

# THE STILT

APRIL 1991

## FEAST AND FESTIVITIES MAY 15

Pulses quicken as plans for Bridgerland Audubon Society's Annual Banquet take shape. In addition to fun and fellowship, inevitable at all Audubon gatherings, those in attendance can expect door prizes, uplifting culture, edification, and revelation of the latest recipient of the Allen Stokes Conservation Award. The brainy part of the occasion will be provided by Dr. James MacMahon, dean of the College of Science at USU. He'll speak on "Global Change: Past and Future Flora and Fauna."

Artists and photographers are invited to display their work for the pleasure of the company. Children's work is particularly requested. Call Pat Gordon for details (752-6561).

Furthermore, dinner will include food. It's too early to say exactly what, but forces are at work to provide the finest that we're willing to afford, dessert included. As you know, these occasions require more to be merrier, so plan to join your fellow Auduboners for this yearly fete. If you're not on the list, you will be missed.

Jannell Larson, fresh blood from over the Rockies, is in charge of banquet arrangements. She is accepting offers of help, objects for door prizes, and ideas for enhancing the evening. She can be reached at 750-1696 (work) or 752-6223 (home). Don't be shy. Your participation will be warmly welcomed. Jannell is like that.

**WHEN:** May 15  
6:30, social hour  
7:30, serious dining, program

**WHERE:** Aspen Grove Reception Hall  
860 North 600 East, Logan

**WHO:** Those in the know

**WHY:** Fun. Self-improvement. Survival.

**HOW:** \$12 per plate  
Tickets available at A Book Store.  
Purchase by May 5 to allow cooks to plan.

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# CALENDAR

**Thursday, April 11.** BAS Monthly Meeting. Dr. Hal Black of BYU will present a slideshow entitled "Some Bats That I Have Known and Others That I Haven't." His talk will focus on the natural history, biology and conservation of bats. With any luck, Dr. Black will be able to bring along a live fruit bat for the group to meet. 7:30 p.m. in Logan City meeting room, 255 North Main.

P.S. There will be no regular meeting during May, so this is the last general meeting until October.

**Saturday and Sunday, April 20 and 21.** Audubon Spring Retreat. This gathering brings members of all Utah's Audubon chapters together. See article on page 6.

**Wednesday, May 15.** BAS Annual Awards Banquet. See front page for details.

## SPRING FIELD TRIPS

**Saturday, April 13.** Children's field trip. "Signs of the Season." Boys and girls ages 7 to 12 are invited to participate in this exploration of birds, insects, wildflowers, and whatever we can find. Enrollment is free, but registration is limited. Call Kayo at 752-3944.

**April 12 and 13.** Grouse Outing. The annual trip to observe courtship of sage and sharp-tailed grouse at Curlew National Grasslands. Camp at Curlew Campground along the shores of Stone Reservoir just north of Snowville, a two-hour drive west of Logan. Get up early Saturday morning to observe the grouse. After a leisurely breakfast we will visit several places to observe waterfowl and nesting red-tailed hawks. Return home early Saturday afternoon. We will stay at a developed campground and have an illustrated talk Friday evening about grouse. This trip by reservations only—limited to 30 persons. Call Al Stokes at 752-2702 for further information and reservations.

**Saturday, April 21.** Spring Birds Field Trip. A visit to the Amalga-Benson-Trenton area to observe marsh and land birds. Leave from the southwest corner of Fred Meyer's parking lot and return by noon. Carpooling arranged.

**Saturday, April 21 and Sunday April 22.** Statewide Audubon Retreat. A chance to socialize with persons from the Ogden, Salt Lake and Provo chapters—a combination of interesting field trips and programs on conservation issues. Call Bruce Pendery at 750-0253 for details on program and travel. See article on page 6.

**Saturday-Sunday, May 4-5.** Antelope Island Trip. An overnight camping trip to Antelope Island State Park under the leadership of Mitch Larsson, superintendent, to observe bison and the many migrating water and land birds. Since the island is open to special groups only, we will have the island to ourselves. This is a first-ever trip for Bridgerland. Leave at 8 a.m. from the southwest corner of Fred Meyer's parking lot to carpool and caravan to the south end of the island. We hope to have several experienced birders from Salt Lake to take us to birding hot spots. Call Al Stokes at 752-2702 for further details on schedule and camping arrangements. Advance reservations required.

**Saturday, April 27.** Logan River Teach-in and Cleanup—Earth Week Activity. The teach-in will be aimed at children, but adults and families are welcome. We will visit three sites along the Logan River. After studying each locale, we will conduct a cleanup of the area. To register, call Kayo Robertson at 752-3944.

**Saturday and Sunday, May 11 and 12.** Bear River Canoe Trips from Trenton down to Amalga. Leave at 8 a.m. from southwest corner of Fred Meyer's parking lot and return about 3 p.m. By reservations only. Call Al Stokes at 752-2702. Couples will be expected to provide their own canoes. Single persons will be teamed up with other singles or placed with couples where space is available. Expect to see 60 species of birds and visit a great blue heron nesting colony. Bring your lunch.

**May 31-June 2.** Visit to Craters of the Moon and American Falls Reservoir. This is a first-ever trip. Camp Friday night at Justice Park near American Falls Reservoir to observe nesting colonies of California and Franklin's gulls and shorebirds; then camp Saturday at Craters of the Moon National Monument with its spectacular volcanic cones and lava flows. Wildflowers should be at their peak. Return Sunday afternoon. Call Al Stokes at 752-2702 for further details on schedule, carpooling and equipment.

**Saturday, June 22.** High Creek Canyon Hike. We visited this beautiful canyon last August. We want to see it in June for its abundant bird life and wildflowers. Leave at 7 a.m. from the southwest corner of Fred Meyer's parking lot and return by mid-afternoon. No reservations required. Easy walking on a good trail. Fine family outing.

## UTAH AUDUBON TRIPS

**Saturday and Sunday, May 18 and 19.** The Basin and Range Seminar is offered each year to the general public. For \$25 anyone can travel to a classic Great Basin spot, camp for the night, and learn about this too-often mysterious ecosystem. Courses will include



geology (with archeology thrown in), desert fishes, desert riparian ecology, mammals, photography, nature writing, and of course, several avian classes. The potluck dinners are always spectacular. Call 583-4041 for more information. Bring the family. The kids loved the Snakes and Lizards class last year!

#### **Saturday, May 4. Deep Creek Mountains Visit.**

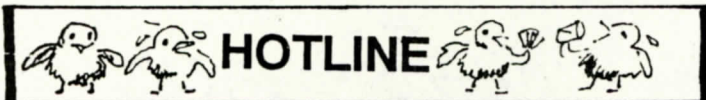
Audubon and several other environmental organizations will be meeting in the Deep Creek Mountains to review the two creek areas slated for hydro-electric plants. Conservation groups have been working hard to forestall these plants, which would produce minimal power (a hydroelectric plant on a desert creek?) and maximum damage to the fragile area and fishes there. If you would like to join the group, call 278-7257 for directions to the camping area.

## **OOPS**

In the March 1991 issue of *The Stilt*, page 8, we gave information about a trip to the Galapagos Islands to be led by Jim Gessaman. Unfortunately, the price was a misprint. The cost is NOT \$2970, as reported, but \$2097—a savings of \$873. I apologize for the mistake, and hope lots of you reconsider this rare opportunity.

— Pat

## **SIGNS OF SPRING HIT THE**



We know it's out there! Spring is sneaking northward from Southern Utah, where BAS members Val Grant and Terry Barnes last week reported spotting flocks of our fair-weather bird friends practically knocking on Cache Valley's door.

Here's a list of who's checked into the summer home so far:

Feb. 22— Mountain bluebirds were sighted up Birch Creek Canyon by Kayo Robertson. He also found the first wildflower, a pretty yellow biscuitroot (*Cymopterus*).

Feb. 28 — Pairs of Canada geese are taking up housekeeping along the Bear River.

March 2 — A lone killdeer was spotted in the canal that runs along 2nd West between 14th and 18th North in Logan by both Pat Gordon and myself.

March 7 — Veda DePaepe called in the first sandhill cranes. Keith Archibald reported hearing sandhills at the Amalga Barrens and on Hyde Park Lane on March 14.

March 10 — Terry Barnes spotted a migrating ferruginous hawk soaring in the sky just east of Newton. Ferruginous hawks are unusual sightings here, and Terry said this one took special care to fly "this way and that, so you could see all its essential markings," which she deeply appreciated.

Other fascinating avian moments in Cache Valley last month included Kayo's good look at a scrub jay harassing a kestrel down on the Island in Logan, and his sighting of a peregrine falcon just west of Smithfield.

Jan Young got a great look at an immature golden eagle in Wellsville Canyon—the bull's-eye markings on the wings were clearly visible, she said.

And I had the thrill, while birding with my 7-year-old daughter south of Benson, of happening upon a mature golden eagle perched atop a smallish tree by the side of the road, its bright hood gleaming in the sunset. We were able to get almost too close to use binoculars! It demonstrated its awesome wingspan "up close and personal."

Thanks to all who called this month. Keep it up!

— Nancy Williams  
753-6268 (eves)  
750-3292 (day)

## **AMALGA BARRENS BIRD REPORT**

This is the first in a series of reports on birdlife of the Amalga Barrens as reported by the observers of Cache Valley. With the prospects of dam construction and little documentation on the birdlife of this area, the compilation of such information seems timely. This information will be useful in evaluating any licensing documents that may be developed involving wildlife resources of the Barrens. At least it will provide information for interested birders who are less familiar with this outstanding birding spot.

The first report covers only our own observations for March. The intent, however, is to include sightings by any observers. Records of species, numbers and dates should be forwarded to: Larry Ryel, 882 North 300 East, Logan, UT 84321, phone: 753-8479. Any and all will be welcomed! Lists of species, numbers observed and unusual sightings (e.g. peregrine falcon) will be most useful for this report and for future evaluation of the birdlife at the Barrens. Summaries of these sightings will be included in future issues of *The Stilt*.



## The Report for March

March 9: 129 tundra swans, four canvasbacks and numerous redheads, mallards, lesser scaup, gadwall, buffleheads, pintails, common goldeneye, cinnamon teal, green-winged teal, ring-necked ducks, American widgeon, ruddy ducks, shovelers and Canada geese.

March 16: 209 tundra swans, assorted ducks; Canada geese; sandhill cranes—one seen, several heard; a plethora of voles.

March 18: 35 swans, one raven, ducks, four bald eagles, one adult and three young.

— Ron and Larry Ryel

## ADVENTURES IN BIRDLAND

### Our Backyard Wilderness

Shortly after we moved to Utah we bought an acre and a half in Hyrum on which to build a house. The lot was neatly bisected by a sluggish irrigation canal at the bottom of the hill upon which we built. Irrigation "trickle" is perhaps a better description. The trickle and its surrounding swamp were the features that sold us on the lot. In the spring, before the jillions of chorus frogs awakened to make noise all summer, the cattails came alive with jillions of red-winged blackbirds and, a little later, jillions of yellow-headed blackbirds. Swallows of numerous sorts zipped back and forth foraging on mosquitos, and an occasional snipe displayed over the swamp and stayed to eat. Occasionally, in wet years, late spring floods would turn our trickle into a shallow blue lake, and we'd be treated to visits by sandpipers, yellowlegs and other shore birds. For a few years a sora rail grunted around in the tules. Pheasants nested among the bunch grass and teasle in the wild pasture behind the trickle, which, much to the amusement of my neighbor, I refused to use for grazing. "You're a-wastin' all that there grass," he'd say. "My heck, y'orter putchya a calf on it." I'd tell him I liked the pheasants, and he'd grin and mutter something about Californian city folks.

But the ducks were my first big excitement. Sitting in the kitchen after work one day, very soon after we moved in, I realized I was hearing ducks, quacking and splashing down among the cattails. I could see nothing from the kitchen window, but city folk or no, I knew ducks when I heard them. Having just bought a 200mm lens for my aging Nikon, I decided then and there to become a wildlife photographer. Ducks, I figured, were a fine manner of wildlife to begin on. I seized my camera and padded quietly out the back door.

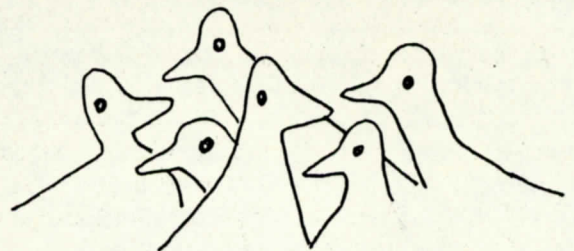
From the back door down the hill to the swamp ran a barbed wire fence, and the grass that had grown up along it would provide cover. From there I could creep

through the cattails along the trickle until I came to the ducks which, I estimated from their conversation, were nearly in the middle of the swamp. I quietly stepped through the barbed wire, made appropriate excuses to the cows and crept down the fenceline.

Having reached the swamp without disturbing my quarry, judging from the ducks' continued petulant gabbling, I stepped back through the fence and began threading my way through the cattails. To stay well-hidden, I realized I'd have to get a bit muddy, but I figured that was a small price to pay, since I planned to have my photo be on the cover of *Audubon*. ("Famed Hyrum wildlife photographer permits publication, for the first time outside a museum, of exquisite duck picture," the photo credit would read. "Refuses remuneration; wants simply to share his art.")

Exercising utmost caution, now on my knees trying desperately to keep my camera and hands mud-free, I eased forward through the cattails, carefully bending leaves down one by one, so as not to disturb the ducks. ("Human being never so close to ducks before," the photo credit would add.) I oozed forward, bent a cattail—and suddenly the ducks fell horribly silent. I froze. As slowly as I could, I settled down in the muddy water, trying my damndest to look like a cattail. I sat there for years. Eventually the mosquitos gave up biting and began accepting promissory notes from my bone marrow. The sun began slipping behind the mountains at my back. I was losing my light! It was now or never.

As carefully as I could, I stretched out on my elbows. Slowly, slowly I parted the cattails and poked my lens through and peeped into the viewfinder. Six ducks sat contentedly in a muddy puddle, staring at me with six bright black eyes. Then they stared at me with six



different bright black eyes. I dared not move; I dared not even reach for the shutter button. I lay there, entranced, gazing at them, unable to really believe what I was seeing. It was then, as I was staring slack-jawed through the weeds, that I heard the most horrible sound I've ever heard in my entire life.

"What in THE HELL are you doin' in there, neighbor?"

Those who may say that a man cannot raise himself from a prone position in a mud puddle without using his arms or his legs or indeed any muscle power whatsoever have never heard that particular sound under those particular circumstances. It's some sort of levitation, I think.



I realized several things in quick succession. First, that my neighbor had been leaning on the fence post for some time. Second, that he was holding a plastic pail. Third, that the plastic pail held some sort of grain. Fourth, that he intended to feed something with the grain. Fifth, that he intended to feed his ducks with the grain. Those very same ducks that were even then, excited by the prospect of dinner, waddling around and between and even over my feet toward him.

"Listen," I said with all the dignity I could muster. "If you don't start paying attention to the leash laws, we'll just have to see about it!" I squished off toward the house, my unused camera catching the last glimmer of the setting sun.

Years have passed. We moved from Hyrum, and he moved from Hyrum. We see one another, now and then. Someday he'll stop giggling. Maybe I'll drop a piano on him.

— TJG

## SPREADING THE WORD

### BAS Education Committee Report

#### FIELD TRIPS.

The March children's field trip found 21 young naturalists wandering the ridges of Green Canyon searching out clues to tales of earthquakes and ancient lakes, venison and voles. Thanks to Kate Boyes for helping out with both natural history and writing instruction.

The next children's field trip will be held Saturday, April 13, from noon to 3 p.m. We will explore signs of the season: birds, insects, wild flowers, and what not. Enrollment is free to children ages 7-12, but registration is limited. To register, call Kayo Robertson at 752-3944.

#### DREAM

Negotiations to purchase Saint Anne's Retreat for an environmental education center continue, although hopes dim. Sincere thanks go to Steve Archibald, Jack Greene, Prent Klagg and Oral Ballam for their efforts. While this project, the establishment of a local center for children and adults to learn the skills of caring for our planet, may have faltered, both the need and the vision remain as strong as ever.

#### EDUCATOR'S EVENTS PUBLICIZED

BAS Education Committee is compiling a quarterly publication to census and promote whatever environmental education is being conducted in the Northern Utah area. Since environmental education is still largely a grassroots project, many of us have continued to re-invent the wheel. If you know of schools,

teachers, individuals, or institutions that are currently involved in environmental education and whose projects should be mentioned in our quarterly, please let me know.

### EARTH WEEK TEACH-IN AND CLEANUP

One of the celebrations of Earth Week '91 will be a teach-in and Logan River clean up on Saturday, April 27. The teach-in will be aimed at children, but adults and families are welcome. We will visit three sites along the Logan River. After we study each locale we will conduct a spring clean-up of the area. To register, call Kayo at 752-3944.



Illustration by Laura Freeman

## THE BEAVER TRIP

February 23, 1991

Trudging through the grassy marshes on the banks of the Bear River, Audubon Society members (and friends) searched diligently with hope of finding traces of beaver activity.

Al Stokes led the beaver fanatics through the muddy land. He pointed out bunches of birds, animal footprints, bird nests, and—yes, trees chopped down by beavers, pathways made by beavers, even the scent of beavers! Indeed, it was an enjoyable experience!

To end that fine outing, a bald eagle soared through the sky, perhaps unaware of the marshmallow-eating onlookers below.

— Heidi Blankenship, 16  
Wellsville



## HELP WANTED

### CAMPUS RECYCLING COORDINATOR

Steve Cannon, who has run Bridgerland Audubon's small but steady campus recycling effort for the last three years, is leaving April 10 to attend graduate school. Therefore, we need someone to take over his responsibilities. Interested? This is a hands-on way to work for the environment; funds from the recycled aluminum go directly toward paying for "Audubon Adventures," an environmental newsletter circulated in many local classrooms. Thus, we build environmentalists in the next generation.

There are approximately 10 barrels on the USU campus for depositing aluminum cans. They need to be checked weekly and the aluminum taken to the recycler's occasionally—every month or two.

This would be a great way for a person working on campus to contribute to Audubon. Or, if your daily routine is off campus, there is no reason some or all of the barrels couldn't be moved to more convenient locations. Either way, we hope we can keep this project going. Many people are saving their aluminum for Audubon routinely, and it would be a shame to lose this momentum.

Call Val Grant (752-7572 or 753-5370) or Bruce Pendery (750-0253) if you'd like to help.

## PWWP NEEDS YOU

People for Wise Water Planning (PWWP) has led the charge to prevent formation of a Water Conservancy District (WCD) in Cache County. If a WCD is formed it would probably sponsor and help finance (through automatic taxation) the Barrens, Mill Creek, and/or Avon Reservoirs, thus harming wildlife habitat. PWWP wants to be sure a WCD is not formed, but we desperately need financial help and volunteers.

Some people think the WCD question was settled when PWWP's petition was denied due to insufficient property value in Amalga. That's not true—we're now concentrating on a close, careful check of the proponents' petition. Their petition must pass muster, too, and we feel we have found some glaring deficiencies.

So, if you can help us as we prepare for a July court date, either financially or with your time, please contact us. Donations should be sent to PWWP, P.O. Box 3955, Logan, 84321. If you want to volunteer time, call Alice Lindahl (753-7744), Bruce Pendery (750-0253) or Merv and Mae Coover (752-8871).

Thank you!

— Bruce Pendery

## UTAH AUDUBON HOSTS WEEKEND RETREAT

All Audubon members are invited to join the other Utah Audubon Societies at the spring retreat, this year to take place in Salt Lake City. Utah Audubon has a fine program coming up, in conjunction with two excellent field trips. Dr. Tyrone Harrison will be guest speaker on April 20 and 21 and will lead the field/bird trips.

On April 20, Dr. Harrison, a botanist, will talk on the Dimple Dell Natural Area, where he has directed so much of his time and efforts. Most of you will recall that until this year Dimple Dell was slated to be a golf course, a situation that was fought tooth and nail by dedicated environmentalists. Dr. Harrison will describe the history of Dimple Dell, the reclamation efforts (of which he has played so stellar a part), and plans for its future. After lunch (bring \$5.00) we will spend the rest of the afternoon in the area.

On April 21, Dr. Harrison will discuss the Jordan River and Parkway, where it's going, where it's been, and what needs to be done. He is also one of the few people who know where the old oxbows are (before human beings saw fit to straighten the river out) and would like to talk to us about perhaps reclaiming some of them. Dr. Harrison is involved in planting indigenous foliage along the river in several areas. Sunday afternoon he will lead a trip to some of these places.

Meet the rest of the Audubon family from north and south at Westminster College, Room 201, both Saturday and Sunday at 9:30 a.m. and socialize at the Saturday night potluck (bring what you want, or contact Ruth Holland, 562-0236) at the Sugarhouse Garden Center, the usual haunt. Everyone is requested to bring 10 slides (on any subject)—for the Slide-a-thon.

## SMITHFIELD—WILDER THAN YOU THINK!

Would you believe there are wildcats found in Smithfield? Gaye and Jay Parsons have photos to prove it!

On New Year's Day, a bobcat showed up in their backyard to feed on a dead deer. Later in the week, a much larger bobcat appeared. The two cats continued to feed, separately, until mid-February. By then, most of the deer carcass had been consumed. What little remained was carried off by a large dog. That ended the thrilling event for the Parsons. They seriously considered hauling another dead deer to their backyard to bring back the bobcats.



I once had a pet bobcat named Waldo. He was the mascot for the Weber State College Wildcats. He taught me well. Highly intelligent and full of surprises, Waldo never seemed to make the same mistake twice. His favorite game was stalking and attacking me! Waldo's preferred place for this game was a garage where he spent one winter. He would disappear in the shadows of the rafters; then when I least expected it, he would drop, landing on my head and shoulder to deliver the fatal bite on my throat or neck-breaking twist to my head. Waldo had been defanged and declawed (not at my bidding), so the game continued. Even though my conscious told me that Waldo was harmless, my unconscious caused my hair to rise and a muffled scream to force its way through my lips. Waldo loved it.



But "curiosity killed the cat." Trappers say the bobcat is one of the easiest animals to trap. It can even be caught more than once in the same trap. Some attribute that to curiosity. I tend to agree, for Waldo was very curious, although he learned quickly. The bobcat has been dangerously over-harvested in many areas due to its habit of wearing a very expensive coat.

Bobcats vary greatly in size, averaging between 15 and 20 pounds, but occasionally one will tip the scales at 50 pounds or more. Incredibly powerful, this relatively small predator has been known to kill an adult deer by breaking its neck or slitting its throat with razor-like claws.

In all my time in the wilds, I've seen only one bobcat, a rare, unforgettable experience. The Parsons are indeed fortunate to have witnessed this marvelous animal in their own backyard.

— Jack Greene

## FORAGING BY MEADOW VOLES

Meadow voles are common wherever there is grass for food. In early April I was walking across the golf course looking for lost golf balls to sell for the benefit of Audubon. At the fourth hole overlooking First Dam I spotted a dense maze of runways that had been cut by voles. I soon realized that all of the runways were on the fairway to the side of the green. It occurred to me that these voles were pretty smart. They avoided the very short grass of the green as not having much forage. Instead they went for the longer grass of the fairways, but at the same time never entered the rough, uncut grass off to the side of the fairway. Could it be that the voles recognized the grass of the fairway for its high nutrient level because of the heavy fertilization that greenskeepers usually put on such grass? The much taller grass of the rough had plenty of quantity but because it had not been fertilized was much lower in quality.

As I continued walking over the course I saw this pattern repeated wherever I spotted vole runways. I also noticed that there were no nests out on the surface as often occurs. I conjecture that we had so little snow this past winter that there wasn't enough to fully cover the voles' nests. Instead they had to burrow down into the ground and place their fine grass nests there. While on the bald eagle trip I spotted more vole runways. On exploring the runway with my finger, I found a pile of finely cut grass about four inches in diameter—a nest, several inches from the surface. Voles may nest all year round, a litter every month. This nest was unoccupied—not unusual, for the death rate among these small mouse-sized voles is very high, and few live as much as a year.

— Al Stokes

## PRINT DONATED TO HELP CRANES

It has arrived, and it's beautiful. The famous Canadian wildlife artist, Robert Bateman, has donated a limited edition print to Bridgerland Audubon to help our campaign to protect cranes in Utah. The picture shows five young sandhill cranes amid graceful grasses beside a lake. Soft greys, blues and greens predominate. The print was framed by Fowl Weather Friends, Inc., in Trolley Square, Salt Lake City. The picture will be sold to support crane protection efforts. We have one offer of \$700, but we're still shopping for the right deal. Until sold, it will hang in A Book Store, 130 North 100 East, Logan.



What will we do with the money? This year the BAS crane committee plans to concentrate on studying crop depredation, which will involve interviews with farmers in the Amalga-Benson area. We also plan to have our teams survey the nesting territories to see how many of last year's birds take up their traditional positions. The Wildlife Board was impressed with last year's study, so we will continue the tradition. If we can show how much damage the birds actually do and find an alternative to the hunt, we will have a good chance to ditch this hunt in Utah.

If you would like to be on a count team (Sunday mornings, 8-11 a.m.) please give me a call. It's fun!

— Alice Lindahl

753-7744

## LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

Great thanks to all those who participated in the Audubon lobbying efforts this year! Our local legislators were visited, and many individuals called local legislators on various issues.

A roundup of some of the issues we worked on or watched, sometimes with trepidation, follows.

### SB 98 — Bear River Water Development and Allocation

The Barrens was not deleted from potential development. However, many legislators are becoming educated, and wary, about the economic and environmental liabilities of that site. As one legislator remarked, "This is beginning to look more and more like a can of worms, and I think we've just scratched the surface." (Yup.) Furthermore, the bill now contains clauses to ensure that environmental analysis and mitigation is appropriately addressed, and only \$2 million was appropriated, a relatively low amount. (Less money equals less damage.)

An interesting development that occurred midway through the session was that the Hyrum Dam site was added to the list of study sites. Expansion of the Hyrum Dam appears to be a much better idea environmentally and economically.

### SB 39 — Department of Environmental Quality

This bill passed, although the funding for its implementation looks unrealistically low. Nonetheless, it's a start. It is hoped that departmental status will facilitate action on environmental issues.

### SB 130 — Refundable Deposits on Specified Beverage Containers, or in

layperson's language, the Bottle Bill. This bill was defeated, largely due to intense lobbying from bottlers and grocers. Speculation is that it will reappear next year.

### HCR 13 — Wilderness Resolution

This bill, calling for 1.4 million acres of BLM wilderness, was rubber-stamped and passed with little real discussion. The task force appointed to submit recommendations, conduct statewide public hearings and on-site investigations of the debated areas, failed to follow through on any of its tasks. Hmmm. . .

Audubon, along with every other environmental group in Utah, would like to see a much larger area set aside as protected wilderness.

### SB 7 — Creation Procedures for Water Conservancy Districts

This bill was one of the most frustrating of the session, allowing backers of a WCD to send petitions to absentee landowners. If the owners do not respond within a short deadline, they are counted as pro votes. This bill represents a real blow to representational government in Utah.

As you can see, we suffered some real disappointments. However, I think that a lot of positive developments came out of the lobbying efforts. We are laying the groundwork for real dialogue on environmental issues, dialogue that will become more and more essential if we are to work our way through the environmental issues and problems that are sure to confront us in this decade. We are also becoming a small but audible voice in the legislature.

Much credit and appreciation is due Wayne Martinson, our lobbyist in Salt Lake. He has an uncanny instinct for the political process, and represented us in a professional, energetic way.

We do need friendly birders who would be interested in taking our local legislators birding this spring. We would like them to experience the living Barrens—sky and space and grass and water, complete with a few dancing cranes.

Please contact me at 753-0497 or 753-5064 if you would be interested.

If you are interested in working on specific issues to help us get ready for next year please call Wayne at 355-8110.

— Nadene Steinhoff  
Legislation Chair





## SITE GUIDE TO WATER BUFFALOS, UTAH SUBSPECIES

Birders are usually not interested in exotic species—you know, the ones that are not native to a region. Starlings, house sparrows, and the like just do not cut it in the birder's world and often do actual damage to native populations.

We need to learn all we can about a non-native bovine group in the Utah power structure that has the potential to do great damage to our natural landscape. They can be found in groups around water coolers and at hearings where management of natural resources for industry is being discussed. During the Utah legislative session in January and February they reach their greatest concentration in the Natural Resources Subcommittees. This is their preferred habitat. Swaying and nodding behavior is typical at this time.

At other times of the year, they disperse to all corners of Utah, even Logan, to give talks to men's groups about how dry Utah is and how our pioneer forebears (an extinct ursid?) never would have allowed the present situation (flowing water) to exist as long as we have.

The habitats they avoid are foot trails, white water, duck-blinds at dawn, horseback rides on the foothills—wherever outdoors types might run into them. Our lack of common interest makes it hard to communicate with them. But we must talk with them and understand their goals if we are to save the natural habitats we have left.

I have spent more time than I care to acknowledge interviewing and talking to Cache Valley residents about the Water Conservancy District, a subject that has burned out most everyone involved. On front porches all over Cache Valley, the question became, "Should I sign the 'Pro' petition or the 'Protest' petition?" People want to do the right thing. Over and over, people told me they wanted to sign whichever petition kept Cache Valley Water in Cache Valley. Sadly, the people don't know that the WCD itself doesn't control interbasin transfers (euphemism for piping water to Salt Lake). The Water Buffalos do.

Citizens are quick to jump on our five Cache Valley legislators to question whether they are "protecting" our water or not. I confess that I had this view once, myself.

If Cache citizens could read the fine print of Senate Bill 98 (the Bear River Water Development Bill), they would see that it hands water rights over to Water Conservancy Districts along the Wasatch Front. It does this by guaranteeing that every time a dam is constructed, the water in it is to be divided among these groups according to a set ratio, as long as each entity comes up with the cash for its share. The bill is authored by the lead Water Buffalo. Thus, 27.2 percent of the 220,000 acre-feet of Bear River spring runoff has been "reserved" for Cache County and the other 72.3 percent has been reserved for the three Water Conservancy Districts on the other side of the mountain. Fortunately for Cache County, there is no Water Conservancy District, so the water was reserved for "municipalities, irrigation companies and water companies" in our valley.

But what would people think if they knew that this "giveaway" not only unanimously passed the House and the Senate, but all five of our legislators voted for it? The explanation lies in the lead Buffalo's favorite rule: the "15-38-1" rule. These numbers are what it takes in the Senate (15 votes), House (38 votes), and Governor's office (no veto) to pass a development bill or approve funding.

It's no secret that this majority can be achieved with the legislators in the Greater Salt Lake area. The megalopolis can have its way with the rest of the state. It's easy to ignore five legislators in Cache County. Thus Senate Bill 98 is not a giveaway but a compromise carefully hammered out with the approval of our representatives. Had they not been cooperative, the "15-38-1" rule could easily have left Cache County with much less.

I have enjoyed getting to know our legislators and think that they are among the best and brightest at the legislature (this coming from a Democrat). They are starting to understand us and have, in some cases, stuck their necks out for us.

The theft of the Bear River is in the hands of a few legislators, WCD lawyers, state bureaucrats, engineering consultants, real estate developers, and industrial businessmen. Our challenge is to use the public interest in preserving our surroundings and a few federal environmental protection laws to steer these buffalos away from our wildlands.

— Alice Lindahl



## REGIONAL INVESTMENT IN THE GREAT SALT LAKE WETLANDS

We just got word that Bob Turner, our regional Vice President for Audubon, has found a way to kick off a program to preserve and enhance the once-great wetlands on the eastern shore of the Great Salt Lake. He has raised enough money to hire Wayne Martinson, our Audubon lobbyist, to head up the effort.

Wayne will be asking us for ideas and help in management recommendations, land acquisition, legislation, etc., starting this spring. Bob is planning to be here April 27 to visit the coastline and make plans.

Thank you, Bob. This is the boost we have been needing to get us going!

— Alice Lindahl

## TATTLETALE SHOPPING BAGS

**Buying habits** tattle about how well we're committed to recycling. When you get home from grocery shopping, take a look at what you've bought. How much packaging have you bought? Packaging costs five percent of all consumer spending. Buy bulk. Avoid excess packaging. Save yourself five percent and lessen the recycling load. Seems simple enough, but taking a critical look may mean having to change some of our buying practices.

**Batteries** contain toxic substances, and the manufacturing of batteries requires fifty times more energy than they produce. Not good, but what can we do? Buy gadgets that run on house electric power, buy a solar recharger, or buy rechargeable batteries. They cost more, but are cheaper in the long run. Also, there are now disposable, non-toxic batteries! These are VOLTA batteries, 100 percent free of mercury and cadmium, safe to put in a landfill. They have been tested to last as long as leading brand alkaline batteries. Eight AA VOLTA batteries cost \$6.45. Eight C VOLTA batteries cost \$8.45. These environmental breakthrough batteries can be ordered from Seventh Generation, Colchester, Vermont 05446-1672.

**The Bottle Bill**, SB130, succumbing to pressure from the bottling industry and grocers, failed to get passed by the last State Legislature. Wouldn't it be great if we as buyers could decide, instead of having to wait for legislation to be passed? We could decide returnable containers aren't as energy saving as reuseable containers. We could demand standard sizes for all bottles and jars. In France all beer bottles are the same. Only the label tells the different brand. One sure way to make recycling cost-effective is to eliminate the need for it.

— Irma Moon  
Recycling Co-chair

## WYOMING'S BOTTLE BILL

Wyoming legislators are working on a bottle bill called RID (Recycling Incentive Deposit). The bill would put a five cent tax (deposit) on items which can be recycled, e.g. aluminum cans. The tax is paid by the wholesaler to the state. The wholesaler distributor, in turn, passes this on to the retail merchant, who, in turn, charges the customer this tax (deposit), just as you'd expect. The consumer gets his/her deposit back when the item is turned in at a recycling center.

The state reimburses the recycling center from the funds collected from the tax on the wholesaler. If the consumer fails to recycle the item, the tax is not paid out to the recycling center and funds start to accumulate in the state pocket. From these funds, the state will pay the cost of administration and also make grants to those who want to go into the recycling business.

Currently, the Legislative Service Office is determining fiscal impact of this bill. Bighorn Audubon in Sheridan, Wyoming, is supporting the bill.

— from *Bighorn Audubon Notes*  
February 1991

## HOW TO MOVE A MOOSE

**VERNAL**—Thirty-one moose from Ogden Valley became new residents of the Uintah Basin recently. On February 5, 6 and 7, 19 moose were moved into the Hill Creek area of the Uinta/Ouray Indian Reservation to establish a new population. Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) biologists also moved 12 animals to Currant Creek on the Uinta National Forest to supplement an existing moose population. The release was the result of a combined effort between the DWR, the Ute Tribe and the U.S. Forest Service.

Moose in northern Utah utilize areas not traditionally considered moose habitat. Traditional habitat examples are the willow-covered river bottoms and wetlands common to Yellowstone and the Grand Teton National Parks. Northern Utah moose utilize mountain browse species allowing them to expand their home ranges. The wildlife managers hope moose on the south slope of the Uinta Mountains will also expand their ranges into similar habitat.

The moose are captured using dart guns and two helicopters. The first helicopter is small, fast and maneuverable. The pilot takes a biologist with a dart gun in close to tranquilize the moose. After the moose is darted, they radio for the second helicopter to bring in a sling crew to pick up the moose. The sling crew wraps a sling underneath the immobilized moose and prepares it for transport. The crew also covers the moose's eyes with a soft cloth to reduce stress on the moose and to help keep it from panicking. The crew then calls for



their helicopter to come in and transport the moose to the main staging area.

The moose is flown to the main site and placed on a platform where other biologists check the health of the moose, take measurements and then place tags and radio collars so the moose can be identified and tracked when it is transplanted. The moose is then moved off the platform into a modified horse trailer. Once inside the horse trailer, the tranquilizer drug is reversed so the moose becomes fully awake. The moose is then transported to its new site and released.

This method of transplanting moose has been quite successful over the years. Funding from license sales allows the Division to move about 30 moose a year. Breeding populations have been established in new areas as far south as the Manti and Fishlake National Forests.

— from *Utah Wildlife News*  
Division of Wildlife Resources

## UTAHNS SUPPORT CHANGES IN WILDLIFE POLICY

A strong majority (77%) of Utahns feel that non-hunting wildlife preserves should be established within the state so that wildlife could live in their natural environment with a minimum of human interference. And 84 percent believe that wildlife should be more important or just as important as human interests in determining the location of the wildlife preserves. These findings are consistent with the concepts embodied in the Utah Wildlife Manifesto.

This is the conclusion of a statewide poll conducted in January by Insight Research, Inc. of Salt Lake City for the citizen group supporting the Utah Wildlife Manifesto. The poll was taken to sample public opinion surrounding the issues of establishing wildlife preserves and the methods of hunting both black bear and cougar.

The telephone poll conducted during the third week of January polled 607 people and represents an accuracy of plus or minus four percent. The data also represents the state population accurately with reference to income, age, gender, and geographical distribution. Both hunters and nonhunters alike were uniform in their philosophy in support of establishing wildlife preserves. An interesting sidelight is that both members of hunting and sportsman groups (76%) and members of conservation groups (81%) were definite supporters of establishing wildlife preserves.

Results indicate that responses from hunting households were consistent with all responses in that 74 percent

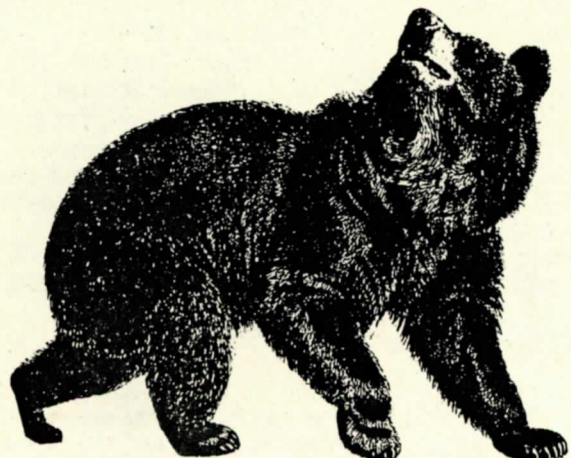
avored establishing preserves, 54 percent favored abolishing bear baiting and 60 percent favored discontinuing hounding of bear. Utahns opinions were just as strong when asked about issues surrounding cougar hunting. While 46 percent of respondents believe that cougar hunting should continue, 73 percent of those interviewed favored discontinuance of the use of dogs to pursue and tree cougars as a hunting method. It was interesting to note that the results indicating a desire to ban bear baiting, bear hounding, and cougar hounding were consistent across the spectrum of respondents.

The survey, jointly funded by the Utah Wilderness Association and the Utah Audubon Society, was commissioned to determine Utahn's attitudes on these controversial issues and to assist the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and federal land managers in planning future considerations for wildlife management. This survey indicates that Utahns favor these specific efforts which have resulted from the Utah Wildlife Manifesto. The attitudes of Utahns are similar to the shifting attitudes nationwide. Utahns appreciate the importance of wildlife to the quality of all life. Utahns see hunting as a legitimate sport but they see the chasing and baiting of wildlife as illegitimate, unsportsmanlike destruction of a valuable native resource.

— Utah Wilderness Association  
News Release

## HELP STOP POACHING

The Division of Wildlife Resources maintains a 24-hour, toll-free "Help Stop Poaching" Hotline. The number is 1-800-662-3337. If you witness a wildlife violation, get as much information about the incident and suspects as possible (don't confront them), and call the hotline. Rewards are offered for information which leads to the arrest and conviction of poachers.





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The Bridgerland Audubon Society meets the second Thursday of each month, October through May, in the Meeting 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.

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Membership in the Bridgerland Audubon Society includes a subscription to *The Stilt*, as well as the *Audubon* magazine. The editor of *The Stilt* 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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## 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.

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