



# The Stilt

## State of the Society in the Year 2000: Bryan Dixon's Parting Words as President

Following is the text of the address I gave at the recent BAS Banquet. Now you can subject yourself to the boredom of a late night speech without even being there! Seriously, it's been an honor to serve as President of Bridgerland Audubon Society. These were my thoughts as I end my second term and turn over the reins.—Bryan

Audubon Society alive. I don't need to tell you that Bridgerland Audubon has survived. But has it done well?

You can evaluate an organization using a private sector model that boils down to four questions. Does it have solid products? Does it have a sound and loyal customer base? Is its

Bridgerland Audubon's mission is "to conserve, enhance, and enjoy the natural environment with a special emphasis on birds and their habitats for the benefit and education of humanity and for the biological diversity of the Earth." NAS President, Donal C. O'Brien, Jr., phrases it more succinctly as

trips. In each of these, we strive to generate passion for the out of doors, and offer the knowledge necessary for individuals to have a meaningful and positive impact on our world.

On the conservation front, our members write comments, organize meetings, attend hearings, and write letters to the editor. We speak out on forest issues, timber sales, ORV abuse and grazing reform. We fight for wetlands protection, water quality in the Bear and its tributaries, and rational wildlife management. We worked on the Logan Canyon highway, planning to protect open space, water management, and even urban parks and environments. We produce and fund workshops and we pay for part of an

(Continued on page 3)

**T**here are two questions I want to address. First, what do I need to tell you? Second, what do you need to hear?

Every organization faces challenges and crises over the years - only good ones survive. In the summer of 1996, BAS faced its most serious crisis ever when Allen Stokes, our mentor and teacher, passed away. I remember visiting Al a few months prior and he made us promise to keep Bridgerland

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management competent and efficient? And is it solvent and capable of meeting its financial commitments? We can answer yes to each of those.

creating a "culture of conservation."

Our products work on conservation issues, environmental education programs, and field

## Meet Your New BAS President

**H**ello, My name is Bruce Pendery. The purpose of this article is to introduce myself to you as I begin serving as your president of the Bridgerland Audubon Society. I have lived in Logan since 1982 and have been involved with BAS almost that long. During the 1980s and early 1990s I served as conservation chair and in several other roles. During most of the remainder of the 90s I took a break from Audubon, but again

became conservation chair during the last few years.

As the above indicates, my personal passion is for conservation activities. I think the biggest need relative to conservation in Cache Valley is to get beyond the purely volunteer status of efforts now. We need paid conservation staff in Cache County to pursue conservation full time. There is a world of difference between someone who is paid to be there every day of the week and who is al-

ways available to answer the phone, and those of us who shoehorn conservation activities in between other responsibilities. That is not to say BAS should hire staff itself, but we can facilitate the creation of such a position.

But while my personal passion is conservation, I believe the strength of BAS is its diversity of activities. Thus my number one priority will be to keep that diversity alive. Field trips

(Continued on page 4)

### This Month:

- New BAS Officers Elected
- More Great Outings Offered
- Reports from Early Spring Field Trips

### Next Month:

- More on Amalga Barrens
- New series profiles BAS members
- Kid's Place Returns

# Calendar

## Meetings & Notices

**M**ay's Board of Trustees meeting is 7 p.m.

Thursday, May 4, at the home of Bruce Pendery, 755 Canyon Road, Logan. All BAS members are invited to join us as we review ongoing projects, priorities and issues.

Looking for our new email address? It's:



stillnews@  
hotmail.  
com

And don't forget the website:

<http://www.audubon.org/chapter/ut/bridgerland>

**Did you notice?** Our publication's namesake, the Stilt, arrived back in the valley last month. The first sighting reported to us was April 6.

**Upcoming Field Trips** - Grab your datebook and pencil 'em in:

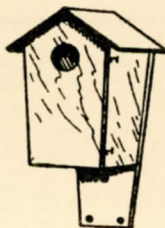
- **Saturday, June 3.** East Cache Valley and Lower Canyons Birding.
- **Friday, June 16.** Evening Full Moon Canoe Trip
- **Wednesday, June 21.** Summer Solstice Evening Canoe Trip
- **Saturday, June 24.** Tony Grove Wildlife.

**T**his month's general meeting is at 7 p.m., Thursday, May 11 at Chapter 2 Books, 130 N. 100

East, Logan. Bruce Thompson, education director of Friends of the Great Salt Lake, will give a talk entitled "The Lake Effect: Living Along the Shores of Something Great."



**C**ould you spare some time to install bird boxes for owls or bluebirds? BAS trustee Dick Hurren says he has a garage full of them—They're just waiting for eager hands. Call him at (435)734-2653.



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



**Don't have a canoe?** You can still join us. Consider renting one at USU Outdoor Recreation Center or Trailhead Sports.

## Field Trips

**T**he Great Salt Lake Birding Festival kicks off at 8 a.m. Saturday, May 6 at the

Davis County Fairground and runs through Saturday, May 13, with field trips, workshops, bird demonstrations, children's activities, displays, vendors, local artists, and live entertainment.

On Saturday, May 6 at 6:30 p.m., Pete Dunne of Cape May Observatory in New Jersey will be guest speaker at an International Dinner at the Fairpark. Dunne will also sign books from 1-4 p.m. On Sunday, May 7, there are several "behind the gates" field trips to the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, Gillmor Sanctuary and Antelope Island. Most events require a small fee. See the festival's website at <http://www.greatsaltlake-birdfest.com> for a schedule of events and registration information.

**W**est Cache Valley Birding- Join us Saturday, May 6,

as we explore some of the benches and canyons on the west side of Cache Valley looking for grassland sparrows (including Grasshopper Sparrows), Sharp-tailed Grouse, and early warblers. The shorebird migration should still be active, so we might stop by Shirley's Shorebird Mud Bar. Meet early at 8 a.m. at the parking lot north of Straw Ibis (50 East and 150 North, Logan). Bring lunch and water, for we may not return until mid-afternoon. For more information, call Keith, 752-8258.

**T**he Bird An-

**nual Bear River Bird Festival, Saturday, May 13,** is free and centered at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge. Activities begin with a breakfast at Pioneer Park in Brigham City on West Forest Street from 7-10:30 a.m. Birding tours and displays will be held at the Refuge from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. For more information, contact Kristen Gilbert at (435) 723-5887 x18, or [kristen\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:kristen_gilbert@fws.gov). BAS board member, Don McIvor, is organizing display tables for BAS on both Saturday events. The festival also needs experienced birders to volunteer for short shifts of a couple of hours to help visitors identify birds at stations around the dike. If you can help, contact Don at 563-6189 or [puma@cache.net](mailto:puma@cache.net).

**A**nnual Bear River Canoe Trips -

These are our traditional one-day trips down our own Bear River to explore wildlife and riparian habitats. We're sure to see some good warblers and the occasional beaver and muskrat. Ponder the Great Blue Heron rookery that went from 100 nests in 1986 to ZERO in 1997 and now back to over 40! Reservations required to keep the number of canoes to about 10 each day. Call Alice Lindahl, 753-7744, to register for Saturday, or Tim Vitale, 753-3814, to register for Sunday.



# From the Board

## State of the Society

(Continued from page 1)



environmental lobbyist to the Utah legislature. We work with other groups locally and on the Wasatch Front.

Our major thrust in environmental education for youth is through the Stokes Nature Center, which we founded and still help to fund. However, in the last five years we've also sponsored over twenty-five mini-grants to local teachers totaling over \$10,000 and we sponsor Audubon Adventures in two dozen classrooms in Cache Valley.

We promote education in the general public through our regular meetings and outings. Last year we held eight interesting monthly meetings and led over 30 field trips, each one designed to educate participants about some wonder of our natural world. Though some trips demand physical endurance, such as the trip to the Wellsville Hawkwatch, most are designed with families in mind.

And our customers respond. We currently have over 330 memberships, which works out to almost one thousand people. But we don't require membership - we also welcome the general public in all we do. And are they satisfied? They say so, and they make Bridgerland Audubon Society the single largest, most active, and I believe, most respected conservation organization in northern Utah.

So, we have good products, and a ready and stable base of customers, what about manage-

ment? I believe our incoming officers and current trustees form the most active and knowledgeable board I've known in Audubon. They range from students to retired folks, and include business people, educators and professionals. All of them care about what we do, give thoughtful input on all issues and devote hours of their personal time on a myriad of projects and programs. Most of the incoming board already have several years of experience in Bridgerland

proud of the work we're doing.

In 1994, I attended some of my first Board meetings at the home of Alice Lindahl, where we were glowing over several victories and successful campaigns. After about 20 minutes of that, I remember that Al Stokes broke in and said, "Ahem, so, what are you going to do to increase attendance at our meetings? Why aren't there more families? Why aren't there more students?" My Granny couldn't have put it better when she said, "When

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*"This is a wonderful place, but we, all of us, have a responsibility to help conserve it. If we don't, who will?"*



Audubon. They can provide the continuity and enthusiasm needed to carry the organization forward. Our newsletter, already noticed by other Audubon organizations as regular, timely, and full of good stuff, is getting even better.

And, finances? We're doing OK, thanks in part to the generosity of the Stokes family, but we also benefit from the donations of many members who have given spontaneously, or during Birdathons, auctions, and special fundraising efforts. Thanks to them, we currently have enough assets that we could continue at our current level of expenditures for 3-4 years without further assistance.

That's the answer to the first question - that's what I needed to tell you. We have a strong organization and we should be

you think you're green you're growing. When you think you're ripe, you're rotten." That's the second question, what do you need to know? The answer is that there is so much more we - you - should be doing.

Our products need to be expanded. We're not working on air quality - which is really transportation. We do nothing about recycling. We're not addressing non-point source water pollution - there's a great deal more we could do to force good citizenship on the part of farmers who live along the Bear River. We don't watch for all the small construction projects that inexorably eat up our wetlands. We aren't doing anything on state-owned lands. We do precious little on open space. Only a few of us have spent the endless hours necessary to be-

gin to understand the many projects and programs underway in the Forest Service. We don't address any of the projects in the Caribou National Forest just a few miles to the north. We're not active in endangered species. We don't monitor grazing. We don't work much on wilderness. We aren't buying up critical habitats.

And our customers? It's true our membership has stayed steady these last few years while that of some environmental groups has even declined. But with the increasing population in Cache County, a greater awareness of environmental issues generally in the United States, and a local university population, why is our membership stuck at 350? Shouldn't our membership be several thousand? Moreover, we only see a small fraction of our members at meetings and outings.

Management? Yes, we have a dedicated Board, and we have a number of enthusiastic trip leaders and a solid core group of activists who do research, write comments, attend meetings, organize events and put out information to our governmental officials and the press. But the number of activists is less than 10 percent of our membership. We all lead busy lives. We have responsible jobs. Many of us came to this place or stay in this place because of the mountains and marshes and we want to spend a significant part of our time out there, and not necessarily in meetings - I know. This is a wonderful place, but we, *all* of us, have a responsibility to help conserve it. If we don't, who will?

(Continued on page 4)

# From the Board

## State of the Society

(Continued from page 3)



We belong to Audubon because we believe in the "culture of conservation." We believe that our place is *within* the world, *among* its creatures - not on "top" of it. We delight in the joys of discovery of nature, and we delight even more in sharing our knowledge with others.

We just need to expand that a little bit. Many hands make light work, goes the Chinese saying. If each of us tried to donate just a few hours every few months, BAS would gain a great deal. Allen Stokes was a master of the ask. You'd see him across the room, heading your way, and you couldn't escape. A few seconds later, he'd be right there asking you to do something for Audubon. "Organize this? How about

sitting at a membership table next Wednesday? Can you get a few friends together to help out on the tree planting project next month? Would you take on the banquet this year? How about leading the Birdathon? You can do it!" And, trying to hide your reluctance, you'd agree. And then, you'd do the deed, and it WOULD take effort and time and usually money. But, in do-

And financially, well, yes, we are solvent. But maybe that's because we've set our sights too low. Instead of \$500 projects, we need to start spending \$5,000 a year to acquire some critical wetlands just a little north of here. We really should be spending \$50,000 a year on a full time office for environmental matters - right here in Logan. We can afford it. You

Alice Stokes Nature in Logan Canyon needs a partner - the Allen and Alice Stokes Nature Center in Cache Valley, a place along the Bear River where we can lay out trails and develop plantings for wildlife, and where young and old can learn more about our world.

So, yes, I need to tell you that we've done well. We're doing all right. You can be proud of being a member of Bridgerland Audubon Society.

But the other thing you need to hear is that we can do better. We can do it together - all of us. And we can do it now. Right now. Get involved. Feed the passion for conservation. And learn the knowledge to channel that passion to good deeds for our fellow critters now and in the future.

Bridgerland Audubon has a place for you - in activism, in education, in outings, and in good fun and fellowship. You are Audubon. We are what you do.

—Bryan Dixon

***"Get involved. Feed the passion for conservation. And learn the knowledge to channel that passion to good deeds for our fellow critters now and in the future."***



ing it you'd discover a real joy - of participating, of contributing, and reveling in good works with your fellows. It's a helluva lot more fun giving than receiving, as each of us has discovered in our adulthood.

know there's work enough to do, and if each member kicked in just \$200 per year, we'd have it! And then there's the next big challenge. We need \$500,000 to create a new nature center out in the valley. The Allen and

## New President

(Continued from page 1)

the Christmas Bird Count, education, monthly membership meetings (speakers), and the Stilt, are all critical to maintaining this rather remarkably active organization. I hope we can maintain an approximately equal balance among conservation, education, and the many other activities we engage in.

If I can be of help to you or you have a comment or concern, call me at 792-4150 or email me at [bruce@mail.n1.net](mailto:bruce@mail.n1.net). I look forward to serving you and BAS.

—Bruce Pendery

## Election 2000 Brings New BAS Officers

**R**esults of this year's election of officers didn't include any surprises, but the results are now official.

All candidates nominated for office or seats on the board of trustees met with approval of voting BAS members and were introduced at the annual Bridgerland Audubon Society annual banquet on April 14.

Most notably, Bryan Dixon steps down as president after serving two consecutive terms. Taking his place is former conservation chair Bruce Pendery, a Logan attorney.

Bill Masslich, a science teacher at Cache Valley Learning Center, will take over as vice-president, a position formerly held by Chris Wilson.

Suzanne Pratt fills an empty spot as BAS's secretary, while Susan Drown continues as the organization's treasurer.

Beginning three-year terms on the board of trustees are long-time Auduboners Mae Coover, Ron Goode, Don McIvor, and Teri Perry.

Other changes of note include the creation of a wetlands conservation chair, held by Alice Lindahl. Bryan Dixon

has agreed to accept the position of membership chair, while Bruce's ascent to the presidency has left the conservation chair open. Anyone interested in picking up where he left off should contact a member of the board.

In addition, Miriam Hugentobler has taken over editorship of the Stilt, a position held by Stokes Nature Center's Lois Olson for eight years. Lois will continue as a BAS trustee.

As always, if you need to contact your officers, their phone numbers are listed on the Stilt's back page.

# From the Field

## Eagle Watch at Willard Canyon

**W**e started our March 11 outing in the Straw Ibis parking lot debating whether or not to go on the trip based on the wintry weather conditions. However, Reinhardt Jockel's enthusiasm and Jack Greene's arrival for the trip swayed our thinking to give it a go.

When we arrived at the gravel pit in Willard, we could only see a few eagles off in the distance towards the Great Salt Lake causing us to second guess our decision. However, we decided to hike out of the gravel pit to the bottom of the quartz rock slope, but no eagles in sight. We decided to continue hiking which turned into climbing up the quartz rock slope being careful of footing on snow patches and hand holds on prickly pear cactus. Although we still did not see any eagles, I did manage to find some prickly pear cactus causing me to pull quills from my hands.

At the top of the quartz rock slope, we finally saw some golden and bald eagles while



having a snack and enjoying the view of the Great Salt Lake. We continued hiking up a Juniper tree slope in calf- to knee-deep snow to our destination, a spectacular overlook of Willard Canyon on top of 1000-foot cliffs, but no eagles.

As spectacular as the view was, the overlook was snow-covered, windy, and cold with

occasional snow showers. Despite the wintry conditions, we decided to eat lunch and wait for eagles, but no eagles came. Just as cold weather forced an early departure, three bald eagles flew overhead putting on an aerial show making the hike even more worthwhile than just the view.

The hike down the juniper

tree slope was more or less a controlled slide through the deep snow. However, the hike down the quartz rock slope was much easier than the hike up it, and Jack Greene made an amazing discovery along the way. He found a Native American pictograph at the entrance of a small cave. We took a few pictures of it, and theorized it might represent an eagle coincidentally fitting the theme of our hike.

We saw several eagles on the hike down which were a beautiful sight against the quartz rock backdrop. Reinhardt Jockel even found some small wildflowers just starting to bloom. Just as we thought the adventure was coming to an end, we found ourselves on another more or less controlled slide down a loose dirt embankment of the gravel pit making our way back to the cars.

Just as we thought the eagle watching was over, a mature bald eagle flew over our car as we were getting in it. Despite the wintry conditions and not seeing as many eagles as in years past, the eagles we saw and discoveries we made more than made up for the strenuous yet adventurous hiking.

—Jim Kingsland

## Sage Grouse Courtship in Curlew National Grasslands

**A** group of about 20 people led by LeRoy Beasley journeyed April 7 from Logan to Curlew Valley in Southern Idaho about 6 miles north of Snowville, Utah. We camped on the shore of Stone Reservoir. When it got dark we had a great look at the three planets (Jupiter, Saturn and Mars) low in the western sky. Mars will pass both going east while Jupiter and Saturn area getting

closer together for their conjunction near the sun May 26-30, which will be visible in the east not long before sunrise.

We got up at 5 a.m. in the darkness the next day, to get to the leks led by Forest Service Biologist Ken Timothy, a USU graduate. In part we had to drive over trackless sagebrush to get to the lookout ridge from where we could see the sage grouse on other ridges against the brightening eastern sky.

Bryan Dixon counted 31 of the big birds strutting around. Their courtship is a rather sedate affair compared to the Sharp-tailed Grouse's, which is rather frenetic. Both species are doing pretty well here, according to Timothy. They are not endangered or threatened here as they could be in other parts of their range. What the reasons are is not known despite many studies. At Curlew National Grassland, they do a lot of active

management of vegetation such as burning, disking, and reseeding to provide a diversity of habitats.

We returned to the camp for breakfast, then went birding to the north end of the reservoir and Sweetan Pond. We saw more loons on the water. Some people were lucky to hear them call and see them display. We also saw and heard a Sage Thrasher sing.

—Reinhardt Jockel

