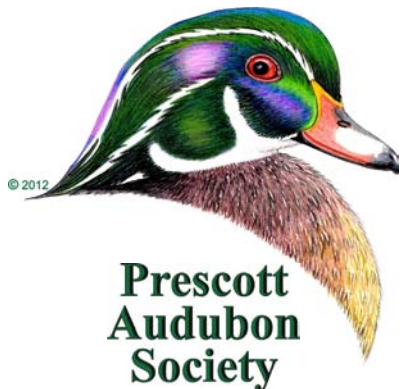
A Publication of the Prescott Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

June, July & August, 2018

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Prescott Audubon Society

*Celebrating Birds
and the
World We Share*

Prescott Audubon Society encourages understanding and protection of our natural environment through education, conservation, and community service.

Membership & Dues

You have three options to become a Prescott Audubon Society (PAS) member. You can join PAS for \$20 per household per year, renewable every year on September 1. You can join National Audubon and, through their system, you will be enrolled in PAS if your zip code is in our chapter region. Or you can do both! To join PAS, click [here](#) to go the join/renew/donate page of our website. If you prefer, you can mail your check to the PAS P.O. Box, listed below.

You can also join/renew at our *Window on Nature* presentations.

Window on Nature Programs

All are welcome to attend our monthly PAS *Window on Nature* programs that take place on the 4th Thursday of each month, September through May, at 7 p.m. at the Trinity Presbyterian Church, 630 Park Ave., on the corner of Park Ave. and

Copper Basin Rd. Our November and December programs are combined into an annual holiday meal and gathering. See [our website](#) or [enroll on our email list](#) for notification of exact dates.

Business Meetings

The PAS Board of Directors meets just before the *Window on Nature* presentations, at the same location. PAS members are always welcome to attend these business meetings.

Wingtips

We publish our e-newsletter, *Wingtips*, five times a year. We can also mail you a printed copy for an additional \$10 for the five issues. Select this option on our [Join/renew/donate page](#) on our website or when you join PAS by mail or at a *Window on Nature* program.

Submit items for publication in *Wingtips* any time. The deadline for the next issue is 5 p.m., Friday, 7th September, 2018. Please send submissions to David Moll at: wingtips@cablone.net.

We prefer that photos submitted for publication be uncropped. PAS does not compensate for published items. Authors and photographers retain all copyrights. Opinions expressed by authors in *Wingtips* do not necessarily reflect the policy of the National Audubon Society or Prescott Audubon Society.

Field Trips

We list our birding field trips on our website and in a monthly email alert. In general, our trips are free and open to the public. Each participant should bring his or her own water, snacks, sun protection, and the like.

Participants should expect costs for caprioling, meals, and for accommodations on overnight trips. Most field trips require that you sign up with the trip leader in advance. The exception is our monthly bird walk at the Highlands Center for Natural History; everyone is welcome. If you need to borrow a pair of binoculars, please contact the trip leader.

Participation is voluntary, and any injury or illness while on an outing is the responsibility of the participant. PAS assumes no liability for accidents, injuries, damage to vehicles, or loss of property while on field trips.

We try to carpool as much as possible, using private vehicles. We suggest that passengers cover the entire cost of gas, currently estimated at \$0.10 per mile and perhaps a bit more if the vehicle gets dirty or dusty. Remember that the driver is covering wear and tear, vehicle cleaning, tire wear, etc.—all of which is more than \$0.10 per mile.

Cover

Western Tanager male, 2018-05-24, Bradshaw Mountains by David Moll.



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Prescott, AZ 86302
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Activities & Announcements



J U N E

Saturday, 9th, 7:30 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk. For our monthly Highlands Center for Natural History bird walk, meet Nancy McMahon & Kathy Wingert in the Highlands Center parking lot, 1375 S Walker Rd., Prescott. Access is easy and all are welcome.

Wednesday, 27th: Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo Survey on the Upper Verde River, 1 of 4. The Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo has been federally listed as threatened and we want to do our part to monitor this rare species in its rare habitat. This will be a full morning survey and involves some medium-difficulty riverside hiking followed by debriefing and lunch at Little Thumb Butte B&B (\$15). For more information and to register contact Dave Frechette at celex47-kestrel@usa.net.

J U L Y

Thursday, 5th: Field Trip: Mingus Mountain. At this time each year, we head uphill to escape the heat and to search for Mingus Mt. specialties, including Broad-tailed Hummingbirds, Hermit Thrush, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and high country warblers such as Red-faced, Grace's, and, if we're lucky, Olive. Contact Rich Schooler at 928-379-5953 or d8@prescottaudubon.org to register.

Wednesday, 11th: Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo Survey on the Upper Verde River, 2 of 4. The Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo has been federally listed as threatened and we want to do our part to monitor this rare species in its rare habitat. This will be a full morning survey and involves some medium-difficulty riverside hiking followed by debriefing and lunch at Little Thumb Butte B&B (\$15). For more information and to register contact Dave Frechette at celex47-kestrel@usa.net

Saturday, 14th, 7:30 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk. For our monthly Highlands Center for Natural

History bird walk, meet Nancy McMahon & Kathy Wingert in the Highlands Center parking lot, 1375 S Walker Rd., Prescott. Access is easy and all are welcome.

Wednesday, 25th: Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo Survey on the Upper Verde River, 3 of 4. The Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo has been federally listed as threatened and we want to do our part to monitor this rare species in its rare habitat. This will be a full morning survey and involves some medium-difficulty riverside hiking followed by debriefing and lunch at Little Thumb Butte B&B (\$15). For more information and to register contact Dave Frechette at celex47-kestrel@usa.net

A U G U S T

Wednesday, 8th: Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo Survey on the Upper Verde River, 4 of 4. The Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo has been federally listed as threatened and we want to do our part to monitor this rare species in its rare habitat. This will be a full morning survey and involves some medium-difficulty riverside hiking followed by debriefing and lunch at Little Thumb Butte B&B (\$15). For more information and to register contact Dave Frechette at celex47-kestrel@usa.net

Wednesday, 8th through Sunday 12th: Southeast Arizona Birding Festival. Web page.

Saturday, 11th, 7:30 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk. For our monthly Highlands Center for Natural History bird walk, meet Nancy McMahon & Kathy Wingert in the Highlands Center parking lot, 1375 S Walker Rd., Prescott. Access is easy and all are welcome.

S E P T E M B E R

Saturday, 8th, 8 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk. For our monthly Highlands Center for Natural History bird walk, meet Nancy McMahon & Kathy Wingert in

the Highlands Center parking lot, 1375 S Walker Rd., Prescott. Access is easy and all are welcome.

Sunday, 9th: Watson Woods IBA Survey. This is counting birds in the morning, followed by optional debriefing and sustenance at Wildflower Bread Company. For information and to sign up, contact Karen O'Neil at jandkoneil@gmail.com.

Wednesday, 19th: 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 (\$15). Surveying involves some medium-difficulty riverside hiking. Contact Dave Frechette at celex47-kestrel@usa.net for details.

Thursday, 27th, 5 p.m.: Board of Directors Meeting; 7 p.m.: Window on Nature program.

Sunday, 30th: Watson Woods IBA Survey. This is counting birds in the morning, followed by optional debriefing and sustenance at Wildflower Bread Company. For information and to sign up, contact Karen O'Neil at jandkoneil@gmail.com. 🐦

Thanks Birdathon Sponsors and other Contributing Members and Supporters!

Congratulations to our six Birdathon teams and their wonderful sponsors! Elsewhere in this issue, you will read about the teams' Birdathon adventures and the species they identified; the preliminary fund-raising results are provided here.

The PAS Birdathon is our major fund-raiser for our educational programs. This year, we donated twenty-two National Audubon *Audubon Adventures* science education kits to elementary school classrooms, awarded a \$1000 scholarship to a young man attending Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, made five Tri-City Prep Science Fair awards, sponsored a scholarship to help a young birder attend the Arizona Field Ornithologists annual meeting, and supported the Prescott Junior Audubon Nature Club at Abia Judd. All donations received by our fiscal year end, June 30, 2018, will count for this year's Birdathon, so if you haven't already done so, you still have time to contribute: please support an individual team or just the event itself by sending your donation to PAS Birdathon, PO Box 4156, Prescott, AZ 86302, or [via PayPal on our website](#).

The teams have raised \$3,668 to date, exceeding even last year's record total of \$3,303! With a last-minute flurry of donations, the Prescott Junior Audubon Nature Club has raised the most funds, bumping the Monday Lady Birders to second place. They are followed by the

Mohave County Chick-a-Deedees, Carl Tomoff's team, and the Sullivan Count team. Final results will be announced in the next *Wingtips*.

All of the teams and the rest of Prescott Audubon thank the sponsors for their generous support and for encouraging our next generation of naturalists!

Birdathon supporters—so far—are: Julie Appletree, Keith Archibald, Sharon Arnold, Sue Arnold, Julie Bare, Linda Britt, Sue Burk, Carol Clayton, DeeDee DeLorenzo, Edie Dillon, Laurel Freeman, Natalie Houghton, Norma Jenkins, Toni Kaus & Mary Trevor, Sue Lord, Kathy Malm, Susanna McDougal, Nancy McMahan, the Miller family, Karen O'Neil, Marge Penton, Bonnie Pranter, Leslie Quinechet, Laura Rhoden, Suzette Russi, Marilyn Saxerud, Nancy Silacci, Linda Smith, Pat Sperry, Barb Stewart, Maxine Tinney, John West, Barbara Williams, Kathy Wingert, Beverly Womack, and Anonymous. Any outstanding pledges and additional donations will be acknowledged when the final results are reported in the next issue.

Thanks, too, to these contributors:

Conservation: Elizabeth Sexton

General Fund: Kathleen & Philip Wright, Anonymous.



2018 Northern Arizona Regional Science/Engineering Fair
Tri-City College Prep High School
March 30, 2018

By Russ Chappell

The 2018 Northern Arizona Science/Engineering Fair, hosted by Tri-city College Prep High School, featured over 100 entries each year, and provided an excellent opportunity for our Chapter to fulfill one of its most sacred goals: support education. It is always a special experience to recognize and encourage outstanding students who are focused on environmental, ecological, conservation and biological issues!

Judging was from 8:00 a.m. to noon with award presentations at 5:00 p.m. With a gym full of projects, judging is a challenge, and our dedicated judges deserve special recognition for their dedication. A special thanks to Harry Allen (Science Fair Chair), Debbie Allen,

Jerry Shaw, Cory Shaw and Fred Arndt, who take this responsibility extremely seriously.

Winners are awarded \$25.00, a copy of *National Audubon Society Field Guide to the Southwestern States*, a personalized, framed certificate and a written invitation for the students, their family, teachers and friends to share their winning projects and interact with PAS attendees during our April 2018 meeting.

Normally, PAS recognizes the four (4) best projects fitting our criteria... some years we get four, sometimes fewer. This year the judges recommended five (5) deserving winners, and the PAS Board honored their decision.

Four of the five winning projects were on display at the April 19th meeting:

1) "Are Microplastics Harmful to Sea Creatures?" by Lanzo Bergamini, second grade, Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School, Clarkdale, AZ

2) "Colored Light and Plants" by Anthony Santos, second grade, Mingus Springs Charter School, Chino Valley, AZ

3) "Detecting Water Properties and organisms in Flagstaff's City Water Supply" by Kaleo Pearson, fourth grade, Marshall Magnet Elementary School, Flagstaff, AZ



At the April Chapter meeting, Prescott Audubon Society director Rich Schooler presented award-winners and families, left to right: the Bergaminis, the Santos', the Pearsons, and the Mischler-Bjorklunds. Unable to attend was Analee Tingerthal and family.

4) "Verde river Water Quality Testing" by Elin Mischler-Bjorklund, fifth grade, Skyview School, Inc.

5) Analee Tingerthal, third grade, Marshall Magnet Elementary School, Flagstaff, AZ, was unable to attend, however she was recognized for her project "Super Soil."

Also in attendance was special guest Director Scott McCreery, from Skyview School here in Prescott.

The Northern Arizona Science/Engineering Fair is a positive and inspiring event, and the hospitality provided by Dr. Halverson, Tri-city's Director, and her talented student body, is first class!

If you want to experience joy, excitement, happiness and hope for the future of our species, checkout this event next year! You will be rewarded with many unique, interesting ideas and projects, and who knows, you might consider becoming a Science Fair judge! 🍷

Watson Woods Important Bird Area Update

By Karen O'Neil

Two surveys were held in Watson Woods this Spring, a week further apart than has been the pattern. While this schedule was established to avoid other things like the Birdathon and Mother's Day, it proved to offer some interesting findings—even in spite of the evidence everywhere of a very dry year to date.

The first survey on April 29, 2018, showed that while the creek was mostly dry, there were four "puddles" containing water—and lots of bird activity in the Granite Creek North transect. Also, the Wildlife Pond had water. Additionally, there was water in the creek at the southernmost third of the Granite Creek South transect at the south end of Watson Woods. Since the Wildlife Pond had water, there were three species of ducks present: Wood Duck, Gadwall, and Mallard. Also, oddly enough, an adult female Cooper's Hawk was perched on the ground on the east side of the pond right on the edge of the water such that it appeared that her talons were in the water. On the South transect, a Red-tailed Hawk was observed on a nest and one Common Black Hawk was observed. There was no evidence that there was any activity at the nest a pair of Black Hawks have used since 2010.

Migration was definitely in evidence. Several *Empidonax* flycatchers were observed as well as Cassin's/Plumbeous, Hutton's and Warbling Vireos; House Wren; Orange-crowned, MacGillivray's, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Gray, Townsend's,

and Wilson's Warblers; tons of Chipping Sparrows (at least 300), Brewer's, White-crowned, and Lincoln's Sparrows. A few Cassin's Finches were still hanging around.

Species who typically breed in our riparian areas were present. These included Lucy's and Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, Summer Tanagers and Bullock's Orioles.

The second survey was held on May 20, 2018. Granite Creek was totally dry except for one "puddle" on the South transect. The Wildlife Pond was dry. Nevertheless, a Cooper's Hawk was on a nest near the Wildlife Pond bed. The Red-tailed Hawk nest on the South transect was well hidden in cottonwood leaves, but as best as observers could tell no one was in the nest. Only one Common Black Hawk was heard, and the nest is beginning to fall apart. It is a disappointment that this species is not breeding in Watson Woods this year, and we can only speculate about the reasons why. The most obvious reason is probably related to a lack of food due to drought. It is also possible that one of the pair is no longer alive (for whatever reasons), and the other bird is searching for a new mate. While three American Kestrels were found on the South transect, all the kestrel nest boxes have been recently checked and none have any evidence of even an attempt to nest. However, a Barn Owl was found roosting under the Prescott Parkway Bridge.

Interestingly, no Cliff Swallows are nesting under that same bridge this year. (If they were, they would have already started nesting on the April survey.) There are plenty of Violet-green Swallows in Watson Woods. One hundred plus were observed. There are lots of Western Wood-Pewees in Watson Woods, and a very unusual finding for the Woods was two Woodhouse's Scrub-jays. Other uncommon findings were two male Indigo Buntings, and one hybrid Lazuli×Indigo Bunting which was singing loudly. The observing team noted that his song was not that of an Indigo Bunting. Finally, a few Phainopeplas have shown up.

Some migrants were still hanging out with perhaps Wilson's Warbler taking the prize for numbers—almost 20 of them! Other migrants included Warbling Vireo; Orange-crowned, Townsend's, MacGillivray's, and Yellow-rumped Warblers; a few Chipping Sparrows; and a Black-headed Grosbeak. And, our other riparian breeding species that is expected is now present: Blue Grosbeak.

Many thanks to the following volunteers for participating in these surveys. They are, Norma Jenkins, Mary Trevor, Kathy Wingert, Sue Arnold, Steve and Sue Burk, Dave Frechette, Sue Drown, Nancy Jo Silacci, Laura Rhoden, Richard Balland, Karen O'Neil, and Oren Thomas, Field Projects Manager for Prescott Creeks. The Prescott Audubon IBA Program would not exist without its dedicated volunteers! 🐦

May Birdathon Summary

Prescott Audubon had six teams in the field in early May, including two elementary school teams from the Prescott Junior Audubon Nature Club, all in support of the chapter's many educational efforts. Our thanks to the leaders and participants on each team. Abia Judd Elementary School teams' experiences are the subject of a separate article in this issue of *Wingtips*. Following are summaries of the adult teams' experiences:

Board member, DeeDee DeLorenzo, lead the birdathon team along the Colorado River on the Global Big Day of Birding. (Our chapter also covers Mojave County.) The Chick-a-deedees came up with a new strategy: divide and conquer. DeeDee counted species in her yard, a known bastion of bird diversity due to the many native plants, while Jan and Marge roamed Mojave County. This team always challenges the Monday Women Birders in fund-raising efforts. The following includes excerpts from a narrative provided by DeeDee and Jan Perrot, better told by paraphrasing their own entries:

While preparing to leave we were pleased to hear the clucking sounds of a Lesser Nighthawk, and Jan heard a Western Kingbird prior to leaving her yard. We headed to the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge North Dike area, and were rewarded by hearing the Least Bittern, Sora and Common Gallinule. Three groups of White-faced Ibis flew over and a lone Bufflehead swam by, a straggler from those headed north.

We next went to Pintail Slough, home of many hungry mosquitoes. Warblers and a few summer residents were present, as well as Blue Grosbeak.

We then headed for Catfish Paradise, also part of Havasu National Wildlife Refuge. A Great Blue Heron attempted to pose as a tree stump, and a few coots and grebes were viewed. We did see Forster's Tern and Cinnamon Teal. The surrounding trees yielded several species of warblers and a Lazuli Bunting!

Next, we traveled through Oatman, over Sitgreaves Pass, through Golden Valley, and on to Kingman. We spotted several burros and had a nice view of a Black-throated Sparrow as well as a Cactus Wren sitting majestically on a rock pedestal and calling loudly.

We eventually arrived at Hualapai Mountain Park where we initially saw Scrub Jay, then an abundance of species including Plumbeous Vireo, Spotted Towhee, Acorn Woodpecker, Pygmy and White-breasted Nuthatches, Western Bluebirds, House Wren, and MacGillivray's and Black-throated Gray Warbler. Lower elevations of Hualapai Mountain Park were closed due to fire danger, so we birded at higher elevations on the way to the Hualapai Mountain Resort.

At about 3:00 in the afternoon, we traveled DW Ranch Road to I-40 where we finally got the elusive Greater Roadrunner.

Returning to Davis Camp County Park, a spot alive with people, we spotted a Northern Mockingbird imitating a Killdeer, as well as Lazuli Bunting, Vermillion Flycatcher, several warbler species, an actual Killdeer, and starlings. Throughout the day we had seen or heard Gambel's Quail, but our late afternoon treat was seeing three adults and some minuscule chicks dashing under an oleander bush.

We then checked the river near Davis Dam as well as Lake Mojave, where we tallied Cliff Swallow (under the Laughlin bridge), Red-breasted Merganser, Redhead, Bufflehead, Spotted Sandpiper, Western Grebe, Ruddy Duck and Ring-necked Duck.

With the temperature now at 102 degrees, we headed home when we spotted Yellow-headed Blackbirds on a small pond, our last species of the day. Our tally was 82 species.

DeeDee found twenty-eight yard birds including Black-headed Grosbeak, Say's Phoebe, Hooded Oriole, Lesser Goldfinch, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Warbling Vireo, bringing the list to 88 species. It was not our highest Big Day count, but any day in the field is better than a day spent inside.

This second report was submitted by Russell Duerksen who has led the Sullivan team for many years. Due to "life happening" to a member of Russell's team, they were only in the field for eleven hours (only!). The three members tallied 110 species, a new "low" for this team. This was probably due to being in the Bradshaws

for only one mid-day hour, which yielded fewer than 25% of species usually found there.

Highlights included a beautiful Prairie Falcon making lunch out of a Eurasian Collared Dove in Russell's yard, a vast movement of Wilson's Warblers, and a Green-tailed Towhee, new to the Sullivan team.

Carl Tomoff traveled within 10 miles of downtown Prescott to demonstrate the rich diversity of bird life supported by the remarkable variety of habitats found in this local area. He tallied 136 species. See his article below.

Last of all, nine Monday Lady Birders met in Chino Valley to bird along Perkinsville Road in support of our annual fund-raising Birdathon. As usual, they began at Safeway and traveled east to the Verde River bridge. By the time they reached the large pull-out at the far end of the residential area, they had tallied twelve species, and some had already seen a Swainson's Hawk. They then progressed slowly along Perkinsville Road, stopping for views of the (location previously known) Great Horned Owl, and were rewarded with a sighting of mama and a still quite downy owlet, not yet ready for flight.

The team's species-for-the-day was, perhaps, two vocalizing Gray Vireos! Enjoyable sightings included Scott's Oriole, Zone-tailed Hawk, Black-throated Sparrow and Lazuli Bunting, among many others.

Upon arrival at the river, highlights included Belted Kingfisher, Western Tanager, Yellow-breasted Chat, Common Yellowthroat, Summer Tanager, Vermillion Flycatcher, and five species of warblers.

In addition, they saw Pronghorn, a Hoary Bat, and Clark's Spiny Lizard while enjoying lunch along the river under the large cottonwood trees. The team tallied 69 species for the day.

And, finally, as stated by Nancy McMahon, "If you have yet to contribute, send your donation to Prescott Audubon Society, c/o Treasurer, P.O. Box 4156, Prescott, Az. 86302. Be sure to put 'Birdathon Ladies Team' on the memo line of your check."

We hope all Audubon members and supporters will be equally enthusiastic about supporting Prescott Audubon's many educational endeavors.

Thanks for Caring, Doug Iverson, Birdathon Chair person. 🍷

Global Bird Day and Birdathon

By Carl Tomoff

I conducted my Birdathon on May 5, Global Bird Day. I traveled within ten miles of downtown Prescott to demonstrate the rich diversity of bird life supported by the remarkable variety of habitats found in this local area.

I began at 0545 in the grassland and ponds near the airport where I found a Loggerhead Shrike, Horned Larks, Northern Mockingbirds, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, and six sparrow species. A Gray Vireo singing in a ribbon of oaks was a surprise. At Antelope Hills golf course, a Wilson's Snipe flushed

from a pond and Tree, N. Rough-winged, Bank, Cliff, and Barn Swallows swirled over the fairways. I tallied 55 species in nearly two hours of effort.

With four stops in Granite Dells woodlands from 0730 to 0915, I found 60 species, notably: Wood Ducks, a Zone-tailed Hawk, a pair of Peregrine Falcons, eight species of flycatchers, including a vocal Brown-crested Flycatcher typical of lower elevations, Canyon Wren, eight kinds of warblers, a singing Yellow-breasted Chat, towhees, grosbeaks, buntings, finches, and eleven species of sparrows.

At Watson Lake three very small gosling Canada Geese followed their parents. Water birds had decreased in numbers. On Sundog Water Treatment ponds, I found the only Ring-necked Ducks and Lesser Scaup of the day. Cliff Swallows were constructing nests on nearby buildings.

At Willow Lake from 0945 to 1200, I observed 55 species on the water, along the shores, in willow-cottonwood woodland, and in the air. I visited the Great Blue Heron and Double-crested Cormorant rookery at the west end of the lake where raucous nestlings squawked

in the canopy and a Great Horned Owl peered at me. Two Greater White-fronted Geese that wintered in the area, three White-faced Ibis, a Snowy and two Great Egrets, one Neotropic Cormorant, a Wilson's Phalarope, and two Least Sandpipers foraged near the lake.

At Granite Basin from 1220 to 1435, a Swainson's Thrush in fine plumage moved from the east willow grove to near the shore. This infrequently seen thrush typically passes through during May. Other highlights were Olive-sided

Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Black-chinned Sparrow, and Scott's Oriole. By the time I left, I had recorded 64 species there.

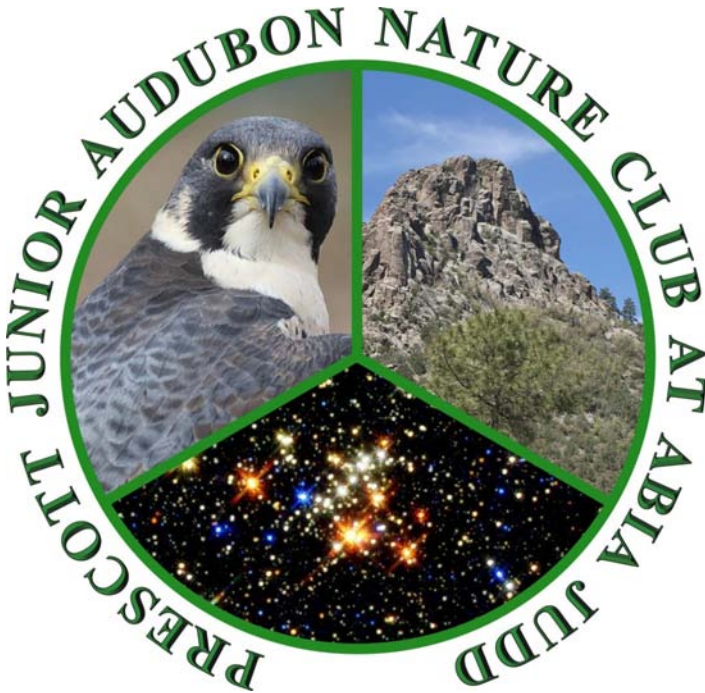
At Groom Creek Schoolhouse along Senator Highway south of town, the day's only Cooper's Hawk scolded during a brief stop in pine-oak forest. Continuing through pine-oak forest to Hassayampa Creek and Kendall Camp road, I added Greater Pewee, Grace's Warbler, and Painted Redstart.

Along upper Hassayampa Creek

with its aspens, maples, and mixed conifer forest, I saw 17 species including Red-breasted Nuthatches, Hermit Thrushes, Red-faced Warblers, and Pine Siskins.

At 1710, I drove back through town and revisited Watson Lake and Granite Dells before returning to Willow Lake and watching sunset. I ended my adventure at 2100 in the forest after listening unsuccessfully for owls and nightjars along Aspen Creek. Overall, I observed 136 species during a wonderful spring day! 🐦

Prescott Junior Audubon Nature Club Birdathon Adventures



The 2018 Prescott Junior Audubon Nature Club Birdathon blew into Prescott with gusts of wind and hot, muggy weather. The Wednesday club is comprised of fifteen young naturalists who were focused, engaged and very respectful of the bird populations in the Secret Garden at Abia Judd Elementary School, and at the Community Nature Center, on Wednesday, May 9, 2018.

The previous Wednesday, Mr. Wilson, a Great Horned Owl from the Heritage Park Zoological Sanctuary

visited the P.J.A.N.C, and they decided, as a group, that they would emulate Mr. Wilson's keen sense of hearing and sight to become the best birders they could be!

The young naturalists were equipped with their bins, Sibley Guides of the Birds of the Arizona Central Highlands, their plush songbirds, snacks and water bottles. This was a handful for 5-11-year-olds, but they managed well. Despite the searing heat and moderate wind, they were delighted to hear or observe 13 different bird species. This annual opportunity allowed the young naturalists to spread their wings and hone their knowledge of the birds in the Prescott area, and they grew confidence in their ability to blossom into young ornithologists and birders.

On a hot, windy Thursday afternoon at the Community Nature Center, nine intrepid Prescott Junior Audubon Nature Club-Grand Canyon kids began their Birdathon, binoculars and field guides in hand. At first, it seemed like their only sightings would be the plush birds some of them carried: Red-tailed Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Canada Goose and California Condor. They heard, but never saw, a Spotted Towhee, and a very distant Gambel's Quail. Then magic! A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher gleaned in an oak, moving out to the edges, to give them good views of its long tail and active feeding behavior. All were very focused on watching this busy little bird. They were surprised that they couldn't find a single raven or Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, but they had a good

time in spite of the difficult conditions and added several species to the Wednesday group's list.

The two Junior Audubon groups were led by their teacher, Sue Lord, on Wednesday, and by Sue Lord and Prescott Audubon treasurer and intrepid birder, Laura Rhoden, on Thursday. Their combined efforts yielded the 19 species listed below:

House Finch	Chipping Sparrow
Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay	Ash-throated Flycatcher
Mourning Dove	Spotted Towhee
Gambel's Quail	Western Wood-Pewee
Common Raven	Bewick's Wren
Anna's Hummingbird	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Turkey Vulture	Juniper Titmouse
Acorn Woodpecker	MacGillivray's Warbler
Lesser Goldfinch	Western Bluebird
Wilson's Warbler	

A fun two days was enjoyed by all, thanks to the many Prescott Audubon Society members and friends, and to Jay's Bird Barn, who have supported the chapter's education programs. May's birdathon is the Chapter's major fund-raiser, and we hope you will offer support by sending a contribution to Prescott Audubon Society, C/O Treasurer, P.O. Box 4156, Prescott, Az. 86302, or by contributing at a meeting. Thanks for caring. 🐦

Kendall Camp Bird Walk

By Corinne Shaw

It was a beautiful warm morning, perfect for a bird walk. The birds we saw were: Acorn Woodpeckers, Bushtits, Plumbeous Vireos—including on a nest, Pine Siskin, Western Bluebirds, a Black-headed Grosbeak, Lesser Goldfinches, Spotted Towhees, Western Wood-Pewee, an American Robin, a Northern Flicker, many Violet-Green Swallows, Dark-eyed Juncos, a very busy Hummingbird, a Bridled Titmouse, a Mountain Chickadee, a Painted Redstart, an Hepatic Tanager, a Western Tanager and a very pretty Red-faced Warbler (a life bird for us). There was water running in the stream and a substantial pool along the walk. If you haven't been to Kendall Camp recently, it's a very nice location for birds. 🐦



Plumbeous Vireo on nest by Corinne Shaw.

Prescott Audubon at the Highlands Center Migratory Bird Fest



Prescott Audubon Society table at the Migratory Bird Fest, Highlands Center for Natural History, staffed by Kathy Malm (pictured), Laura Rhoden, Doug Iverson, Rich & Carol Schooler.

The Highlands Center for Natural History hosted the Migratory Bird Fest in their Discovery Gardens on May 12, 2018, to celebrate the 25th World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD). Attendance was around 75 adults and children.

WMBD brings attention to one of the most important and spectacular events in the Americas: bird migration. Educational events all over focus on topics including the habitats birds need to survive, birds and the ecosystem services they provide, the impacts of climate change on birds, and the laws, acts, and conventions that protect birds, such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Convention on Biodiversity.

At the Highlands Center, Prescott Audubon staffed a booth in addition to leading our monthly bird walk. Our display board with photos of local birds was quite popular with youngsters and generated a number of bird ID questions from adults.

Other exhibits included Extreme Eggs, Bird Sketching with Diane Iverson, Raven Games: Are You As Smart As a Raven?, Bird Masks & Wingspan, and the Migratory Journey Loop with these stations: Gather Food, Get to Safety, Find Shelter, and Make a Home.

There was also a bird photo scavenger hunt; we overheard one little girl who was very excited that she had found all 28 birds!

The Fest opened with a presentation by Noel Fletcher, Wildlife Biologist for the Prescott National Forest. She described how the audience could help the birds during migration: making windows more visible to prevent window strikes; keeping feeders clean to prevent the spread of disease; landscaping with native plants to provide habitat; recycling plastics to keep them from harming birds.

Later, Tice Supplee, Director of Bird Conservation for Arizona Audubon, also gave a presentation. She described short and long-distance migrations; night-time migration; the routes taken by various species; the importance of riparian habitat as way stations; the effect of urban lighting, wind combines, and oil sumps; and the toll taken by feral domestic cats.

We thank the Highlands Center for this opportunity to help educate many children and adults about our birds, their habitat, and related Prescott Audubon activities! 🐦

A Big Thank You to the Neelys

By Bonnie Pranter

Sylvia Neely was a member of Prescott Audubon's Education Committee when it initiated a program around 1980 that provided bird seed and feeders to local care facilities. In 1984 she became committee chair and served in that capacity for a lengthy tenure. Sylvia felt this was an important outreach project that should continue.

Twice a year Sylvia called each center to arrange for delivery of seed, then she or another member picked up the seed bags and made the trip to each location. For most of those years it was Bill Neely who provided that part of the process.

Sylvia also distributed to the facility directors or activity leaders flyers that gave them some direction for keeping a healthy feeding station.

The project has relied in part on the outreach budget but in more recent years on donations made by members and friends at monthly meetings where attendees can drop bills and change into a displayed bird feeder. Donations of seed have also been made by two local businesses,



Sylvia & Bill Neely.

Olsen's Grain and Jay's Bird Barn. The project has come to be known as Feed the Feeder.

Included among the facilities served through the years have been the Pioneer Home, the VA Center, Sterling Ranch (Skull Valley), adult day care centers, and nursing care homes in Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Chino Valley. Currently there are twelve facilities in all. Our chapter has enjoyed numerous notes of thanks and appreciation from the personnel and the residents of those facilities.

Sylvia has been involved with this project for over 35 years and has always felt it to be a most worthwhile program. We can imagine the numbers of care center residents through all that time who have been enriched by the birds due to her commitment. She states that for her, it has been fun, satisfying, and rewarding.

As the coordination of this program transitions to Delores and Art Manburg, Prescott Audubon wishes to thank Sylvia and Bill for their unwavering devotion to sharing the birds in this way with so many. 🐦

The Best Kept Secret

By Delores Manburg

Sylvia and Bill Neely have managed to keep a secret all these years: it's that the very best volunteer job in PAS is distributing birdseed to the nursing homes! When Art and I were asked if we would be interested in taking over for the Neely's, we agreed gladly but not knowing what a surprise it would be.

From the first call we made, the maintenance person we delivered the seed to said the residents cheered and gave him a thumbs up when they saw him filling the bird feeders. Our next delivery happened around lunch time. We saw the feeders outside a big picture window. When we carried the seed inside, one of the ladies sitting at the dinning room table having lunch rose to point excitedly outside the window. She told us that's where they watch the birds every day, having lunch with

the birds. Another delivery was directly to a resident who handles the bird feeding at the Pioneer Home. She delighted in showing us where to bring the seed. She proudly showed us the lovely area the feeders are in and told us about all the birds and other wildlife that visit there—right in the middle of the city!

We could give so many others stories of the happiness and fun this PAS program gives to those in our area who are at a stage when many other of life's pleasures are gone. We thank the Neely's—as did many of the people we delivered to—for passing to us this "secret" of a job which gives as much happiness to the givers as to the receivers. So we pass this on to you: please help by Feeding the Feeder. We thank you and many others do also. 🐦

Mexican Spotted Owl Survey

By Richard Balland

This was my second Mexican Spotted Owl survey. Leif Baierl, Prescott National Forest field technician, picked me up at 3 p.m. It took about an hour to get to where we parked and began the survey. We hiked for about an hour and Leif made a comment saying we might see an Mexican Spotted Owl (MSO) in a few hundred meters or so. Shortly after making that statement he looked up and a MSO male was perched in a tree in full view within 50 feet of us. I immediately took a photo thinking the owl might fly away at any moment; time was 5:12 pm.

We had been prepared to hike a lot longer if needed, but that was no longer necessary. The owl did not seem to be at all concerned about our presence. We decided to do some mousing (we had 4 mice with us). Leif put a mouse on a log and it was obvious the owl could see it, but it was in no hurry to get it. We watched the MSO for about an hour. The mouse got off the log several times and Leif kept retrieving it and putting it back on the log. Eventually the mouse made its escape and could not be found. Leif put out another mouse and about an hour after we had put out the first mouse, the MSO swept down silently, picked up the second mouse, and flew off. We tried to track the owl's flight and we located it in a tree with the mouse in its talons. We heard it call to its mate, but it just sat there with the mouse. It was in no hurry to eat it or to fly away. We watched it at its 2nd location for about half-an-hour.

It was about 6:30 p.m. and it was going to get dark soon so I decided to go back to the trail and search the trees to see if I could find a nest. I got back to the trail but did not find a nest.

Leif rejoined me and we went back to where the owl took the 2nd mouse. At that location we saw the female

fly low through the trees towards the male's 2nd perch. Shortly after that, the male returned to its original perch near the trail. Leif put out a 3rd mouse. While I was messing with the camera for a few seconds the owl swooped down got the mouse and returned to its perch. It was so fast and silent that I did not see it get the mouse or fly to its perch.

We watched it eat the 3rd mouse. It did not fly away so eventually Leif put out the 4th mouse. It was taken shortly thereafter. Not sure if it ate that one or if it took it to its mate.

At that point it was almost dark. Then we saw the MSO swoop down into the stream bed and pick up the first mouse that had initially made an escape. Not sure who ate that one either.

Around 7:30 p.m., it was getting dark so we put on our headlamps and started back to our vehicle. A short time later with still a hint of daylight we saw the owl perched within 15 feet of us, obviously hoping for a 5th mouse. We continued walking a short distance and it got dark. We stopped so Leif could rummage in his day pack. I looked up and could see the owl

once again within 15 feet in the fringe of light from my headlamp. I did not shine my light directly at it. We never saw the owl again after that and will never know if it followed us any further.

We got back to our vehicle about 9 p.m. At our parking spot we could hear a Western Screech Owl, but we made no attempt to try to locate it.

I got back to my pickup point in Prescott Valley a little before 10 p.m. All in all an exciting and eventful Mexican Spotted Owl survey. 🦉



Mexican Spotted Owl. Photograph by Richard Balland.

Lynx Lake Bald Eagle Banding

By Dave Frechette

As an organization, we are gifted to have a group of volunteers dedicated to studying and helping wildlife. One of the rewards of this volunteer work is the opportunity to access areas and events not open to the general public. One of these events was the opportunity to attend the banding of two Bald Eagles at Lynx Lake.

After an early morning meeting, a team of eagle specialists from the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) led our group to the nest site. Upon arrival at the site, we observed two nestlings and one nearby adult. As we sat and observed, Tuk Jacobson climbed to the nest. Once at the nest, Tuk first hooded the nestlings to calm them, then fitted them with booties to protect both the birds and humans from their powerful talons. Once the nestlings were appropriately attired, they were placed in a zippered satchel and lowered to the waiting two AGFD biologists. On the ground, the nestlings were each held by nest-watch volunteers while being thoroughly inspected and measured to confirm sex and health characteristics. The nestlings were determined to both be healthy and well-fed males. One of the



Various data are collected from the hooded Bald Eagle nestlings. Photograph by Richard Balland.

characteristics we noticed was the very frayed condition of the nestlings' feathers. Next the nestlings were banded with both a federal band on one leg and a color-coded AGFD band on the other. These bands are surprisingly quite large and riveted closed to prevent removal by the birds. As the banding was being carried out, Tuk inspected the nest for stability, any hazardous material and parasites. Before being returned to the satchel and then to the nest, the honor of holding one of these majestic creatures was had by some of the attending volunteers. A quick spray with water to cool the birds and back to the nest they went. After removing the booties and hoods, Tuk descended the tree and, as we

left the area, one of the adult eagles returned to the nest with food. There was much discussion about the banding and many smiling faces on our hike back to our vehicles.

Thank-you to Richard Balland for the photographic documentation of this event. Thank-you Prescott National Forest and AGFD for the invite to this very special and exciting event. 🐾

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!

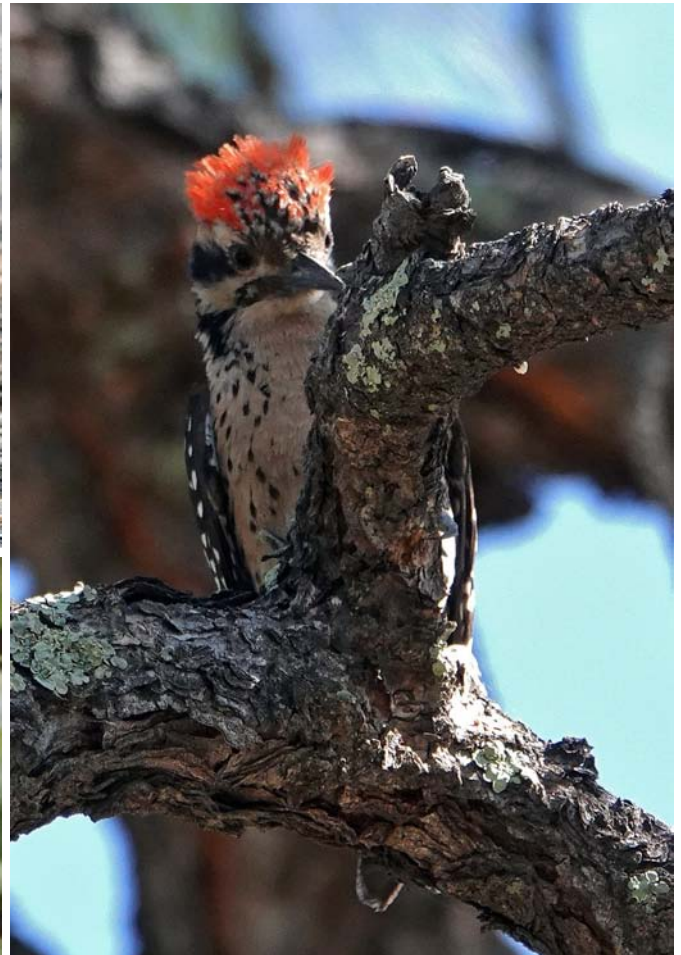


If you have any questions, please contact Laura Rhoden at treasurer@prescottaudubon.org or (928) 776-4514.

Gallery



It seems to have been a good spring migration. Wilson's Warbler, male, by [Ed Wright](#).



It's been a good month for yard birds. Clockwise from top left: Anna's Hummingbird, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, and Black-headed Grosbeak and Lazuli Bunting. Photographs by Toni Kaus.

Prescott Creeks Granite Creek Cleanup

By Laura Rhoden

Prescott Audubon was a financial sponsor of the April 21 Granite Creek Cleanup, and we also fielded a team ably coordinated by our membership chair, Kathy Malm. We met at the Rosser Street entrance to Watson Woods, collected our trash sacks and T-shirts, and chose to clean up the area along Granite Creek where we do the south transect of our Watson Woods IBA surveys. By the time we got to the south end, we had filled our bags with many plastic bottles, a shoe or two, a sealed but no-longer-frozen dinner, some garden hose, and other assorted trash. Naturally, we birded as we went, finding some warblers—Wilson's and one Black-throated Gray—plus a nice bonus: a Green-tailed Towhee. We were surprised to find water in Granite Creek all the way, and we discovered Wood Ducks at the south end.



Prescott Creeks reports that 400 volunteers picked up 1.24 tons of trash and 20 tires from Granite Creek and its tributaries, and improved four sections of trail. Over the years, the trash collection weight has varied from a high of 10 tons (yikes!) to a low of 0.78 tons.

It was a great morning helping to improve our local habitat; please join our team next April!



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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 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. Start at the main Fry's screen (www.frysfood.com). Click on "Community" in the top menu, then select "Fry's Community Rewards" from the drop-down box.

2. Click on "Enroll Now" and sign in when prompted.

3. In the Search Box on the "Find your Organization" page, type either "Prescott Audubon" or our number "37295", and click "Search".

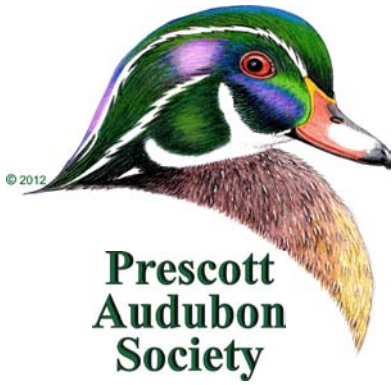
4. In the results area, click on the circle to the left of Prescott Audubon Society, and then click "Enroll".

5. When you return to the "Account Summary" screen, you can review your choice and then sign out.

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





SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
J U N E						
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 7:30 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 Yellow-billed Cuckoo Survey, upper Verde River	28	29	30
J U L Y						
1	2	3	4	5 Field Trip: Mingus Mountain	6	7
8	9	10	11 Yellow-billed Cuckoo Survey, upper Verde River	12	13	14 7:30 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Yellow-billed Cuckoo Survey, upper Verde River	26	27	28
29	30	31				
A U G U S T						
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 Yellow-billed Cuckoo Survey, upper Verde River	9	10	11 7:30 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk
Southeast Arizona Birding Festival						
12 Southeast Arizona Birding Festival	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
S E P T E M B E R						
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 8 a.m.: Highlands Center Bird Walk
9 Watson Woods IBA Survey	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 Upper Verde IBA Survey	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Board Meeting & Window on Nature	28	29
30 Watson Woods IBA Survey						