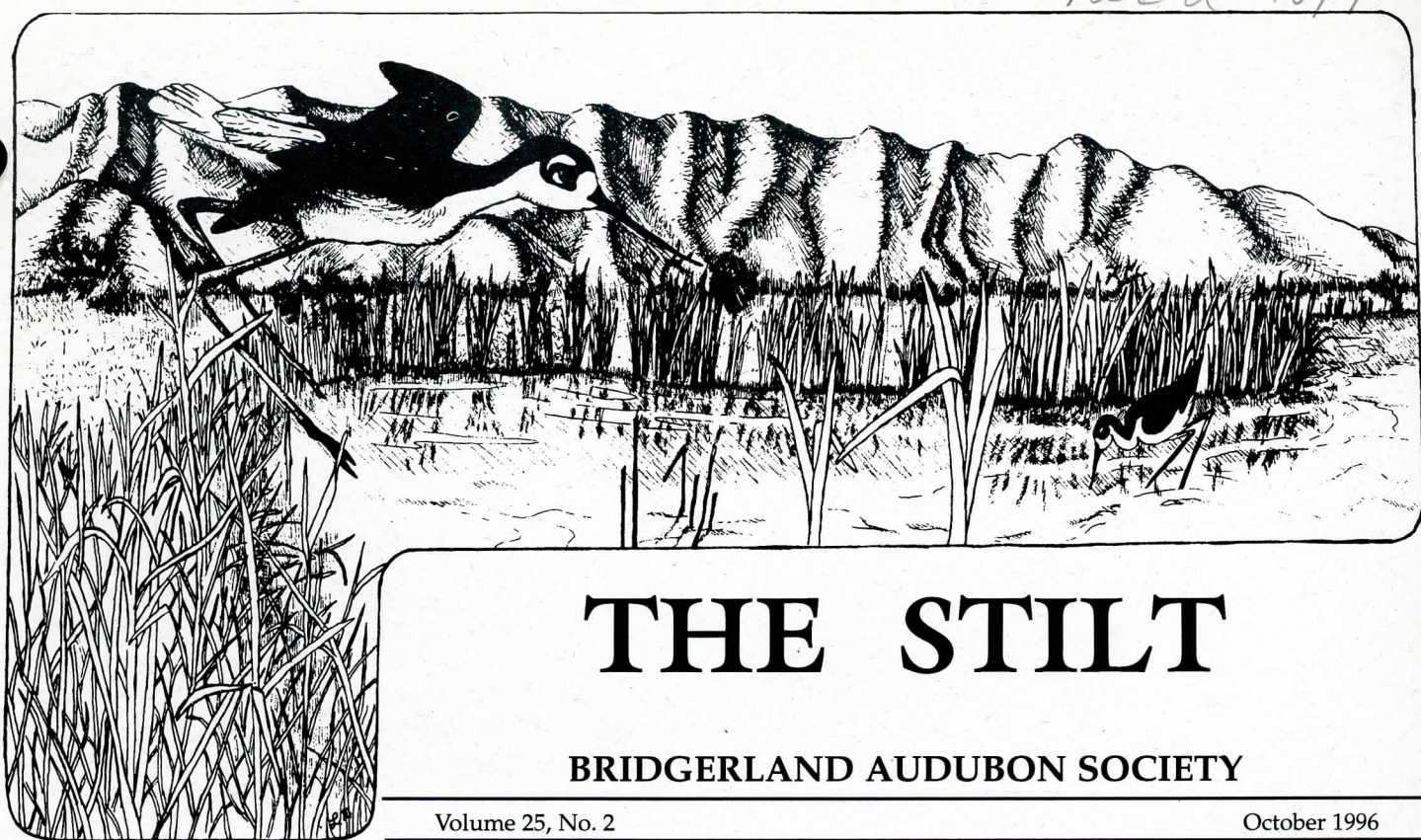


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THE STILT

BRIDGERLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 25, No. 2

October 1996

The Electric Hotline Reluctantly Folds Its Summer Hammock

You might remember, way back in May, the Hotline announced it was getting wired. We set up a small e-mail list for birders who'd rather zap their messages than phone us about sightings and waited to see what would happen. Surprise! There was lots more action on the new "electric hotline" than there was on the telephone.

There was plenty of bird action to report, too, what with lesser gold finches turning up all across the valley, white-winged crossbills spotted in Logan Canyon and breeding indigo buntings spied near Richmond. We thought you might enjoy this wrap-up of the summer's birds:

May 21 – Rod Hammer spotted a great egret at the intersection of 3000 North and 3000 West this morning. The bird did not appear to have breeding plumage, nor were its lores colored for breeding, he observed.

May 29 – Ron Ryel sent up the first flare about the lesser gold finches: "There has been a small flock of lesser gold finches south of Avon. They were first seen by Sue and Dave Drown on Monday and again today by Ron and Larry Ryel. They have been seen both days south of Avon, 1.1 miles south of the turnoff to Porcupine Reservoir. They were seen this morning sitting on the power line that crosses the road at this point. There were also American gold finches in the area. Three catbirds and a chat were seen just south of this site as well. At least two male bobolinks are in the field north of the Mendon road, east of the Logan River."

June 1 – Sue Drown saw two male lark buntings along the road to Ant Flats, 10 miles past Hardware Ranch.

June 4 – Jack Greene reported willow flycatchers in Smithfield Canyon (near the ranch)—possibly nesting.

July 8 – Ron Ryel filed this very interesting crossbill report: "Two (and perhaps four) white-winged crossbills were seen with a flock of 15-20 red crossbills along the Sinks road, 5.3 miles south of the turnoff from Highway 89 at the Summit of Logan Canyon July 7. A female and juvenile were seen foraging in an aspen tree with the red crossbills. The juvenile suggests that this species nested in the area. Nesting birds in northern Utah of this sporadic species were last observed in the late 1970s. A few white-winged crossbills were also seen in the western Uinta Mountains in late June."

July 15 – Keith Archibald found breeding indigo buntings five miles east on Cherry Creek Road in Richmond.

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October Calendar Meetings

Thursday, October 10, 7:30 p.m. General Meeting:
Alaskan Bears and People. Logan City Meeting Room, 255 North Main. Dr. Barrie Gilbert, Professor at the USU Wildlife Department will speak and show slides of his work in the north country. Refreshments will be served.

Wednesday, October 16. BAS Planning Meeting.
7 p.m. At the home of Bryan Dixon, 10 Heritage Cove (255 East 700 North, Logan). Officers, Chairpersons, and Trustees meet to discuss issues and make plans for meetings, activities and projects. General members are always welcome.

Trips

BAS field trips are open to all. There's always fun with new people to meet; and we're always watching for wildlife—especially birds; Unless stated otherwise, reservations are not needed, trips are open to all ages, and carpooling is available. If there is a trip you would like to lead or one you'd like to see offered, please call Bryan Dixon at 752-6830.

Saturday, October 5. Annual Hawk Watch. Hike up to the crest of the Wellsville Mountains to witness one of the wonders of the avian world. Over 6,000 hawks migrate along the Wellsvilles between mid-August and mid-October. On a good day, we'll see over 100 raptors including golden eagles and falcons. We'll hike up Deep Canyon to a station monitored by HawkWatch International and get an update from this year's watchers. The trail gains 3,000 ft. in approximately four miles and is a bit steep in places, so wear sturdy footwear. We like to sit on top for a couple of hours to watch the hawks, and since it is usually cool and windy on the ridge, a change of layers, a warm sweater and a good wind shell make the experience more comfortable. Bring lunch and water. Leave at 8:00 A.M. from the parking lot north of Straw Ibis (about 55 East and 150 North in Logan); carpooling will be available. For more information or if bad weather makes the trip questionable, call Jim Sinclair, 752-0061.

Saturday, October 12. Logan River, River of Change. This field trip will explore the Logan River, from Franklin Basin to the Cache Valley, studying the riparian zones along the way. We'll get to understand the interrelationships of the geology, hydrology, wildlife (including the beaver colonies we saw last year) and plant communities in one of the most beautiful and controversial river corridors in Utah. Leave at 8:00 A.M. from the parking lot north of Straw Ibis (about 55 East 150 North); carpooling available as usual. This trip involves only short walks so is suitable for all ages and abilities. For more information, contact Kayo Robertson, 563-8272.

Saturday, October 19. Annual Roadside Cleanup. It's opening day of deer season and if you're not a hunter, we've got the perfect outing! BAS has taken responsibility for cleaning up the litter along a highway west of Richmond. So, what better hunting alternative than to spend a few hours out in the valley exploring the archeological remnants of our civilization? And so conveniently located, too, no digging necessary! Meet at 8:30 A.M. at the parking lot north of Straw Ibis (about 55 East 150 North in Logan). Fewer than 10 people can finish our section in just a couple of hours, and then you feel like a million bucks for the rest of the day. For more information contact Sue Drown, 752-3797.

Watch for these upcoming field trips. Dates to be announced in the next Stillt.

November

Observe Red Squirrels. We'll visit the home of some notorious squirrel lovers. Squirrels will be harvesting pine cones and other foods for the winter. There will be squirrel nests to explore as well as pine cone caches. Sound yummy? Join us for an afternoon of local exploring. Great trip for kids as well as adults. Meet at the USFS office at 1500 East Hwy 89 at 1:00 p.m. Back by 3:00.

How to Feed and Attract Birds to Your Garden. See the various types of feeders, seeds and water devices in use locally. Bring binoculars and dress warmly, but most observing will be done indoors. Leave at 9 a.m. from the USFS office at 1500 East Hwy 89. Back by noon.

December

Winter Bird Watching. Spend a morning touring the valley to observe winter birds. Potential stops include Hyrum Reservoir for late ducks (maybe an oldsquaw?). Hyrum fields to find rough-legged hawks (maybe ferruginous?), and sparrows along the roadside (maybe a longspur?). Beginner birdwatchers are welcome.

21st Annual Logan Christmas Bird Count. A tradition in England since 1900, the CBS has been held in the same area in Cache Valley for the last 20 years. Last year we counted over 20,000 birds and 90 species. Teams are assigned particular areas and some folks start before dawn. Potluck dinner afterwards to go over the numbers and get a total. If you'd like to help out, call Keith Archibald, 752-8258

Sunflower seed
available October 20
50 lb. bag for \$16.00

Pickup at Sunrise Cyclery
138 North 100 East
or
Contact Nick Strickland
750-5035

Hotline

Continued from page 1.

July 2 – Keith Dixon had two male lesser gold finches in his yard on Island Drive (briefly). He reported that Pat Bahler retrieved a window-killed female 100 yards west on July 7, and he saved that bird as a study skin. "The condition of the ovary did not suggest that nesting was imminent. Another pair drifted through the yard on August 1; no certain sighting since. I find lessers elusive. They do not visit my feeders, unlike American gold finches and siskins."

August 19 – From Bryan Dixon: "This weekend turned up some interesting sightings. Sage thrashers were common in the sage country west of Cache Junction. (Check out those yellow eyes.) I wonder if they nested there this summer? Take the west side highway north through Cache Junction, and just after passing underneath the railroad bridge, but before crossing Cutler Reservoir, turn west on a dirt road that parallels the tracks. After crossing the tracks, the road continues westward through field, and then jogs northwest. Just at this jog, the thrashers were found in sagebrush on either side of the road. Also found was a Virginia's warbler nest with a chick and one egg. On the way home, we passed by the Oxbow along Sam Fellow Road and saw gobs of shorebirds amongst the mud flats. Returned later with scope, but light was bad. Looks like the fall shore bird migration has begun in earnest!"

The e-mail list also turned out to be good for solving puzzles, such as one I posted late in August: "Our apple tree is hosting about 10 grackles tonight for dinner. Anybody know if these guys are becoming more common out West? Or are we just getting lucky deep in the heart of Logan?" The answer came back quickly: A small band of common grackles (fairly uncommon here despite their name) headquartered around Willow Park may be expanding their range. They are ravenous and will eat you out of black sunflower seeds in no time flat.

Verdict: the Electric Hotline works. If you'd like to be added to the list, send e-mail to me at nanwill@cc.usu.edu. If you'd rather phone, that's fine too; call me at 753-6268. Happy trails!

— Nancy Williams

Life's Surprises/Time Out

Even on a hot July day in the heart of Logan you can see wildlife. On July second I was in my third floor apartment putting together yet another resume to send out when my children began calling me to come look at the ducks. I thought they were talking about some picture they drew with their sidewalk chalk. But there they were, two adult ducks and three fledglings. Somehow they must have wandered down from the first dam pond. They were drifting down the current and eddying in every few feet looking for sheltering bushes. Unfortunately the stretch of canal I know

doesn't have much overhanging vegetation so they passed on down the way. But it was a pleasant reminder of the natural world surrounding us. No matter how important I think my life is, the true struggle of life is written in a bigger story.

— Rena Everton

New Members

Magnus Augner
Kathleen Barker
Tawnya Bowles
Mr Warren Brown
Gerald L Byington
Allen J Christensen
Lula C DeValve
Launi Evans
Jake Gibson
Carolee Hammel
Roger Held
Mr Al Jones
Barbara Kerr
Mrs Paula Koeven
Bert Lewis
The Long Family
Joseph Madison
Dean Panter
Carl J Saunders
Renee Spatig
Jeffrey W Watkins
Danielle Wheeler

Renewing Members

Leroy B Beasley
Mindy Bell
Max Elliot Brunson, Jr
Claire S Caldes
Kevin Connors
Swede Dahl
John Dymerski
Kurt Finlayson
Ar Al Forsyth
James Gessaman
Scott Griffiths
Kurt Gutknecht
Robert Hammond
E N Hatch
Bob & Linda Hendy
Pamela Hudson
Joanne Hughes
Josh Lawlor
Michelle Loeser
James A MacMahon
Nancy Mesner
D Richard Nelsen
Pam Riley
James Ruzycski
Jim Sinclair
Kim Sullivan
Robert R Trowbridge
Dan & Cindy Walker
Mrs Elaine H Watkins
Nancy Williams

REGIONAL NEWS

Forestry Practices on Private Lands

The Energy, Natural Resources and Agriculture Interim Committee of the Legislature will be considering legislation to regulate logging on private forest lands. An interim task force has considered the problems which result from unregulated logging and presented their ideas to the legislative committee on September 18. The reception of the plan was not quite unanimous but the chair, Senator Myrin, asked that the staff prepare a tentative bill for the committee's consideration. He acted after many of the committee members had left, and unfortunately Senator Myrin was the only senator in attendance all morning. Thus, the future of the forestry practices legislation may be uncertain.



Forestry practices legislation has been a long time coming. Utah is one of only four western states that has no regulation of logging on private lands. However, Utah's private forests are in special need of protection. Utah is arid. Trees often take 150 years to replace themselves. If logging is done badly, the cycle may be even longer. The Pacific Northwest is running out of trees. Logging companies are looking to the inter-mountain west to keep themselves in business. Private forests are becoming the last remaining source for wood. Declining logging on public lands means loggers are now turning to private holding as a last resort. I might add that Utahns are perhaps too trusting, a praiseworthy trait in many respects, but one that leads to our guileless citizens being taken by the unscrupulous. And unfortunately there is no way to put the trees back after a bad job.

Poor logging practices lead to denuded vistas, loss of wildlife habitat, contamination of water, and flooding. Often landowners are cheated and usable wood is wasted, left behind in piles which are unsightly, fire hazards, and barriers to animal movements.

It is ironic that the very people who whine most about infringement upon private property rights are the first to demand action when the esthetics of their cabin or the purity of their water supply is threatened by clear cutting.

The proposals of the Utah Forest Practices Task Force are:

1. Education effort. This includes funding for materials and additional personnel.

2. Incentive programs. Technical assistance is included.
3. Administrative oversight. The Division will be responsible for enforcing minimum standards, registration of timber operators, and receiving notifications of intent to harvest. Upon notification the Division is required to determine whether the specific circumstances require a harvest plan.

Unfortunately additional personnel means a substantial budget increase and a harvest plan requirement is viewed as an infringement upon private property rights by some land owners and legislators.

So the future of this legislation may be uncertain. En/NR/Ag committee members Representatives Ure and Johnson were members of the task force but had done no lobbying of the En/NR/Ag Committee before this meeting. It will be interesting to hear the discussion when the actual bill is presented. Brad Johnson said he left the last Forest Practices meeting having made the decision that he could not sign on to the recommendations, but on the drive home he revisited the sad experience of logging his own forest and interrupted his trip to call back that he would support the plan. We can hope that his and other sad tales can change more minds.

Utah Audubon Council Retreat – A State Office for Utah?

The semi-annual Audubon retreat was held at Camp Tuttle in Big Cottonwood Canyon September 21-22 to discuss whether to create a state office with permanent paid staff. Dan Beard, Regional Vice President for National Audubon, attended from Boulder, Colorado and Don Amosti, Executive Director of the Minnesota State Office helped to facilitate the discussion. Also joining us from NAS was Carol Warden, new staff person in Boulder, responsible for helping local chapters with fund-raising. Over 30 Audubon members attended from around Utah, including two members from the new Red Cliffs chapter in St. George.

Saturday's sessions started with reports from the various Utah chapters on current activities. BAS had a lot to report with the new Nature Center, and other conservation activities. Great Salt Lake Audubon reported on their water conservation education program, preserving wetlands near Franklin Quest, and a riparian restoration project along the Jordan River at 106th Street South. The Wasatch Chapter (Ogden) reported on new additions to their nature center and environmental education programs. Marilyn Davis, from the new Red Cliffs chapter, reported on their recent formation and some of the issues in the south. They also told us about their beginner bird watching class, which attracts young and old and introduces them to the joys of birding.

We have two paid staff persons already working in Utah. Wayne Martinson, Utah Wetlands Coordinator, reported on the Governor's drive to build roads along the east side of the Great Salt Lake, and the Mitigation Plan being developed to prevent destruction of the extensive wetlands. On the conservation side, there is a move afoot to award international recognition of the Great Salt Lake. Ella Sorenson, reported on the new Gillmor Sanctuary, located north of the SLC Airport. The sanctuary covers 1400 acres of the ancient delta of the Jordan River and is planned as a migratory shorebird refuge. Ella has a lot of work yet to do to secure better access (probably through Antelope Island's southern causeway) and water rights to provide better habitat along the old riverine channels.

The State Office discussion was moderated by Don Amosti. The group identified five "dragons" or concerns regarding paid staff offices:

- Where will funds and energy come from, and how to avoid compromising other ongoing efforts by the chapters?
- How to manage a office and staff; who will decide what issues they work on?
- How to find the extra people and commitment necessary to make a state office work?
- Can a state office be effective against the local anti-conservation ethics?

After long discussions, we also found common dreams and hope for a state office, including (in order of importance):

- Establishing and maintaining more sanctuaries in Utah
- Promoting recreational birdwatching and serving as a source for information on Utah birds
- Facilitating environmental education and leading our efforts to get the *Audubon Adventures* magazine in more classrooms
- Protecting wildlife habitat
- Assisting with fund-raising
- Environmental advocacy
- Sponsoring Utah-centric science regarding wildlife and habitat preservation

There was agreement that a State Office could undertake needed work, and some projects which local chapters really can't do. But the biggest concern is how to get one going without undermining the efforts of the local chapters which are already spread thin in terms of active volunteers. In the end, we agreed to ask Dan Beard to take the results of all these discussions, and return with a report on how National Audubon can help us establish an office, and how the early years could be funded. We expect this report in the spring of 1997.

If you'd like more information on the State Office effort, all Bryan Dixon or Jean Lown, 752-6830.

Citizens for the Protection of Logan Canyon (CPLC)

Two Bridges Project Moves Forward — Upcoming on October 1 the contract for the construction of Burnt Bridge and Lower Twin Bridge will be let. Construction is slated to begin in the spring of 1997. Shawn Swaner, CPLC member on the Cooperating Advisory Team (CAT), has poured over bridge designs with bridge engineers, natural resource specialists and landscape architects. Our negotiations resulted in less road widening and a reduction in the road length that is in this project. Cuts on two of four slopes were eliminated and fewer guard rails in the lower canyon. We advocated a bridge design that would "disappear" into the landscape but UDOT insisted on a concrete bridge with walled parapets, claiming that this was necessary for safety standards. We succeeded in educing the width of the pull-off at the upper end of Lower Twin Bridge, eliminating an ugly stretch of pavement in this scenic area.

In December, the CAT group will met with the contractor to review guidelines for construction. Once construction has begun, Shawn will meet weekly with the contractor supervisor and UDOT engineers to assess the impacts of construction and to ensure environmental compliance. CPLC would like to establish an independent monitoring team to ensure that all construction work adheres to the highest standard. Volunteers are invited to call Kathy at 752-0946 for more information.

Birds in Panama Celebration in February '97

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT) will hold its "Celebration of Tropical Birds in Panama" from February 9-16, 1997. VENT will donate all profits to the Panama Audubon Society and the Center for Neotropical Studies of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.

The event will include a series of lectures and guided field trips to top birding spots in Panama. The 1996 guides included Victor Emanuel and Dr. Robert Ridgely. For more information contact Norita Scott-Pezet, chapter President, at 507-224-4740, e-mail audubon@pananet.com.

Deadline

October 30 is the deadline for submitting memories of Al Stokes. Please mail them to the *Stilt* editor, Lois Olson, 280 N. 300 E., Logan, UT 84321.

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W. Bryan Dixon
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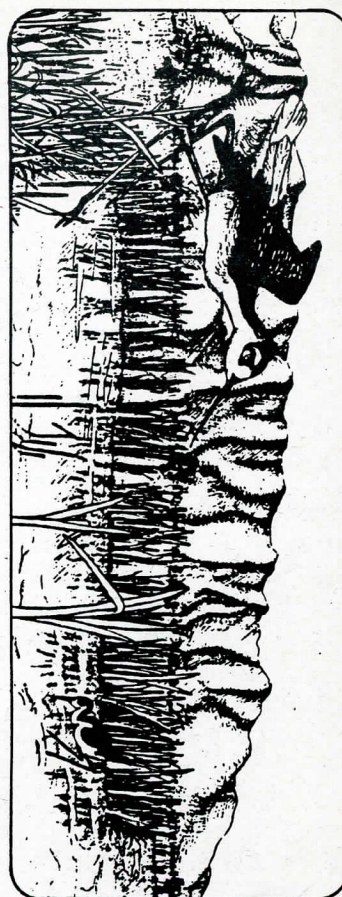
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THE STILT

BRIDGERLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. Box 3501
Logan, Utah 84323
Vol. 25, No. 2
October 1996



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 at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month, September through May. Locations may change monthly. Check calendar page. Everyone is welcome to attend.

President	Robert Schmidt, 755-9262
Vice President	Barrie Gilbert, 752-0946
Secretary	
Treasurer	Susan Drown, 752-3797
Conservation	Nick Strickland, 750-5035
Education	Jack Greene, 563-6816
Membership	Al Stokes, 752-2702
Field Trips	Al Stokes, 752-2702
Newsletter	Lois Olson, 752-9085
Circulation	Susan Durham, 752-5637
Hospitality	Tim & Jackie Henney, 755-6888
Hotline	Nancy Williams, 753-6268

Trustees

1993-96	Rebecca Echols, 752-2367 Richard Mueller, 752-5637
1994-97	Bryan Dixon, 752-6830; Glen Gantz, 258-2748; Ted Evans, 753-2259; Jan Anderson, 752-2946
1996	Suzanne Marychild, 755-5571; Peter Rubin; Allen Christensen, 258-5018

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 280 N. 300 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.

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, CO 80322-1001

LOCAL CHAPTER _____

Bridgerland Audubon Society
P.O. Box 3501
Logan, UT 84323-3501

W-52
Local Chapter Code
7XCHA

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