



The Stilt

Volume 32, Issue 4
April 2003

Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

It's Banquet Time

Join us on Wednesday, April 16 for the Annual Bridgerland Audubon Society Banquet.

This year's banquet is being held at the Coppermill Restaurant, 55 N. Main St., Logan.

Festivities will begin at 6 p.m. with music and a social., followed by a delightful dinner.

Our speaker will be USU Fisheries and Wildlife Professor and BAS member Robert Schmidt. The topic of his talk is "Wolves in Utah."

Robert Schmidt has been a key player in setting the stage for a scientific evaluation of wolf recovery in the West.

Schmidt comes to USU from California, where he earned a PhD in

Biological Ecology at the University of California at Davis in 1986, specializing in disturbed environments, especially those with canids.

He has been on the USU faculty since 1991. Schmidt's current research efforts include:

- Exotic and invasive species ecology and management
- Taboo areas within wildlife management
- Livestock predation management systems
- The sociology of wildlife biologists
- Public attitudes toward wildlife management practices
- The emerging nuisance wildlife control industry

- Predicting the biological, social and economic impacts of gray wolves in Utah.

He is actively involved in The Wildlife Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the National Animal Damage Control Association.

The banquet will also include an award ceremony recognizing recipients of this year's Education and Conservation awards.

Tickets for the banquet are available at Fuhri-man's Fine Art and Framing and Chapter II Books for \$20 per person. Come out and support your local chapter!

Inside this issue:

Banquet Time	1
Chapter Notes	2
Audubon Calendar	3
Taking Charge of Teasel	5
State Notes	6
Audubon Contacts & Membership Update	7

Chapter Notes

Hi Campers—

It's election time again, and this year we have four open seats on our Board of Trustees. We

From Our President

have four nominations for those positions, listed on the ballot on page 7. You may vote for these four nominees or submit the name of a write-in candidate. Then mail in your ballot (Bridgerland Audubon Society, P.O. Box 3501 Logan, Utah 84323-3501) or submit it at the upcoming BAS banquet on April 16.

Suzanne Pratt Johnson has submitted her resig-

nation as secretary. Jamey Anderson has agreed to replace Suzanne. To say that we will miss Suzanne is an understatement. She turned presidential babblings into reasonable utterances and retained our Board's sound decisions for posterity. We look forward to having Suzanne with us again at some future time and wish to convey a hearty thanks to Jamey for his enthusiastic acceptance of this responsibility. May both of you and the rest of us wake up tomorrow, hearing "W" say, "just kiddin!"

Other changes among Bridgerland Audubon volunteers: Sandra and Ron Goede have agreed to help Bill Masslich out

with locating and hog-tying our monthly speakers for the general meetings. Jim Kingsley will be helping Dick Hurren with our outings schedule, a schedule without peer among Audubon chapters. Gail Christensen is helping Teri Peery put together this year's banquet. And lastly, one of our trustees, Jamie McEvoy, is no longer living in Logan; hence, it's difficult for her to make meetings. If you would like to nominate a replacement for Jamie, please call me at 753-5370 or email me at biores@mtwest.net

—Val Grant
BAS President

Thanks to BAS from our Friends at SNC

On behalf of the staff and board of the Stokes Nature Center, I would like to thank the members of the Bridgerland Audubon Society for their recent contribution of \$2,000 to the SNC Partners in Nature Education (PINE) fund. PINE

funds provide important learning opportunities to students in Cache Valley who would not otherwise be able to participate in SNC programming because of a lack of funding. Teachers with students participating in SNC School Programs

and Stokes Field Expeditions are eligible to apply for these funds. BAS's support of nature education has the power to affect many lives and we thank you for your generosity.

—Janna Custer
SNC Executive Director

Audubon Calendar

April 2003

2 BAS Board Meeting. The Board of Trustees will meet Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the offices of Bio-Resources, 135 E. Center in Logan. All interested are invited to attend. Note that there will be no general meeting this month. Join us at the April 16 banquet instead.

5 Roadside Cleanup Rally. Some years ago, BAS assumed responsibility for cleaning up litter along part of the highway west of Richmond. We are currently on schedule in fulfilling this responsibility and want to keep it that way. We thus put out a special plea to all BAS members and friends for support. If we have a strong turnout, we can take care of this assignment in short order and have fun and good association with one another in the process. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the parking lot between the Logan Fire Station and Café Ibis (50 E. 150 North) in Logan. Bring gloves and suitable clothing. Bags and safety vests will be provided. Carpooling will be available. For more information call Jim Hoffmann 787-4053 or Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653.

16 Bridgerland Audubon Society Banquet. Come join your fellow Auduboners at 6 p.m. Wednesday at the Copper Mill Restaurant for a pleasant evening. There will be music and a social starting at 6 p.m., followed by a delightful dinner. Our speaker, USU Wildlife Professor Robert Schmidt, will give us an update on wolves in Utah. Education and conservation awards will also be presented. Please come support your local chapter. Tickets are available at Fuhriman's Framing & Fine Art and Chaper II books for \$20 a person.

19 Amalga Barrens for Shorebirds. The Amalga Barrens are a magnificent, ever-changing habitat. Join us as we travel there to see what species of shorebirds and other birds of note are passing through Cache Valley. We will also spend a bit of time at BAS's new sanctuary, which borders the Barrens. This part of April can be a fantastic time for viewing migrating shorebirds. Mammals, such as red fox and badgers, are also seen at or near the Barrens at this time of year, and wildflowers are in bloom. We will leave from the parking lot between the Logan Fire Station and Café Ibis (50 E. 150 North) in Logan at 8:30 a.m. and will return in early afternoon. If there is enough interest, some of us can take the long way home and view other habitats. Trip leaders for this event will be Keith Archibald (birds) and Reinhard Jockel (wildflowers). For more information call Keith, 752-8258, or Dick Hurren, (435) 734-2653.

Earth Day Celebration. On Saturday, April 19th, there will be a tree planting at Denzil Stewart Nature Park to celebrate Earth Day. The park is located at 700 East 100 South in Logan. This event begins at 11 a.m. Activities include tree planting, nature walks and talks, and music. A Kid's Parade starts at 2 p.m., costumes welcome. Baby trees, shovels, and refreshments will be provided. Old clothes and gloves recommended. Smiles required. For more information call the Utah Conservation Corps at (435) 797-0964.

25 Extended Foray to Lytle Ranch Preserve in Southwestern Utah. The Lytle Ranch Preserve is located in the extreme southwestern corner of Utah, near the Nevada and Arizona borders. Since it is part of the Mojave Desert, it has a very different set of birds and other wildlife than the rest of Utah. Scott's orioles, vermillion flycatchers and a whole set of other very tropical looking birds are seen there, and lots of migrating song birds heading further north should also be there at this time. One of the leaders also knows where there are desert tortoise and other reptiles of note in the area. We will also visit other points of interest. For more information regarding accommodations (motels or campgrounds) and possible carpooling call Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653. For general information, call Dick or Allen Christensen, 258-5019. Plan to travel down

individually or in small groups on Friday the 25th and overnight. We will then arise early on Saturday, meet, and drive out to the preserve. After we have satisfied ourselves at the preserve we will take in other sights. For those interested, we can also take in other attractions part of the day on Sunday the 27th.

26 Utah Audubon Council Spring Retreat. Wasatch Audubon will play host to the state council's spring retreat on Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27 at the Ogden Nature Center, 966 W. 12th Street, in Ogden. The group will meet at noon Saturday for a field trip to Willard Bay State Park and Perry Nature Park. A potluck and general meeting will follow at 6 p.m. at the Nature Center. Participants will start their day early on Sunday with a 6:30 a.m. walk along the Nature Center's trails, followed by an 8 a.m. breakfast at the Ogden Nature Center hosted by Wasatch Audubon. A business meeting for council members will begin at 9 a.m.

29 Evening Canoe Trip to Lower Bear River, Logan River, or Cutler Marsh. It's spring migration, with incoming shorebirds and waterfowl at their peak at the end of April. Join us as we explore Cache Valley wildlife from the water's surface. Meet Tuesday evening at 6 p.m. at the parking lot between the Logan Fire Station and Café Ibis (50 E. 150 North). Bring your own canoe (rentals are available at USU Outdoor Recreation, 797-3264; Muddy Road Outfitters, 753-8388; or Trailhead Sports, 753-1541). Return about 9 p.m. For more information, call Bryan or Jean at 752-6830.

Looking Ahead

May 15-18— Extended Foray to Yellowstone, and Not Just for Wolves. We plan to take a three-nighter to Yellowstone. There will be plenty of time to observe wolves but we will also take special birding side trips. For information on accommodations, call Allen Christensen, 258-5019. For general information, call Allen or Dick (435) 734-2653.

Mid-June— Boating the Upper Bear River. This is an annual overnight float and camping spectacular. For advance information call Bill Masslich, 753-1759.

Other Extended Forays in the Offing. The Uinta Mountains, the Ruby Mountains in Nevada, Great Basin National Park, Deseret Ranch.



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.

2003 UCC Summer Crew Member Positions!

Work outside and make a difference! Join the Utah Conservation Corps this summer and spend 3 to 6 months engaged in service benefiting communities and our public lands. Members work in crews of six to seven constructing trails, restoring habitat, building fence and organizing volunteers. Projects can be physically intense and require long days outside. Benefits include a living allowance, education award and great experience. Application Deadline: April 18

For more information, contact Kate at (435) 797-0964 or our website www.usu.edu/ucc

Taking Charge of Teasel

An exotic invader is stealthily spreading at our Barrens Sanctuary. No, this is not a case for the Department of Homeland Security, for the invader is a familiar weed, the common teasel (*Dipsacus sylvestris*). A relative of this teasel was originally brought to North America centuries earlier from Europe, where the spiky seed heads were used in textile mills to raise the nap of cloth. Steel combs soon substituted for that purpose, but the legacy of that introduction is the weedy teasel.

Left to its own devices, teasel forms a carpet of leafy rosettes that smothers surrounding vegetation. Teasel plants spend several years growing a substantial taproot, then in one season, send up a flower stalk, bloom, set seed and die, leaving the attractive spiky seed head to stand sentinel through the coming winter. Each flower head yields several thousand seeds. These seeds fortunately don't travel very far, but they do remain viable in the soil beneath the parent plant for several years.

At our Barrens sanctuary there are 4-5 solid stands of teasel. Many more small patches are easily found by their ranks of old flower heads. Around these you can see constel-



Mature teasel seedheads at BAS's Barrens Sanctuary.

lations of smaller rosettes that have not yet matured enough to flower. These provide ample evidence that, left untouched, teasel will continue to expand and eventually dominate our sanctuary.

Teasel control is well suited to Audubon, for the plant is distinctive and the methods low-tech and safe. We should obtain noticeable control with a few years of periodic effort and vigilance. The idea is to find and kill the current crop of plant rosettes and remove flower heads once blooming has commenced. Plants are recognizable by their dense rosettes of spiny leaves; you can look at ones with old dry flowering stalks to convince yourself of their identity. Individual plants

can be killed mechanically, one at a time, by slicing the taproot an inch or two below the soil surface and yanking it out of the soil, sort of like spearing dandelions in the home lawn. Where there are hundreds of closely-packed plants in a stand, we will probably resort to a short-lived herbicide like "Roundup." Round-up only affects actively photosynthesizing tissues of green plants. Applied precisely and early in the spring, before any of the natives have greened up, this short-lived herbicide will only affect the teasel plants. This is the method recommended by the Illinois Nature Preserve System for controlling teasel in their tall grass prairie remnants. Afterward, we may want to seed in a na-

tive grass or forb to take over once the teasel leaves have withered.

Later in the growing season, flower heads with their tiny lavender blooms can be clipped. We dispose of the flower heads away from the Sanctuary because, though cut, flower heads can continue to mature their seed. Cutting flowering stalks before bloom simply elicits the production of several new flowering stalks, sort of like the brooms in "Sorcerer's Apprentice!" Done right, we prevent the addition of new seed to the soil seed bank, and after several years, exhaust the current seed bank of teasel and the plants that grow from it, substituting with something native and adapted.

I expect that we will organize a teasel control activity as part of a field trip out to the Barrens sanctuary this spring. Any of you going out there birding in the spring can bring along an asparagus knife or similar tool to cut teasel tap roots when there is a lull in bird activity. If you head out in the summer time, pack some clippers and a sack and nip a few flowering heads while you enjoy the bird fauna. You'll be helping to restore our Sanctuary to the natives.

—Jim Cane

State Notes

Ouray NWR Tapped as Utah's First Important Bird Area

The National Wildlife Refuge System 100th Anniversary is this year. The three National Wildlife Refuges in Utah – Ouray, Fish Springs and Bear River – all provide valuable habitat for birds. All three refuges easily meet the criteria for being selected as Important Bird Areas.

The following briefly highlights the Ouray National Wildlife Refuge and then provides a brief update on other likely Utah IBA sites.

The nomination form for Ouray National Wildlife Refuge provides a wonderful summary of the refuge. Ouray National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1961. It consists of 11,987 acres and is located 27 miles southwest of Vernal on Highway 88.

The refuge includes approximately 19 square miles of bottomlands and river surface in six naturally occurring bottoms along the shallowly entrenched Green River. The current management emphasis of the refuge is

given to the riparian habitat and to function more as a migrational stop-over for migratory birds. The major habitat types on the refuge include lowland riparian, wetlands, shrubsteppe, high desert scrub, water and grassland. Ouray NWR is considered the most significant single stand of riparian cottonwood on the entire Green River and perhaps the entire Colorado River drainage.

The nomination form provides good detail regarding bird use. Lowland riparian has use by broad-tailed hummingbird, yellow-billed cuckoo and black-throated gray warbler. The wetland habitat has nesting populations of American avocets and black-necked stilts and high use by American white pelicans. The shrubsteppe habitat has occasional sightings of ferruginous hawk, a history of use by sage grouse and good populations of both Brewers and sage sparrow. Specific bird surveys provide lots of data including the following numbers: migrating Canada geese – 3,000 in 2001; mallards

– 10,000 on Green River in December 2000; bald eagles - 160 seen at a time in the past couple of years; and, American white pelicans – peaking at 1,400 in mid-September to mid-November.

The nomination form contains much more about the refuge including additional information on birds, other wildlife, and conservation issues. But just learning more about Ouray NWR makes me want to visit and find ways to support it.

The Utah IBA Technical Committee, which is chaired by Val Grant, President of Bridgerland Audubon Society, has reviewed the Ouray NWR nomination form. There are a few small procedural things that need to be accomplished and then the refuge will be officially announced as an IBA site. One thought is to have a large number of IBA sites announced at once – say May or June.

The Utah IBA program has a current working list of 56 sites that could/should be selected as

IBAs and at least 15 other suggested sites. The 56 sites are located in 22 Utah counties. The main habitats are wetlands, waterbodies, riparian areas and shrubsteppe. Not surprisingly, most of the sites are around the Great Salt Lake, or within the Greater Great Salt Lake watershed. Many other sites are in the Uintah Basin and southwestern Utah. I would be happy to share this working list with anyone interested.

Individuals and groups are definitely encouraged to nominate a site. The easiest place to get the nomination form and criteria, as well as a fuller explanation about the IBA program is on the web at www.audubon.org/bird/iba/utah. Assistance in any other ways with the IBA program would definitely be appreciated.

Please feel free to contact me at wmartinson@audubon.org or (801) 355-8110.

– Wayne Martinson,
Utah Important Bird
Areas Coordinator,
National Audubon Society

Renewing members

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| R K Archibald | Daisy & Trevor Hughes |
| Patricia Bahler | Nathan & Chris Hult |
| Norbert V Debyle | Elizabeth Johnson |
| Gail Duering | Heather L Keough |
| Deborah Eshelman | Robert Newhall |
| Al Forsyth | Robert Schmidt |
| Mr & Mrs T J Gordon | Philip R Stafford |

**2003 Ballot
BAS Board of Trustees
(elect four)**

- Ron Goede
- Kate Stephens
- Andrea Walker
- Sandra Schimmelfennig
- _____
(write-in candidate)

Bridgerland Audubon contacts

Trustees

- 2000-2003 Mae Coover, 752-8871; Ron Goede, 752-9650
Teri Peery, 753-3249
- 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

Bridgerland Audubon Contacts

- President Val Grant, 752-7572, biores@mtwest.net
- Vice Pres. Bill Masslich, 753-1759, bmasslich@pcu.net
- Outings Dick Hurren, 435/734-2653, hurrens@aol.com
- Secretary Suzanne Pratt, 713-0197, suzap@cc.usu.edu
- Treasurer Susan Drown, 752-3797, drown6@attbi.com
- Wetlands Alice Lindahl, 753-7744, alindahl@bridgernet.com
- Forest Issues Kathy Gilbert, 752-0946, gilbert@mtwest.net
- Education Jack Greene, 563-6816, jgreene@lhs.logan.k12.ut.us
- Newsletter Miriam Hugentobler, 752-8237, stiltnews@hotmail.com
- Circulation Susan Durham, 752-5637, sdurham@cc.usu.edu
- Hospitality Allen & Gail Christensen, 258-5018, gaichr@pdp.usu.edu
- Hotline Nancy Williams, 757-0185, nanwill@cc.usu.edu
- Webmaster Chris Wilson, 753-3769, cwilson@sisna.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 15th 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

Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

P.O. Box 3501

Logan, Utah 84323-3501

Email: stiltnews@hotmail.com

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

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