



# The *Stilt*

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Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

## Come On Out & Count

The Christmas Bird Count had its origins from the pages of a magazine called, "Bird-Lore," from December 1900. This was the precursor to the Audubon magazine that we are familiar with today. Frank M. Chapman, ornithologist and prominent figure within the Audubon Society at the time, suggested the following: "It is not many years ago that sportsmen were accustomed to meet on Christmas day, 'choose sides,' and then . . . tie themselves to the fields and woods on the cheerful mission of killing practically everything in fur or feathers that crossed their path . . . Now Bird-Lore proposes a new kind of Christmas side hunt in the form of a Christmas Bird census, and we hope that all our readers who have the opportunity would aid in making it a success by spending a portion of Christmas day with the

birds, and sending a report of their 'hunt' to Bird-Lore before they retire that night."

That first Christmas Bird Count in 1900 brought out 27 people in 25 localities to count (not hunt) birds. They counted about 18,500 individual birds making up a total of 90 species. Over the past 104 years, the Audubon Society has sponsored this tradition, with the number of participants over 50,000 and approximately 1,823 bird counts by 2000.

This event has served to create a wider interest and understanding of birds and their conservation. It has also become an invaluable resource for scientists, enabling them to collect raw data on the

number of birds throughout North America.

Last year, BAS counted a total of 98 species within Cache Valley, with 62 individuals participating.

Join us on December 18<sup>th</sup> for the 104<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Bird Count. We will spend all day counting every bird we see within a 7.5-mile radius of Hyde Park. Later that evening we will get together to swap stories, gather data and share in a potluck dinner.

For more information and to participate please contact Keith Archibald at 752-8258 or Bryan Dixon at 752-6830.

—Stephen Peterson



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# Felines & Feathers

*(Or How I Grew To Love The Bird Killers)*



I became a cat lover in order to save the birds at my feeders. As I sit here and look at the two cats we just adopted, I am trying to find the forgiveness in my heart for Goldie. She is a nine-month-old orange tabby. A beautiful cat, with lovely golden eyes and a dark ringed tail. The other cat, which is her sister, is a tabby of the gray variety.

They wandered into our yard this past summer and became frequent visitors. The problem with their visits was that they were spending too much time hanging out around my bird feeders, gazing longingly at the finches, chickadees and nuthatches that dine there.

We kept an eye on the two cats as much as possible, but their presence caused great concern on my part in behalf of my feathered friends. The pair of sister

felines eventually mastered the feat of climbing onto the roof of our house via the nearby hawthorn trees. I was not amused, to say the least.

I decided that I would either have to take the cats down to the animal shelter or take them into our home. Apparently, wherever they came from, the *Homo sapiens* didn't keep very good tabs on their pets.

After three months of feline backyard company, we purchased a litter box and some cat food, and started letting the sister duo into the house on a regular basis. We figured that we would make them feel at home and keep them in as much as possible, letting them out periodically, such as when we were at work. Well, I can now say that this was not a wise decision.

I came home from work tonight and Goldie had left me a surprise on the front porch. And not a very pleasant surprise at all. There on the porch laid a lifeless red-breasted nuthatch, which I had just seen the previous day grabbing sunflower seed

from my feeder, with its other nuthatch companion. I was devastated, to say the least.

Here was a bird that is not a frequent visitor to my home, that had been feeding by my kitchen windowsill, and had given me much joy in watching it flit about the birdbath. And now it had come to its untimely demise at the claws of a feral cat named Goldie!

I would not have felt bad in the least if the nuthatch had been snatched up by a western screech owl or a shrike, and died a natural death. But it had its short life ended by a domestic pussycat!

Now as Goldie's sister lies curled up at my feet on the couch as I write this, I have vowed to keep these cats in the house at all times. We will now go purchase collars and harnesses for our feline family members, so we can take them outside from time to time, to get some fresh air. This will be the only way that Goldie and her sister, Tiger, will be able to enjoy the outdoors, on a leash.

Cats kill hundreds of millions of birds annually in

the United States. I urge all of you who own a cat, to keep your furry friends indoor at all times. This not only helps to protect the birds but will also keep your cat safe from traffic, disease, and fights with other animals. And if your cats go outside, please harness them.

You will be doing a huge service to the birds that visit your neighborhood and prevent many unnatural deaths from occurring amongst our feathered friends.

I think I will now try to find the courage and go over to the couch that Goldie is lounging on and attempt to make peace with the Bird Killer.

—Stephen Peterson





# Audubon Calendar

## December 2004

**1 BAS Board of Trustees.** Bridgerland Audubon's Board of Trustees meets this Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the offices of Bio-Resources, 135 E. Center, in Logan. All interested are invited to attend.

**4 Learn How Experts Attract and Feed Winter Birds.** See the various types of feeders, feeds, and water devices in use locally as we visit some people who have really elaborate feeding and attracting setups. Bring binoculars and dress for the season. Most of the observing will be done outdoors. Leave at 9 a.m. Saturday from the parking lot between Caffé Ibis and the Logan Fire Station (50 E. 150 North). Carpooling will be available; beginning birders are welcome. We will finish up in early afternoon, but people can leave early if they need to. For more information, call Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653.

**9 BAS General Meeting.** The Bridgerland Audubon Society meets the second Thursday of each month, September through June, at the Logan City Building's meeting room, 255 North Main, Logan. Meetings start at 7 p.m.

**10 Film Showing.** *Monumental*, a new film about David Brower, who helped keep the river in Grand Canyon and Dinosaur from being dammed, will be shown at Taggart Student Center Auditorium on the Utah State University campus at 7 p.m., Friday.

**11 Looking for Rare Winter Birds in 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 of birds are found in Utah in winter. Lapland longspurs and snow buntings have been found there in recent years. On our trip to this area last year we found a Eurasian collared dove. Even 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 day to explore the various habitats from Snowville through Park Valley and the Curlew Grasslands. 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 Caffé Ibis at 8:30 a.m. Saturday. For more information, call Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653.

**18 Mark Your Calendars for the 2004 Christmas Bird Count.** Saturday, December 18, is the date for this year's Logan Count Circle of the Christmas Bird Count, sponsored by Bridgerland Audubon Society. Each year, volunteers count all of the birds they can find within a 7.5-mile radius of Hyde Park. We've been doing this since 1955, and we're one of almost 2,000 count circles and 60,000 individuals participating in this important citizen science project; there's no other event like it. We need you - or at least your eyeballs - for all or part of that day. Beginners welcome; it's a great time to learn to identify our winter birds. The evening potluck and compilation is not to be missed, either. Our record is 99 species. Maybe this year we'll break 100! For more information, contact Keith Archibald, 752-8258, or Bryan Dixon, 752-6830.



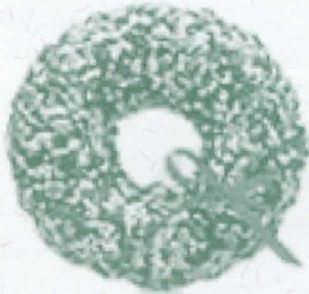
*If you'd like to come along on a field trip but do not have binoculars, call Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653. He'll try to find a pair for you to use.*

**23 Field Trip to Spots Where Rare/Unusual CBC Birds Were Sighted.** Join us as we go back to some of the places where rare or unusual birds were spotted during the Christmas Bird Count. No promise can be made that the birds will still be there, but often they are. Meet at the parking lot between Caffé Ibis and the Logan Fire Station. 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.

## January 2005

**3 Birding Hawaii.** Some of us will be away January 3-8 on Bridgerland Audubon's birding foray to Hawaii. If you are not among this group, have a wonderful Christmas and New Year, and we will see you when we return.

# A Gift for the Birds



This holiday season, why not give the birds a homemade gift that they're sure to enjoy? Here is a fun and easy project for the whole family.

### Winter Bird Seed Wreaths

#### Materials:

- Piece of corrugated cardboard
- Packet of clear gelatin
- 2 quarts of mixed seeds and nuts
- Length of wire
- Ribbon, Bow or cluster of California pepper berries (optional)

- Step 1. Cut a circle of corrugated cardboard to a diameter of 10 inches.
- Step 2. Mix packet of clear gelatin, according to the package directions.
- Step 3. Pour 2 quarts of seeds and nuts into the gelatin.
- Step 4. Stir to coat the seed mixture. If the mixture is too loose and doesn't hold together when you squeeze a handful, add more seed.
- Step 5. Mold by hand onto the cardboard form.
- Step 6. Attach loop of wire for hanging. Attach a bow, ribbon or cluster of California pepper berries for decoration, if desired.

*(taken from 'The Backyard Bird Feeder's Bible' by Sally Roth)*

**Kudos** to BAS's **Bob Atwood**, who recently listed his 600th North American bird species, a Boreal chickadee seen near Sydney, Nova Scotia.



# Welcome to BAS

## New Members

Don G Blair  
 Denis Brunke  
 June Budge  
 Reed Hart  
 Laurie McNeill  
 Daniel Webb  
 Max R George

## Renewing Members

Karen Beard &  
 Andrew Kulmatiski  
 Max Elliot Brunson, Jr  
 Windsor Copley  
 Alene S Fornoff  
 Diana T Glenn

RM & MR Holdredge  
 Jim Cane & Linda Kervin  
 Gary C Lewis  
 Craig Reger  
 Laura Selman  
 M Coburn Williams  
 Elizabeth Wright

## Transfers Into Our Chapter

Lindsey Johnson

# Bridgerland Audubon contacts

## Trustees

2002-2005 Jim Cane, 713-4668; Richard Mueller, 752-5637;  
 Dick Hurren 435/734-2653  
 2003-2006 Ron Goede, 752-9650; Kate Stephens, 755-0608;  
 André Walker, 755-2103  
 2004-2007 Dave Drown, 752-3797; Jack Greene, 563-6816;  
 Melanie Spriggs, 245-4376; Reinhard Jockel;  
 Stephen Peterson.

## Bridgerland Audubon Contacts

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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.



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

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## Holiday Cards With a Cause

Common Ground Outdoor Adventures is pleased to announce their 5th annual 'Holiday Cards with a Cause' fundraiser. This year we are pleased to offer seven new scenes including "Gifts of Love" one of Jerry's Coyote pieces. We are very excited to offer this card as it embraces the joyous, lively spirit of Common Ground and the youth and adults with disabilities that we serve. 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 Fuhrman's Framing and Fine Art, AVA, Square One Printing, Shangri-La, and Logan Tourist Council.