



# The *Stilt*

Volume 40, Issue 4  
April 2011

Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

## Bridgerland Audubon Society

### Presents:

Dr. Brian Moench - "The War on the EPA: What does it mean for your family's health?"

Dr. Brian Moench will speak on air quality in Cache Valley. An M.D. trained at Stanford and the University of Utah, with a current private practice in anesthesiology at Holy Cross Hospital and LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City, he plans to present the latest information on health effects from PM 2.5 pollutants. His talk will move beyond that grim assessment, however, to highlight some of the good news on the air quality front.

Here's a wonderful chance to hear an engaging and informed speaker on an issue that affects us people as well as the creatures with whom we share this valley."



Bridgerland Audubon Society Banquet

Coppermill Restaurant

Thursday, April 14

Social Hour 6:00 PM

Dinner 6:45 PM

Tickets - \$30 available at Fuhrimans Framing,  
Caffe Ibis and Sunrise Cyclery

#### Inside this Issue

Local Bird Spotlight	2
BAS Events Calendar	3
Western Field Ornithologist Conference	4
Audubon Contacts	5

# Local Bird Spotlight

## Yellow-rumped Warbler

It's springtime now, another equinox just passed. Temporarily, the sun is hitting all parts of the earth, with us northerners looking forward to our turn at the lion's share of light. It was a long and snowy winter. With the vernal equinox come the floods—floods of water running down from the peaks, floods of sap rising from roots, and floods of birds flowing north, some settling into our valley backwater. For serious birders this is it—jockeying for position to see the best waves of this avian deluge as it pours across our continent. Of particular interest to many birders are the waves of warblers.



Photo by Dan Pancamo

For the pickiest of warbler aficionados, the east or Gulf coasts have the best views of this flow of warblers across North America, and many people go to well known hotspots such as Cape May, New Jersey; High Island, Texas; or Dauphin Island, Alabama, to view the spectacle. The diversity of species in these areas is the highest and perhaps some spring day a few of us may find ourselves wading in warblers at one of these spots. But for now, and for most of us, we have to be content to watch a relative trickle of warblers move by our neck of the woods and take what we can get when it comes to these little feathered droplets.

Ten or 11 species of warblers can usually be seen in our valley if you want to work for them, with another four or five species seen only rarely and by the most persistent of birders. For the lazy birder, there are three to four relatively common species—the Yellow, Orange-crowned and MacGillivray's Warblers can be easy to find during both the spring and summer. Another common warbler in the valley that shows up earlier than others and can be found in a variety of habitats is the Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Yellow-rumped Warblers are aptly named, with both the males and females sporting a diagnostic yellow rump patch along with yellow patches on their sides, throats and a yellow feather cap. Flocks of these active little birds start showing up in mid- to late-April on those first really warm days when everyone wants to be outside enjoying the sunshine. You will most likely see them gleaning tree trunks and branches looking for early insects amongst swelling and newly broken buds. They can also be seen taking short fly-catcher-like flights, nabbing prey on the wing, a behavior somewhat unique for warblers and helpful in both spotting and identifying this species.

There are actually two subspecies of the Yellow-rumped Warbler that can be seen in Cache Valley, the more common western variety or Audubon's Warbler (with a yellow throat), which nests in the valley, and the more ubiquitous Myrtle Warbler (with a white throat). Myrtle Warblers can be seen migrating through on the way to nesting grounds in Canada and are much more common in the eastern U.S. The Yellow-rumped Warbler is able to winter farther north than most other warblers due to its ability to change its diet from mostly insects in the spring summer and fall, to a diet consisting more of berries: particularly hard-to-digest fruits from junipers, bayberries and wax myrtles. This makes it possible to see this species earlier and longer in the year than any other warbler.

So keep your eye out for the wave, or in our case the trickle, of warblers passing by Cache Valley here in the next month or two. Seeing them is a nice bonus on a beautiful spring day and bodes of summer to come. Happy birding – yeah spring!

—Bill Masslich

# Audubon Calendar

## April

**2** Migratory Waterfowl. April is a great time to see migrating waterfowl. Join local birding expert Reinhard Jockel as we travel the valley looking for Sandhill Cranes and waterfowl such as Tundra Swans and the first Blue-winged Teals of the year. If we're lucky, we might find a rare Snow Goose, Ross's Goose, or Greater Scaup in the mix. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot between Caffe Ibis and the Logan Fire Station (50 East, 150 North). Come prepared to stand outside or take short walks, and bring a spotting scope if you have one. All skill levels are welcome. We will be back by about noon.

**14** Audubon Banquet. Coppermill Restaurant, Thursday, April 14. Social Hour 6:00 p.m. Dinner 6:45 p.m. Tickets - \$30 available at Fuhrimans Framing, Caffe Ibis and Sunrise Cyclery

**16** Hyrum Dam. Join local birding expert Reinhard Jockel as we bird Hyrum Reservoir. This is a good time of the year to find both Red-breasted and Common Mergansers as well as Common Loons. On a good day, we could see up to four species of grebes. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot between Caffe Ibis and the Logan Fire Station (50 East, 150 North). Come prepared for a few short hikes, and bring a spotting scope if you have one. All skill levels are welcome. We will be back by about noon.

**23** Conservation Lands of Cache County. Join local birding expert Ryan O'Donnell as we visit (and bird, of course!) some of the important conservation lands of Cache Valley. We will tour some of the lands owned or managed by the Bridgerland Audubon Society, including the Amalga Barrens and the Bear River Bottoms, and possibly visit some other sites owned by other organizations as time allows. Come see what the BAS is doing to protect bird habitat in the valley, and look for some birds at the same time. This is a good time of year to find many species of shorebirds, and with migration in full swing you never know what else might show up. Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot between Caffe Ibis and the Logan Fire Station (50 East, 150 North). Come prepared for a few short hikes (boots are recommended). All skill levels are welcome. We will be back by about noon.

**30** Tenth Annual Birdie Day. We have been graciously invited by our great rancher friends, the Selmans, to visit their property in extreme southern Cache Valley and observe Sharp-tailed Grouse doing their courting ritual. Following the grouse viewing, the Selmans will provide us with a wonderful ranchers' breakfast. Past participants on this trip have given it rave reviews and we are very grateful to the Selmans for affording us this opportunity. In addition to viewing the birds, it is an opportunity to see how truly responsible stewards of the land (the Selmans) carry out their ranching operations in a way that makes the land more and more productive and beautiful for both man and wildlife. This trip is suitable for both novice and experienced birders. Meet at 5 a.m. at the McDonalds parking lot in Hyrum. Carpooling will be available and mandatory from there. We plan to be back about 1 p.m. Please let Val Grant know in advance if you plan to attend (435) 752-7572.

## Western Field Ornithologists Conference: Sierra Vista, AZ August 17-21, 2011

If you've never been to southeast Arizona during the late summer season (or even if you have), this is an opportunity you won't want to miss. We will offer field trips to all the southeast Arizona hotspots looking for local specialties like Scaled and Montezuma quail, Gray, Short-tailed, and Zone-tailed hawks, a dazzling variety of hummingbirds and flycatchers, Elegant Trogon, Red-faced Warbler, Cassin's, Botteri's, Rufous-winged, and Five-striped sparrows and much more. To register and see full details go to [www.westernfieldornithologists.org](http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org) and click on the 'Annual Conference' banner in the middle of the page. You will probably want to download the Conference Details document and review before you begin registration. Non-member registration includes a one-year membership to WFO and a subscription to our publication, Western Birds.

The rains that come during late summer to southeast Arizona create breeding conditions for some species and, for others, ideal conditions for molting prior to movement to the wintering grounds. This phenomenon of molt migration will be the subject of a Keynote address by Peter Pyle during the conference, and will make the field trips particularly interesting. As always, we'll have Science Sessions Friday and Saturday afternoons, a wide variety of field trips, and workshops on topics like flycatcher identification, bird banding, study skin preparation, and wilderness first aid. Dan Fischer will give a talk about the first naturalists to visit the southwest. We are offering pre-and post-meeting field trips to the Chiricahua Mountains and California Gulch and a Sunday trip focusing on butterflies and dragonflies. Many local experts will be helping us out with workshops and field trips including Tony Battiste, Bob Behrstock, Homer Hansen, Melody Kehl, Michael Marsden, Ted Mouras, Heather Swanson, Wezil Walraven, Jack Whetstone, Sheri Williamson, and Erika Wilson. In addition, you'll have chances to bird with members of the WFO board like Ken Able, Jon Dunn, Kimball Garrett, Dave Krueper, Kurt Leuschner, Dave Shuford, and Jay Withgott.

As so many discovered last year, you need to register very early to be sure to get your first choice of field trips and workshops, so visit the WFO web site ([www.westernfieldornithologists.org](http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org)) right away to see full details and to register.

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## Grant Opportunities!

**Bank of America's Neighborhood Excellence Initiative** recognizes and strengthens community leadership and service by nonprofits and individuals. The 2011 application period began March 1st. The application deadline for the Neighborhood Builder Award is June 1st, 8:00 PM ET.

[http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation/index.cfm?template=fd\\_neighborexcell](http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation/index.cfm?template=fd_neighborexcell)

**The North Face Explore Fund** was established to inspire and enable the next generation of explorers by funding nonprofit organizations that are working to re-connect children with nature. Applications are being accepted online through April 15, 2011 at [www.explorefund.org](http://www.explorefund.org). Submissions will be vetted by a youth advisory council and issues experts, and the most promising projects will be announced on May 15, 2011.

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# Welcome to BAS

**Consider Joining or Rejoining Bridgerland Audubon Today!**

## Bridgerland Audubon contacts

**Trustees**

- 2008-2011 Jim Cane, 713-4668; William Masslich, 753-1759; Richard Mueller, 752-5637
- 2009-2012 Ron Goede, 752-9650; Frank Howe, 787-1859 Robert Schmidt, 755-9262; Bret Selman, 257-5260
- 2010-2013 Chris Cokinos, 245-7769; Jack Greene, 563-6816; Reinhard Jockel; Ryan O'Donnell, 232-8146

**Bridgerland Audubon Contacts**

- President Val Grant, 752-7572, biores@mtwest.net
- Vice Pres. Open:
- Secretary Open:
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- Asst. Treasurer Susan Drown
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- Webhost www.xmission.com

Membership in the Bridgerland Audubon Society includes a subscription to *The Stilt*, as well as *Audubon* magazine. The editor of *The Stilt* invites submissions, due on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Send to [chris.cokinos@usu.edu](mailto:chris.cokinos@usu.edu).

**National Audubon Society  
Chapter Membership Application**

**Yes.** I'd like to contribute to Audubon and receive the Bridgerland Audubon newsletter, *The Stilt*, and the *National AUDUBON* magazine, as a:


\_\_\_\_\_ **New** member of the National Audubon Society and Bridgerland Audubon.

My check for \$20 is enclosed (this is a special first-year rate).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



**Please send all checks payable to National Audubon Society with this card to:**  
National Audubon Society  
PO Box 422250  
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250  
Membership Source Code: COZW520Z

National Audubon occasionally makes its membership list available to selected organizations. To have your name omitted from this, please check this box.

**Note to new National Audubon members:** To get on *The Stilt* newsletter mailing list without the usual 8-week delay, contact Susan Durham, 752-5637, [sdurham@cc.usu.edu](mailto:sdurham@cc.usu.edu).

**Prefer the local newsletter only?** Send \$20 (make checks payable to Bridgerland Audubon Society) and this form to: Bridgerland Audubon Society, PO Box 3501, Logan, UT 84323-3501 for a subscription to *The Stilt*.



# The *Stilt*

***Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society***

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**Logan, Utah 84323-3501**

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**Visit our website: <http://www.bridgerlandaudubon.org>**

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## Bear River Bottoms – Help Needed for April Plantings

Volunteers and Utah Conservation Corps workers spent the last two years at the Bear River Bottoms building fences, hauling out debris, and treating weeds. Now it's time to start plantings for wildlife habitat.

**April 2** and **April 9** we'll be planting cottonwood poles cut from a nearby stand that became established on its own after the 1980s floods.

**April 16** and **April 23**, we'll be putting in hundreds of shrubs, focusing on fruiting plants such as woods rose and golden currant.

If you're not already on the Econet email list and would like to receive notices of the details (separate morning and afternoon sessions scheduled each day), email [bdixon@xmission.com](mailto:bdixon@xmission.com), or call Bryan Dixon, 752-6830.

