



# The Stilt

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Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

## Join the Christmas Bird Count

**W**anna make people think you're winter weird? Here's your chance. Come and count birds on a cold day in December.

Actually, it's not cutting edge weird anymore, just sort of ho-hum weird. I mean, if 60 or so folks of all ages and walks of life participate and end the day in an old-fashioned potluck, how weird can it really be? Still, most people in Cache Valley will think you're a little added to give up a TV football game on a warm couch for trudging around the valley marking down every single bird you see.

There's an important purpose, though. In 1900, conservationists were moved by the general lack of public concern about wildlife and decided to replace the Christmas Side Hunt with a Christmas Bird Count. It's gotten so popular that last year 55,994 people throughout the western hemisphere participated

in 1,981 counts, and recorded 73,137,928 birds. The highest count circle was the Rain Forest Aerial Tram in Costa Rica with 400 species. The highest in the U.S. was in Matagorda County, Texas, with 243.

Many count circles posted record highs last year. Prudhoe Bay, for example, recorded 129 common ravens and...well...that was the only species, but it was a record. Our own count also posted a record high number of species. After tying the record of 98 species during the evening potluck, three lunatics risked reputation and jail time to find the 99<sup>th</sup>, a wood duck, at about 11 p.m. near Willow Park. Think of it — it's cold, dark and snowy, yet we can find almost 100 species of birds in a single day within a 7.5-mile radius. This is one way-rad-gnarly-deluxe-amundo place. The rule is, count on any one day between Decem-

ber 14 and January 5 within the same prescribed circle. Our circle was established in 1955 and is centered on an intersection in Hyde Park. This year, it's scheduled for Saturday, December 20. Keith Archibald, ECP, (Exalted Count Poobah), will once again organize us into 11 teams. Each team leader will have scouted their area in the weeks preceding the count and will divide the team up to cover as much of the area as possible. Some will be experienced birders, some will be beginners (this is a terrific way to get started birding because eyes to find birds are as important as the skill of identification).

Anyone with particularly good potluck dinner talent is especially valuable, for we meet that evening at the home of Sue and David Drown (1776 East 1400

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# State Notes

## Wolf Working Group Convenes

The first meeting of the Wolf Management Working Group took place on November 10. As you may recall, House Joint Resolution 12 of the 2003 Legislature directs Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to develop a Gray Wolf Management Plan, and the Wildlife Board and DWR

### From Our Lobbyist

have chosen to convene a working group to represent stakeholder interests important to this plan. There are 13 working members, representing the interests of agriculture, sportsmen, academia, wolf advocates, local government, the Ute Tribe, and at-large conservation organizations. Audubon Council is one of the two at-large conservation organizations.

The Working Group goal is to develop a draft wolf management plan by approximately May 1, 2005. All meetings are open to the public and our minutes will be posted on the DWR website. Addition-

ally, the Working Group has a panel of technical advisors from DWR, USDA Wildlife Services, and US Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as professional facilitators from Dynamic Solutions Group.

In our first meeting, we set forth our ground rules, reviewed and approved a Charter, scheduled several future meeting dates, and began fleshing out our work plan. We requested DWR Mammals Biologist Craig McLaughlin to prepare an executive summary of biological and legal facts for presentation to the group on January 20. Input to Craig for that summary was due by Thanksgiving.

On February 24, the group will meet in preparation for a series of 8-10 public scoping meetings to be held all around the state from March 8 through 19. Details of those meetings will be addressed and publicized in coming months.

The cordiality and professionalism displayed by group members, the public, and DWR bode well for the process. Audubon has an important role to play on the Working Group. We have a positive working relationship with all of the stakeholder groups, as well as with Wildlife Board members and Legislators whose support will be essential to acceptance and approval of the Management Plan. We are also the only organization whose representative is a RAC member. The primary concern of Utah Wolf Forum, expressed repeatedly, is that the RACs, Board, or Legislature will somehow undermine or reject the final work product. I respect these concerns, and will do everything I can on behalf of Audubon Council and the Wolf Working Group to prevent that kind of outcome.

—Debbie Goodman  
State Audubon Lobbyist

# Audubon Calendar

December 2003

**3 Board of Trustees Meeting.** Bridgerland Audubon Society's Board of Trustees meet at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the offices of Bio-Resources, 135 E. Center, Logan. All interested are invited to attend.

**11 The Lake Effect...Living Together on the Shores of Something Great.** Featuring the work of over 30 area photographers, this dramatic slide show experience celebrates the biological, economic and recreational attributes of our own Great Salt Lake. This presentation is brought to you by Brian Nicholson and Friends of the Great Salt Lake. Join us Thursday evening at 7 p.m. at the Logan City Library meeting room, 255 N. Main Street, Logan.

**13 Looking for Unusual Species in Northern Box Elder County.** Due to its northern location and flat prairie-type habitat, northern Box Elder County is more often than not the place where very unusual species are found in Utah in winter. Lapland longspurs and snow buntings have both been found there in recent years. A gyrfalcon was there for a short time a few years ago, and there are even records of snowy owls having been in the area. Join us for a fun Saturday to explore the various habitats from Snowville through Park Valley. We will almost certainly see ferruginous hawks, prairie falcons, great horned owls and golden eagles, among other things. Bring a lunch or plan to buy one at Molly's Café in Snowville, and wear warm clothing. We will plan to return to Logan by mid-afternoon. Meet at the parking lot between Logan Fire Station and Café Ibis (50 East 150 North) at 8:30 a.m.

**20 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Logan Christmas Bird Count.** A tradition in England since 1900, the Christmas Bird Count is now held in many areas of the United States. It has been held in the same area in Cache Valley for over 20 years. Last year we counted about 20,000 birds and 99 species. Teams are assigned particular areas, and some folks (but certainly not all) start before dawn and go until dark. Participants are welcome, even if they can take part only for a few hours. A potluck dinner is held afterwards, where we go over the numbers and species of birds seen. Please come join us. The more participants we have, the more fun we will have, and the more accurate and complete our count will be. If you can help out, call Keith Archibald, 752-8258, or the partners you intend to go with so the partner can call Keith. If you want to participate but don't have binoculars, don't let that stop you. Call Dick Hurren, (435) 734-2653, and he will find a pair that you can borrow for the day.

**27 Hot Spots from the Bird Count.** Join us as we go back to some of the spots where rare or unusual birds were spotted during the CBC. No promise can be made that the birds will still be there, but often they are. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the parking lot between the Logan Fire Station and Café Ibis. Wear warm clothing and bring some munchies because we may not be finished until a little after noon. For further information, call Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653.



*If you'd like to come along on a field trip but do not have binoculars, call Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653. He'll try to find a pair for you to use.*

## Future Events

**January 8th, 2004 Monthly Meeting.** David Lancy, a professor at USU in the department of Sociology, Social Work and Anthropology, will give us a talk on "Hanging Out with Mountain Gorillas." David visited the gorilla sanctuary last year and trekked into the rain forest to see the group that is adjusted to the visits of people. David has video footage of the event and another participant in this trek will show his slides. Don't miss this one!

**Early May – Spring Migration in Port Aransas, Texas.** We will be going to the south Texas Gulf Coast to see the spring migration spectacular there. This is one of the very best spots in the nation to observe huge numbers of spring migrant birds. The tentative dates for our stay are May 1-4. We plan on renting a condo, so we need to get a fix within the next 60 days on how many plan to attend. A \$100 deposit will be required before we include you in the reservation plans. This should be a very exciting trip, so we hope you will plan to go with us. To make your reservation or to obtain further information, call Val Grant, 753-5370; Sue and Dave Drown, 752-3797; or Dick Hurren, (435) 734-2653. Travel arrangements may include a flight to Houston with a commuter flight to Corpus Christi, or a direct flight to San Antonio and a 1.5-hour drive to Port Aransas. The second option is preferred, and we may rent a van or two and share the cost.

**Mid-May – Mountain Plovers and Endangered Plants of Eastern Utah.** We are planning to take an overnight foray to Myton Bench in eastern Utah in mid-May to see the birding sights there, and particularly to find the elusive mountain plover. We are in touch with individuals who have been part of the monitoring of mountain plover in Utah, so we believe we have a very good chance of finding these phantoms. We are awaiting word of which weekend in May will be the best time. There is a campground just outside Duchesne, one or two motels in Duchesne, and more in Roosevelt. We'll travel Friday night to Duchesne (about a 4-5 hour trip), track down the plovers Saturday morning, check out the Pariette marshes and active ferruginous hawk nests, then look for five endangered plants found in the immediate area.

**January 2005 – Hawaii's Endemic Species.** We are also making plans for a trip to the big island of Hawaii. Most of Hawaii's endemic species of birds are in rapid decline, and a number may go extinct within the next few years. We plan to see these marvelous birds before that can happen. This trip is tentatively planned for early January 2005. We know an individual on the big island who will house us (up to 20 of us) for free. So if you haven't been to Hawaii, or want to go back, please come and join us. We know this is way out there in the future, but we want to give you plenty of time to work it into your schedule. For more information, call Val Grant, 753-5370; Sue and Dave Drown, 752-3797; or Dick Hurren, (435) 734-2653.

## Christmas Bird Count

*(Continued from p.1)*

North in Logan – take 1400 North until it turns into 1500 North, go as far east as you can, back up 20 feet and turn right onto 1800 East, then take your first left, they're in the cul de sac) to chow down, swap stories and tally the results. The data from our count are then posted to a web site, complete with appropriate documentation on any oddities. That site, <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/cbc.html>, is available for anyone to peruse. Check out other count circles, or look at our own over the past years.

The CBC is the longest running, most comprehensive data source for research on bird populations in the world. Scientists use it to gauge the health and dynamics of bird populations over long periods of time. The data are priceless, for it'd be impossible to gather this much information without volunteer dedication. We try to make it fun, and we hope newcomers will feel welcome, but the bottom line is that it's important for bird conservation. And bird conservation is at the heart of the BAS mission.

—Bryan Dixon

# Welcome to BAS

## Renewing Members

Jeff Allan & Jennifer Hoffman	Harvey Mohr
Fred Baker	Rosalie Mueggler
Jerry Burn	Mary Palley
Renee Chi	Richard & Virginia Ratliff
Ardelle King	John N Ream, Jr
James E Kingsland	R J Shaw
Nancy Mesner	Emily Speth

## New Members

Carl Brothersen  
Teri Johnson

## Chapter Transfers

Clark & Leanna Ballard

# Bridgerland Audubon contacts

## Trustees

2001-2004 Merr Lundahl, 753-1707; Dave Drown, 752-3797; Jack Greene, 563-6816  
 2002-2005 Jim Cane, 713-4668; Joyce McMullin, 713-4399; Dick Hurren 435/734-2653; Jamie McEvoy, 753-3559  
 2003-2006 Ron Goede, 752-9650; Kate Stephens, 755-0608; Andree Walker, 755-2103

## Bridgerland Audubon Contacts

President	Val Grant, 752-7572, biores@mtwest.net
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Sanctuary	Jim Cane, 713-4668, jimcane@cc.usu.edu or Bryan Dixon, 752-6830, bdixon@xmission.com

Membership in the Bridgerland Audubon Society includes a subscription to *The Stilt*, as well as *Audubon* magazine. The editor of *The Stilt* invites submissions, due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Send to stiltnews@hotmail.com.

## National Audubon Society Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to contribute to Audubon and receive the Bridgerland Audubon newsletter, *The Stilt*, and the *National AUDUBON* magazine, as a:

- New member of the National Audubon Society and Bridgerland Audubon.
- Renewing member of the National Audubon Society and Bridgerland Audubon.

My check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed (\$20 membership dues)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



Please make all checks payable to National Audubon Society and send with this card to:  
 National Audubon Society  
 Membership Data Center  
 PO Box 51001  
 Boulder, CO 80322-1001  
 W-52 Local Chapter Code: 7XCHA

Note to new National Audubon members: To get on *The Stilt* newsletter mailing list without the usual 8 week delay, contact Susan Durham, 753-5637, sdurham@cc.usu.edu.

Prefer the local newsletter only? Send \$20 and this form to: Bridgerland Audubon Society, PO Box 3501, Logan, UT 84323-3501 for a subscription to *The Stilt*.

National Audubon occasionally makes its membership list available to selected organizations. To have your name omitted from this, please check this box.



# *The Stilt*

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**Visit our website: <http://www.bridgerlandaudubon.org>**

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Common Ground Outdoor Adventures is pleased to announce their 4th annual 'Holiday Cards with a Cause' fundraiser. These high-quality color prints feature three winter scenes by artist Jerry Fuhriman. Cards are available in any quantity with customized imprinting available or can be purchased in gift boxes of 12 cards. All proceeds provide accessible and affordable recreational opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities in Northern Utah. Contact Common Ground at (435) 713-0288 for ordering information or visit [www.cgadventures.org](http://www.cgadventures.org). Gift boxes are also available for purchase at Fuhriman's Framing and Fine Art, Chapter Two Books, the AVA, Accents, and Shangri-La.

Holiday Cards with a Cause