



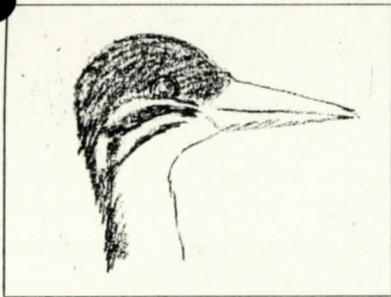
THE STILT

BRIDGERLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vol. 18, No. 3

December 1990

RED-NECKED GREBE SIGHTED NEAR BENSON



In a variation on an old adage, this is about "like son, like father."

First a flashback. On April 13, 1988, Ron Ryel observed a red-necked grebe while rafting through the Colorado River's Cataract Canyon in

Canyonlands National Park. To Ron this was a species he had seen before in Michigan and Montana, but to Utahns it was more significant. Although there were apparently two earlier sightings in Utah, one in Farmington Bay on May 20, 1963 and two small flocks along the causeway to Antelope Island on December 3, 1970, the documentation for these was considered "inadequate to demonstrate their unquestionable occurrence." Hence the species was listed as "unverified" in the 1985 publication, *Utah Birds: A Revised Checklist* by Behle, Sorenson and White. Ron's observation was carefully written up and accepted as the first satisfactory state record.

Now to the present. Late in the afternoon of Sunday, November 4, Larry Ryel spotted and photographed a juvenile red-necked grebe on Cutler reservoir near Benson Marina. Driving west, he glimpsed a grebe with a yellow bill, and pulled over to observe the striped head unique to the juvenile red-necked grebe. He quickly notified several local birders to spread the word and called Ella Sorenson of West Valley City, a prominent member of Utah's Bird Records Committee.

Traffic to Benson Marina quickly increased, with birders arriving from both near and far to add a new "lifer." The bird became number 303 for the year in Utah for West Point dentist Craig Kneedy, as he continues to add new species to his one-year state record. This is the first record for the species in Cache Valley and very likely will be only the second accepted record for the state. Strange that both were discovered by the Ryel family and at opposite ends of the state. Larry's familiarity with red-necked grebes dates back to the summer of 1951 in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Only "old timers" will remember that the species was called Holboell's grebe in those days.

As of this writing, the bird was still present just south of the new bridge at Benson Marina area, often near a mixed flock of Western and Clark's Grebes. The distinctive striped-head juvenile plumage of this individual is shown in the National Geographic's *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. None of the other standard field guides shows this plumage.

— Larry Ryel
Nov. 8, 1990

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CALENDAR

Thursday-Saturday, November 29-December 1.

Bridgerland Audubon will be present as usual at Holly Faire, selling ornaments to paint and birdhouses and feeders to construct on the spot. We'll also be offering Cache Valley Calendars. Marjorie Lewis is signing up helpers for two-hour stints. Please call her if you'd like to join this festive activity. It's a good way to boost your Christmas spirit. 753-8724.

Saturday, December 8. Weeds in Winter. Using a key, we will try to identify the common weeds by their seed heads. At the same time we will observe what birds and mammals might be feeding on them. Leave from the Fred Meyer parking lot at 1 p.m. and return by 4 p.m. Trip location will depend on snow conditions.

Thursday, December 13. 7:30 p.m. Logan City Meeting Room, 255, North Main. This month's general meeting will focus on recycling. Cache Recycling Coalition president Nancy Fox will present a slide show and talk on recycling in Cache Valley. Topics will include the local politics of recycling, a brief history of the Cache Recycling Coalition (of which BAS is a member), and information on what materials can be recycled locally and who is currently accepting them. An updated version of the CRC's Basic Guide to Recycling Household Waste in Cache Valley will be available at the meeting. We hope to have a speaker from Soft Bottoms, the new diaper service in Logan, also.

Saturday, December 15. Annual Christmas Bird Count. Keith Archibald, birding fanatic disguised as dentist, is organizing our yearly birding bash. Bundle up your tootsies and steam up your binoculars as we romp and stomp through the fields, etc., finding an incredible array of birdlife out there in the frozen wastes. Then reward yourself with the traditionally scrumptious potluck fare as the results of the count are reported. Call Keith at 752-9225 to sign up.



WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

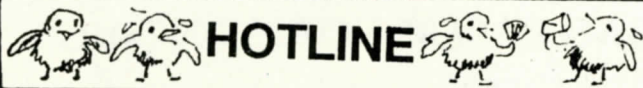
Mrs. Christine Beorchia, Smithfield
B. C. Bosworth, Hyde Park
Amy Burdett, Logan
Chris Carlson, Logan
David Duffy, Logan
Joy Emory, Logan
Michael J. Hoffer, Logan
Sheri Kopka, Logan
Mrs. Aleda S. Marshall, Smithfield
Mrs. James Pickett, Logan
Richard & Virginia Ratiiff, Logan
Mrs. Rodney Ream, Dingle, Idaho
Kyte Robson, Logan
Ian P. Rose, Logan
Jalaja Thillainathon, Logan

THANKS, RENEWING MEMBERS!

Charles E. Baldwin, Logan
Diane Behl, Logan
Max Elliot Brunson, Jr., Logan
Mr. Windsor Copley, Mountain View, Wyoming
Mr. Tony Cowen, Logan
T. W. Daniel, Logan
Bill Ehmann, Logan
Mr. Al Forsyth, Logan
Jim and Debbie Gessaman, Smithfield
Terry Griswold, Wellsville
Chris Himmel, Logan
Daisy and Trevor Hughes, Logan
Joanne Hughes, Logan
Mr. Allen S. Keller, Preston
Ivan G. Palmblad, Providence
John A. Scherting, Logan
Chris and Diane Terry, Logan
Mrs. Elaine H. Watkins, Logan
Nancy Williams, Logan

WANTED: SOCIABLE TELEPHONE TALKERS

If you have time and talent for communicating via phone, you could be useful to the membership of Bridgerland Audubon. A variety of activities require contacting individuals. For the right person or persons, this could be fun. Call Pat Gordon, 752-6561, to enlist.

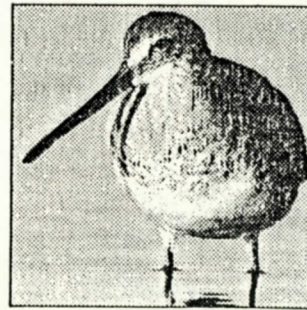


BIRDWATCH HITCH FOR DIPPED TWITCHERS

Alice Lindahl smuggled this article through customs following travels in Great Britain and points east. Those familiar with behavior of local birders may note similarities with that of the European species.

There is much twitching on the river Weaver in Cheshire, where bird enthusiasts have spotted a solitary long-billed dowitcher blown far off course across the Atlantic (Ronald Faux writes).

The twitchers, bird watchers who respond immediately to the sighting of species they have not ticked off their lists, have flocked to the area with their binoculars and telephoto lenses to spot the small russet-coloured riverbank bird with bright plumage and a feeding style likened to a sewing-machine needle.



The "birders" rate the dowitcher a "biggie," not quite a "crippler" or a sighting so spectacular it leaves a twitcher speechless. Birders accidentally stumbling on a sighting of a riverbank rarity are said to have "jammed in on a big twitch."

"It's a curious language, probably designed to keep talk to a minimum so more time can be spent watching," one birder said. Bird-watching enthusiasts who lack the obsessive dedication of a twitcher and who have usually travelled less far and do not possess the correct equipment, can easily be spotted by a genuine twitcher as they carry binoculars that look as if they have survived a campaign in the desert.

Dedicated birders may be in Fair Isle one day and Lundy the next, chartering aircraft and boats when they hear a target bird has put in an appearance. As the Reverend Gilbert White, the vicar of Selborne, put it: "That place yieldeth most that is most watched." A twitcher who has spotted a target that has been eluding him is said to have "unblocked." The birder said: "Some quarters think twitchers are a bit mad or akin to train spotters, but that is unfair. They help bring an almost diagnostic focus to ornithology, which has been a benefit."

Sightings might give the first hint of significant changes in migration patterns or colonisation or of threat to a species.

But for the twitchers yesterday, not a lot stirred apart from a little stint, a couple of redshank, Canada geese waddling on a mudflat and a greater-striped traffic cone drifting sluggishly towards the Manchester ship canal and there was no twitch of the coveted dowitcher. The birders had "dipped."

— from the *London Times Independent*
Aug. 15, 1990

The bird that stirred the most excitement for the month was doubtlessly an immature red-necked grebe spotted by Larry Ryel. (See story on page one.) Bill Dehman reported the grebe mingling with both ring-necked ducks and western grebes. Dehman also called in an immature snow goose from the Sewage Lagoons.

Keith Dixon reports a Harris sparrow from his feeder. Richard Hedd reported a blue, scrub, and lone pinyon jay in his backyard at the same time. Jane Kidd noted a flock of migrating pinyon jays from atop the Wellsvilles, but these are rare birds to be seen in the valley.

Thanks for your calls.

— Kayo

HOTLINE NUMBERS

Kayo Robertson, 752-3944; Nancy Williams, 753-6268; Val Grant, 753-5370.

DEAD BIRD DUTY

If you find a dead bird with a band, remove the band and send it to: US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bird Banding Lab, Laurel, Maryland 20707. Include description of type of bird, where it was found, and date. (We found two banded dead Canadian geese this summer.)

— Jean Lown

SUNFLOWER SOURCE

Keep an eye on those grosbeaks. They're making substantial dents in the supply of sunflower seeds. Fortunately, this season's crop is equal to the demand.

Sunflower seeds continue to be available at \$18 per 50-pound bag, with a \$1 refund for returned bags. As a nickle per pound goes to underwrite our lobbying efforts, the grosbeaks are obviously a political force. Seeds can be had from Al Stokes' garage or Sunrise Cyclery.

— Jean Lown

RECYCLING PROGRESS

Cache Recycling Coalition begins its second year with Nancy Fox, president, and Bob Bayn, president-elect. USU has organized a supportive recycling chapter under the leadership of Mike Nelson and Bruce Hiatt. Ahead are exciting plans and promising developments.

The city of Logan has purchased a specialized 500-gallon tank, a receptacle for the disposal of waste motor oil. If you are winterizing your car with an oil change, save the oil to dispose in the new tank. Within a month the program will be in operation.

The city-county changeover to automated garbage trucks will be total by mid-December. Each household will be issued a 90-gallon container with instructions about use. If the householder prefers not to use the 90-gallon size, he or she may then exchange for a 60-gallon container. November 10 and November 17 from 8 a.m. until dark, volunteers may help assemble containers. Cost is 25¢ for each container, and the money earned will go into a medical assistance fund. Volunteers must be 18 years or older. Cache Recycling Coalition is urging citizens not to abandon their old garbage cans. If possible, keep these to separate household waste for recycling.

CRC seeks a motto or slogan to use for its scheduled January 1991 recycling awareness and recognition month. Suggestions for a suitable motto may be mailed to PO Box 192, Mendon, UT 84325.

Special events are being planned for January, so watch for announcements.

In a cooperative breakthrough, members of CRC Board for the first time were invited to and attended the Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting on October 29. CRC has applied for a \$60,000 EPA grant to study and implement a composting program.

CRC meets the fourth Tuesday of each month, 7 p.m., at the Senior Citizens' Center, 236 N.100 E. Circle this Tuesday and plan to attend. Meetings are open to members and non-members in true democratic participation. Recycling is a grassroots, citizen push effort. Ideas, reports, and updated information are exchanged, and there are guest speakers. Come and share. Information brochures about how and where to recycle are free and available at Logan Library.

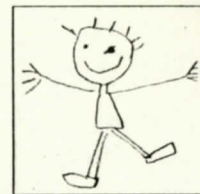
CRC information number is 753-4608.

— Irma Moon

BAS GUIDE FOR SANTA'S HELPERS

Audubon Adventures

Is there someone on your gift list who has everything? I'll bet they don't have their very own Audubon Adventures classroom. For a mere \$35, you could buy this person (or yourself) sponsorship of a third-to-sixth grade classroom in Cache Valley. The kids will regularly receive materials for creative nature-oriented activities from National Audubon on such issues as carnivores, recycling and wetlands.



Since two-thirds of the cost of this program is picked up by National Audubon, it is the best gift bargain ever. (Except for Santa's efforts, of course.)

Call Teri Peery (753-3249) and get your check to her. She can assign a classroom to your sponsor, who will be making a unique contribution to the environment.

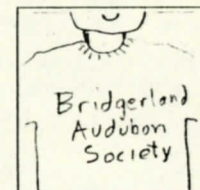
Crane T-shirts

Great Christmas gifts. Jade or pink shirts are available in long- and short-sleeved styles (\$15 and \$10 respectively), and show two dancing sandhill cranes. Your gift recipient will get a card with the shirt explaining that the proceeds will be applied to studying the population biology of the birds and analyzing crop depredation in Northern Utah. Wearing such a shirt helps "save a crane." These can be purchased at Accents (57 South Main in Logan).



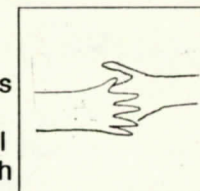
BAS T-shirts

Audubon T-shirts are in stock again. Great choice of colors and sizes from small to extra large. Long sleeve, \$10. Short sleeve, \$8. Tax is included. Call Al Stokes at 752-2702 or stop at his office in Biology-Natural Resources 281 most mornings. Great Christmas presents for all ages.



BAS Memberships

A gift membership to Audubon is always thoughtful. It says, "I know you are a responsible, caring sort of person, and I want to share the good things in life with you." Audubon members find a large group of kindred souls enjoying and working for the environment in many ways. The more the merrier, so think up all your friends and relatives, near and far, and bring them into the fold.

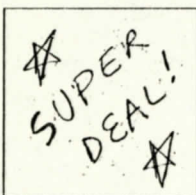


IMPORTANT!

If you use the form in this newsletter, or other membership materials designated "W-52" for Bridgerland Audubon, \$15 of your \$20 membership fee will return to our chapter treasury. If you use forms from National, we receive only \$5.50 locally.

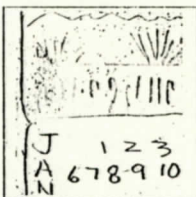
Stilt Subscriptions

This is the REAL bargain of the year. Non-members can receive a year's subscription to *The Stilt*, our award-winning newsletter, featuring the Calendar with all the upcoming things to do, places to go, and people to see; TJG's stirring column, "Adventures in Birdland," local birding and environmental news, and assorted items of interest and amusement. How can they make this happen? By sending \$5 to circulation manager Tom Gordon, 718 North 200 East, Logan. That's how.



Cache Valley Calendars

BAS has the privilege of selling these beautiful calendars, produced by Jane OKeefe and Scott Smith. Each month, you enjoy a different vista featuring local beauty—full-color photography by Scott. You ALSO contemplate a fine line drawing of a local landmark (Jane's work), accompanied by historical data every well-bred Cache Valley resident should be familiar with. AND the calendar is sprinkled with significant dates in local history. Did you know the first school session held in Logan was on January 3, 1860? Now you do. This calendar could make you a lot smarter, as well as happier, as you gaze at the beautiful pictures and marvel at the multitude of things to learn. Price is \$9.95. Of that amount, \$2 goes to BAS. Calendars will be on sale at Holly Faire and the general meeting in December. Don't be the only one in the valley not to own one! They're wonderful gifts for those ex-residents who have left all this gorgeous country behind, too. It will make them weep. Call Pat Gordon (752-6561)



NATIONAL CONVENTION TO BE IN COLORADO

July 21-27, 1991
Estes Park Center, YMCA of the Rockies
Estes Park, Colorado

Put the above dates on your calendar and plan to join fellow Auduboners from around the country. The ever popular, gorgeously situated, and reasonably priced YMCA of the Rockies will be our destination. The Convention theme will be "Audubon in the Americas," an in-depth hemispherical look at the inter-related wetland and forest management issues and their impact on wildlife and, in fact, civilization as a whole. Please alert your chapter members to these dates. We will be providing information in the next nine months as Convention plans further take shape. Lodging, program, and field trip details will be available after the first of the year. See you in Estes Park!

CONSERVATION UPDATE

Golf Course

Logan City is attempting to find private funding for the proposed golf course south of Willow Park, since Logan voters defeated a bonding plan last May. So far the city has been unable to devise a plan that would not require the expenditure of taxpayer money and/or the granting of city-owned land to make the golf course "go." The time is rapidly dwindling to bring up alternatives in the form of a walking park or nature-oriented facility.

Water Conservancy District

On December 18, 1990 the judge will make the ruling concerning the formation of the district. It is now too late to file a protest petition. However, if you own property outside Logan, you can file an objection stating your reasons why the formation is a bad idea. The judge must consider these arguments at a hearing, and they are potentially more powerful than the protest petitions. Please call Alice Lindahl (753-7744) if you can help or if you have questions.

Barrens Dam

This damsite is still being proposed as No. 1 on the list of all potential Cache Valley dam sites. BAS opposes this on the grounds that it is the worst choice with respect to wetlands loss and destruction of wildlife habitat. It has many other flaws: destruction of farmland, predicted low water quality, no recreational benefits, etc. If you would like to join in the effort to save the Barrens, please give Alice a call (753-7744). All talents are needed on this one.

Logan Canyon

We will soon be asking all of you to take pen in hand to defend our beautiful Logan Canyon from unnecessary widening and dumping of fill into the Logan River. Please get out your address books and find for us a list of previous residents of Cache Valley who now live elsewhere and who would probably also write letters to defend the canyon. Give your list to Bruce Pendery (750-0253). You will receive a mailing on the canyon at the right time.

Bear River Task Force

This group of legislators and water bureaucrats will be recommending new policies to the 1991 state legislature for its approval. Among these are: guarantees of water allotments to northern Utah water conservancy districts, approval to construct the Honeyville and Barrens dams (before the feasibility studies are done) and large yearly state appropriations for these projects (e.g. \$10 million per year). We don't like any of these ideas, but we are focusing our objections on not building the Barrens reservoir and protecting the water rights for the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge.

— Alice Lindahl

The Bridgerland Audubon Society meets the second Thursday of each month, October through May, in the Council Room of the new Logan City Building, 255 N. Main. Meetings start at 7:30 p.m. The BAS Planning Committee meets the following Wednesday, October through May, in the Logan Library at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

President
Vice President
Secretary
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Education
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Field Trips
Newsletter
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Recycling
Trustees

1987-90: John Barnes, 563-3910; Dianne Browning, 752-5946
1988-91: Ron Rye, 753-6077; John Sigler, 753-5879
1989-92: Larry Rye, 753-8479; Cynthia Kerbs, 752-3251
Bob Atwood, 752-9284; Office, 753-0012

Membership in the Bridgerland Audubon Society includes a subscription to *The Still*, as well as the *Audubon* magazine. The editor of *The Still* invites submissions of any kind, due on the 15th of each month. Send to 718 N. 200 E., Logan, UT 84321.
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Bridgerland Audubon Society
P.O. Box 3501
Logan, Utah 84321

DATED MATERIAL — PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

National Audubon Society

Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20 is enclosed.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please make all checks payable to the National Audubon Society.

Send this application and your check to:

National Audubon Society
Chapter Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 51001 • Boulder, Colorado 80322-1001

LOCAL CHAPTER

Bridgerland Audubon Society
P.O. Box 3501
Logan, Utah 84321

W-52
Local Chapter Code
7XCHA



Subscriptions to *The Still* are available to non-members for \$5.00 per year. Call Tom Gordon, 752-6561.