

THE STILT

BRIDGERLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 27, No. 4

December 1998

River Echoes

Swish, swirl, dip, pull. The bow slicing the water creates the music of the canoeist. In and out, arm forward, muscles pulling water toward the canoe. "We are following in the footsteps of Jim Bridger," says Reinhard Jockel, Cache Valley's bearded Thoreau archetype. "Bridger floated in a bull boat down the Bear River and ended in the Great Salt Lake. At that time the Salt Lake looked different; there were no Russian Olives, no Tamarisk." The paddles move in syncopated rhythm and Reinhard explains the introduction of the Russian Olive. A Marsh Wren twitters from the swiftly moving bank. It seems as though the river is stationary and the world, in its blue luminance, is rotating around us.

A laugh echoes across the water, from my position in the bow I shift my body so I can better see. Ten canoes splash the Bear River with a menagerie of color. Blue, yellow, red, beige, and green canoes float in haphazard unity, through the farmlands of Idaho and Utah.

The sun, at its zenith, creates a pleasant yellow warmth. It is Halloween, the last day of October, one of the last warm days of fall. LeRoy Beasley, the man in charge of the Audubon Canoe trip, could not have chosen a better day.

A Red-tailed Hawk circles above the river. I lay my paddle across the gunnels, grab binoculars, and focus on the spiraling hawk. I stare at its breathtaking beauty until it swerves in front of the sun. Cringing I drop the binoculars. Black vacant splotches dance on the banks of the river.

Swish, swirl, dip, pull. Water has the ability to collect people of passion. The canoeists find themselves sharing the music of paddles, knowledge, food, and companionship. All levels

of ability can be found in the nineteen people present. "The Audubon society seems to have new people every outing," says Jaimy Anderson while paddling the red kayak he rented from the Outdoor Recreation Center. "The power of the Bridgerland Audubon Society is that people attend because of interest, not because of race, color, or gender." Jaimy's statement is reinforced at lunch when people freely share their food. "You can find religion in the outdoors," says Alice Stokes, popping one of Reinhard's juicy grapes into her mouth. "There is no better way to spend an afternoon than on the Bear River. This is what life is all about."

Swish, swirl, dip, pull. Watching the vortexes from my paddle eternally swirling across the river. I am inclined to agree. This is what life is all about.

Continued on page 3.

Inside

GENERAL MEETING	2
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT	2
BOARD STUFF	2

December Calendar

Meetings

Tuesday, December 1, 7:00-8:00 a.m. , First Forest Breakfast at JB's Restaurant. Join other citizens in a relaxed breakfast meeting with Brian Ferebee, USFS District Ranger for the Logan District, to discuss concerns and issues on the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. The agenda for this coming meeting will be: 1) winter recreation conflicts, and 2) Naomi Wilderness Plan update. Anyone is welcome and any topic is fair game (after we get through the two on the agenda). This is shaping up to be a great way to exchange ideas between the conservation community and the federal agency which manages some of the most beautiful land in Utah. Come early if you like; breakfast on your own.

Thursday, December 10, 5:30 p.m. Board of Trustees Meeting, at the Logan City Hall meeting room, 255 North Main. All BAS members are invited to join us as we review projects, priorities and issues.

Thursday, December 10, 7:00 p.m. General Meeting, at the Logan City Hall meeting room, 255 N. Main. This month's meeting is a panel discussion on the Bear Hodges Timber Cut proposal. Invited speakers include Evelyn Sibbersen and Dan Arling, USFS, Drs. Jim Long and Mark Brunson, USU Department of Forestry and citizen scientists Drs. John Carter and Barrie Gilbert. The Bear Hodges project would involve large timber cuts in and around the Daniels School Forest south of Logan Canyon summit. Our objective is to invite a public discussion and learn about this important issue.

Field Trips

All BAS trips are open to the public. For more information, call the trip leader listed at the end of each description.

Saturday, December 19, Christmas Bird Count Alert! BAS's 22nd Annual Christmas Bird Count. The CBC is conducted every year in the same 15 mile diameter count area with compilations sent to a central database and an annual report and analysis. We'll put over a dozen teams in the field and hope to find 90+ species (in December no less). A wonderful and fun-filled winter's day for birders of all levels of skill. After the count we'll meet at the home of Sue and David Drown (1776 East 1400 North) for a potluck supper and the annual compilation. If we're lucky, someone's seen something really unusual which means you should leave a little time the next day to go see it for yourself! If you'd like to help our contact Keith Archibald, 752-8258. Cost is \$5 per person to cover national compilation costs.

Board Stuff (As opposed to bored stiff . . .)

BAS is governed by a Board of Trustees which meets once a month (see meetings listed in the Calendar). Good camaraderie as we fight the forces of evil and save the world. All BAS members are invited, of course.

Politics, processes and participation—three important “p”s. Politics can be nasty, but it has a positive side. Politics is how our government resolves conflicting values of different groups (rather than just letting everyone shoot it out). In a perfect world, the “political solution” would be fair, rational, based on sound input, science and history, and have a long term perspective. Of course, we humans are fraught with faults, so politics is often downright sleazy.

We develop processes to improve political solutions, we create advisory boards of citizens and representative governments intended to respond to citizen input. Alas, sometimes these fail because they get stacked with special interests. We get decisions pushed through in back-door meetings, or hurriedly made because information is expensive.

Here's where we come in. Participation. It's frustrating, time-consuming, and often fruitless, but participation is the only recourse we have to bend the political process. If we participate, we can usually get decision makers to hear (they may not actually “listen”) what WE believe to be truth. We can stay informed by reading, attending meetings, writing letters, and organizing our neighbors and colleagues. We can let our passion move us to writing letters and speaking out even though we would rather be on a hike, asleep in bed or reading a good book.

BAS recently adopted a mission statement with several goals (see elsewhere in this issue for the full text) wherein we commit to 1) environmental education, 2) outings, and 3) conservation. There are participation opportunities in all where we can make a difference.

Environmental Education – We are continuing to support the Stokes Nature Center. (I hope you all made it to their recent fund raiser!) We provide them board members, publicity, and dollars. Our members participate in the programs and we've made a moral commitment to ensuring that the SNC succeeds.

As another way to accomplish our education goals, we offer a general meeting every month with recent offerings on themes like fish ecology, birding and most recently, Native American science. In addition, we continue our annual environmental education grants (\$2,000 to local teachers), we sponsor Audubon Adventures for 25 classrooms, and make small grants for various projects supported by our members.

If that weren't enough, our outings always seem to offer an educational component—but out-of-doors and designed for fun. They are always open to the public, usually suitable for all ages and abilities, and cover a

wide range of topics from aquatic ecology, to geology, to wildlife, and all manner of topics scattered across the alphabet in between.

Conservation, though third on our goals list, is why Audubon Societies came about and the interests of BAS's membership continue to drive what we work on. We're planning a workshop in December on a local timber proposal. In January, we plan another workshop to update us on the Amalga Barrens Dam. In between, we're involved in policies concerning grazing, ORV use, dam re-licensing, wetlands conservation, wilderness, etc.

The take-away here is that the world will get worse if we don't speak up. (Unless one believes that Mother Nature hasn't quite got it right with this *homo sapiens* Experiment and when it fails, Ma will just have another go. This perspective is boring, however.)

We can make it better without shooting each other and, though it demands patience, composure and endless hours, we can participate in most of the process and make a political difference. It doesn't mean everyone has to attend meetings every night, write gobs of letters or get flat-ear from being on the phone. It does mean that we should each invest some effort in staying informed, and when the opportunity presents itself, take action.

The Board of BAS can map the direction, provide the opportunities, and keep the organization solvent, credible and alive. It's your job to jump in when the music stirs you. It's an important dance we do. The more we do it, the more graceful we become. Wanna waltz?

— Bryan Dixon

River Echoes

Continued from page 1.

The Canoe Trip Bird List

Black-capped Chickadee	Song Sparrow
Black-billed Magpie	Downy Woodpecker
Northern flicker	Redwing Blackbird
Belted King Fisher	Brewer's Blackbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Green-winged Teal
Ring-necked Pheasant	Marsh Wren
Mallards	Northern Harrier
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Canada Goose
Dark-eyed Junco	Evening Grosbeak
Great Blue Heron	American White Pelican

As well as a fox and later, a weasel swimming in the river.

— Elizabeth Ann Lester

E-mail service provided by Digital Planet. Use the following addresses to contact your BAS leadership:

stilt@digitalpla.net – for newsletter items
audubon@digitalpla.net – for anything else

Bird Seed

Bird seed is still available. Get it at Sunrise Cyclery, 138 North 100 East, Logan, where 50 pound bags sell for \$16. Too heavy to lift or don't have the means to pick it up? No problem. Call 258-5012 to make arrangements for free delivery! Alice Stokes also has 15 bags at her home.

New Members

Robert & Lois Anderson
David Beveridge
Ray Hardy
Lyle Henderson
Andreas Leidolf
Lance Nelson
Matt Radford
William G Taylor

Renewing Members

Marlene Beecher	Dawn Holzer
Claire S Caldes	Mark Leonhardt
Carolyn R Chase	The Long Family
Windsor Copley	Rosalie Mueggler
Edward & Deborah Evans	Richard J Mueller
Robert Hammond	Ann & John Mull
Ruth B Helm	Jeanette Norton
Marc D Henkels	Gene & Melle Washington

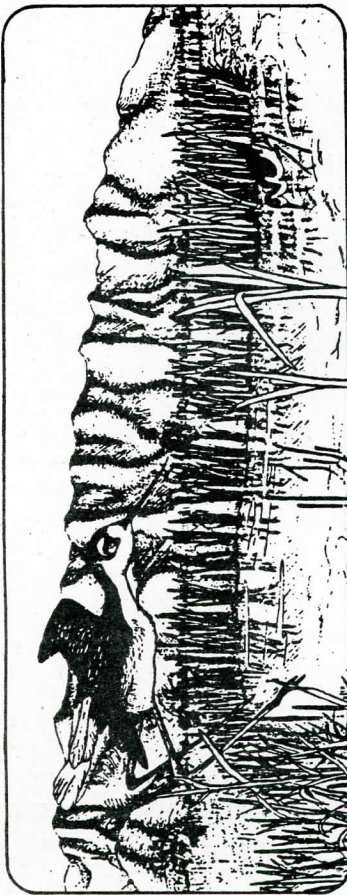
Bridgerland Audubon Society Mission

To conserve, enhance, and enjoy the natural environment with special emphasis on birds and their habitats for the benefit and education of humanity and for the biological diversity of the Earth.

Goals

- **Environmental Education**
Every program, outing, and activity carried out by BAS should educate participants about the environment we live in. BAS should consciously try to provide programs for both adults and youth, such as: Audubon Adventures in Cache Valley classrooms, programs at the Stokes Nature Center, and regular monthly meetings with themes to disseminate knowledge about the environment.
- **Outings**
BAS should offer at least two outings per month, open to the public, in which the participants can experience nature, learn about environment, and have fun doing so.
- **Conservation**
BAS should seek to influence private and public policy and programs to protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment.

Adopted October 8, 1998 by the Board of Trustees.



BRIDGERLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY
 P.O. Box 3501 Logan, Utah 84323
 Vol. 27, No. 4 December 1998

THE STILT

Nonprofit Organization
 BULK RATE
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Permit No. 104
 Logan, Utah

The Bridgerland Audubon Society meets the second Thursday of each month, September through June, in the Meeting Room of the Logan City Building, 255 N. Main. Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. The BAS Planning Committee meets at 5:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, September through June, The Conservation Committee will meet the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in Room 3 in Logan City Library. Locations may change monthly. Check calendar page. Everyone is welcome to attend.

President	Bryan Dixon, 752-6830
Vice President	Chris Wilson, 753-3769
Secretary	Wendy Hellstern, 753-8750
Treasurer	Susan Drown, 752-3797
Conservation	Bruce Pendery, 792-4150
Education	Jack Greene, 563-6816
Membership	Alice Lindahl, 753-7744
Field Trips	Ron Hellstern, 753-8750
Newsletter	Lois Olson, 752-9085
Circulation	Susan Durham, 752-5637
Hospitality	Tim & Jackie Henney, 755-6888
Hotline	Nancy Williams, 753-6268

Trustees

1995-98	Suzanne Marychild, 755-5571; Peter Ruben, 797-2490; Allen Christensen, 258-5018; Doug Tempel, 755-6774
1996-99	Jack Greene, 563-6816; Lois Olson, 752-9085; Ron Hellstern, 753-8750; Merr Lundahl, 753-1707
1997-20	Glen Gantz, 258-2748; Robert Schmidt, 755-9262; Teri Peery, 753-3249; Mae Coover, 752-8871

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.

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

Subscriptions to *The Stilt* are available to non-members for \$5.00 per year. Call Susan Durham, 752-5637. Also, call Susan for new subscriptions or address changes.