



# The Stilt

Volume 33, Issue 4  
April 2004

Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

## Bring on the Banquet

Join us Thursday evening, April 22 for Bridgerland Audubon's spring banquet.

The event will be held at Aspen Grove Reception Center, 860 N. 600 E., Logan. Festivities begin at 6:30 p.m., Dinner is at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person and are available from Fuhriman's Framing, Café Ibis, or from any BAS board member.

Our 2004 speaker is USU English professor and author Christopher Cokinos. The title of his talk is, "Hope Is the Thing with Feathers: A Personal Chronicle of Vanished Birds"

Drawing from his book of the same title, Cokinos will explore the true stories of several North American birds, including the Carolina Parakeet, the Passenger Pigeon, the Heath Hen and the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Combining short readings from

his critically acclaimed book with slides and informal discussions of the compelling natural and human histories of these creatures, Cokinos will introduce us to Doodles the pet Carolina Parakeet and Press Clay Southworth, the Ohio farm boy who shot the last known wild Passenger Pigeon, a bird named "Buttons," among other fascinating figures. He'll share what he knows of the possibility that Ivory-bills are hanging on, defying news of their extinction, and discuss a plan to "recreate" Heath Hens by introducing Greater Prairie Chickens to Martha's Vineyard.

Believing that stories are more inspiring than statistics, Cokinos will show how the tales of these vanished creatures can inspire us to a greater awareness of American history and to a renewal of our energies to protect the birds and habitats we love today. Cokinos's book was featured in such

venues as NPR's "All Things Considered," People magazine, Scientific American, the Boston Globe, the Washington Post Book World and The Condor.

Christopher Cokinos is also the author of a poetry collection, *Killing Seasons* (1993), and is a past two-term president of the Kansas Audubon Council. While in Kansas, he helped stop a corporate hog farm from locating near Cheyenne Bottoms and co-founded a local organization devoted to sustainability. He is an Assistant Professor of English at Utah State University. He is the winner of several awards, including the Sigurd Olson Nature Writing Award, and is at work on another creative nonfiction manuscript about meteorites and those who become obsessed by them. That project has taken him to such locales as remote Northwest Greenland and the interior of Antarctica.

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# Local Notes

## Uneasy Breathing By Dennis Hinkamp

I was in Washington DC about 10 years ago when I heard my first unhealthy air alert on the news. They were actually telling people to stay inside as much as possible and not to exercise.

My first thought was "why would anybody voluntarily live in a place like this?"

Of course, I have the same thought about a lot of places. I live in Logan, Utah and last week the air quality was worse than Washington, DC. It was, in fact, worse than just about anyplace not near a forest fire. We had a PM 2.5 exceeding 180. The official number was subsequently lowered due to calibration errors but it was still twice the level defined as "unhealthy."

We all learned the definition; if not the impact of "PM2.5." It's a measure of particulate matter (pollutants from combustion and natural sources) smaller than 2.5 micrometers in diameter. Small, but big enough to make you cough like a retired coal miner.

The town plays maybe fifth or even sixth fiddle behind other more recognizable

Utah cities. If you don't live here or go to college here or drive through on your way to Yellowstone, you'll probably have to reach for a map. We like it that way. I'm a 23-year resident and for the most part, an apologist for Logan. I can tell you that the Wellsville Mountains that border the valley on the west are the steepest mountains in the world. It is just an anomaly of height divided by width, but it makes the valley unique.

We had gotten a little cocky about our uniqueness. The names Washington, DC, Los Angeles and even Salt Lake City rolled off our tongues like we were spitting out spoiled milk. But look at us now. We beat them all, but how? Outside of FOX news and radio pundits there are no easy answers, but being too cocky covers most of the bases.

All the Mormons, the gentiles, the college kids, the geezers and the dairy cattle conspired to make this happen. Even the good green-hearted brethren contributed by burning wood to preserve fossil fuels even though there are no hardwood trees in sight. Others headed for the mountainsides and

canyons and traded a view for a commute.

Like many towns we tore up the streetcar tracks in the 50s to make way for automobiles and parking spaces. We fought starting a city bus line until 10 years ago and then only agreed to do it if we didn't collect fares. We built a downtown bypass route and then quickly gave up on it because we didn't think the town was growing fast enough. We gave up on bike paths because we thought we were too rural to need them. We started fencing off the canal paths that crisscross the valley because neighbors were worried about personal liability. We courted big box stores and chain restaurants because we had low self-esteem about what our town had to offer. Every new business went after the main street property and installed a drive through window for everything from dry cleaning to veggie wraps. We fought emission controls and testing on our cars because we didn't want the extra hassle. In short, we inhaled deeply from the addictive tail pipe of the personal automobile.

*Continued on p. 4*

# Audubon Calendar

April 2004

- 7 BAS Board of Trustees Meeting.** Bridgerland Audubon's Board of Trustees meets at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the offices of Bio-Resources, 135 E. Center, Logan. All interested are invited to attend.
- 10 Bear River Bird Refuge Shore Birds.** Join us for a morning and early afternoon of birding at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge west of Brigham City. This should be a great time to observe migrating shore birds as they fatten up before making their way north toward their nesting areas in the arctic. Meet at 8:30 a.m. Saturday at the parking lot between Café Ibis and the Logan Fire Station (50 E. 150 North, Logan). Bring binoculars and a snack, which we will eat at the parking lot at the end of the refuge loop drive. If you have a scope, please bring it also. For further information, call Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653.
- 15 Bear River Canoe Jaunt.** We just can't wait to get back on the river. It could be chilly, maybe a chance of rain, but join trip leaders Bryan Dixon and Jean Lown as we paddle a short section of the Bear River around the Valley View Marina as the sun sets in the west. Meet at the arena (straight west on Valley View Highway to the parking lot on the south side of the road on the west side of Cutler Marsh) at 6 p.m. Thursday. Bring your own canoe or rent one from USU Outdoor Recreation, 797-3264, Muddy Road Outfitters, 753-8388, or Trailhead Sports, 753-1541. Wear warm clothing, and bring something to munch on if you get hungry. For more information, call Bryan or Jean, 752-6830.
- 17 Earth Day Tree Planting.** The Utah Conservation Corps is sponsoring their annual Earth Day Tree Planting at Stewart Nature Park, 100 S. 100 E., Logan. The event will be held Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and will include tree planting, refreshments, entertainment and environmental education activities. Wear your grubbies and dig in! For more info, call 797-0964 x 2
- 22 Audubon Banquet.** Join us this Thursday at 6:30 p.m. for Bridgerland Audubon Society's annual banquet. Our speaker will be Chris Cokinos, author of "*Hope is the Thing with Feathers.*" We will also present conservation and education awards. See related story on p. 1.
- 24 Amalga Barrens Revisited.** The Barrens are a magnificent ever-changing habitat. Join us as we return there to see what species of birds have stopped over on their way north. We will also examine BAS's newly acquired sanctuary that borders the Barrens. The second half of April can be an excellent time for shorebirds. Mammals such as red fox and badgers are also often seen at this time of year. We will leave from the parking lot between Café Ibis and the Logan Fire Station at 8:30 a.m. Saturday and return around lunch time. If there is enough interest, some of us can take the long way home and view other habitats. Trip leaders will be Sue and Dave Drown and Reinhard Jockel. For more information call Sue or Dave at 752-3797.



*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.*

## Barrens Sanctuary and Wetlands Maze Dedication

Bridgerland Audubon and PacifiCorp are planning a joint celebration next month to dedicate PacifiCorp's Wetland Maze at Cutler Marsh and BAS's adjoining Barrens Sanctuary.

Dedication ceremonies are set for Friday, May 7 at 9:30 a.m. at the Valley View Marina off Utah Highway 30, west of Logan.

The program will include speakers from National Audubon Society and Scottish Power, PacifiCorp's parent company.

Day-long festivities are planned, including a birding trip to northern Cutler Marsh after the dedication, and guided canoe trips in the afternoon.

For more information contact Jim Cane, 713-4668, or Bryan Dixon, 760-0691. Watch for more details in the May Stilt.

—Miriam Hugentobler  
Stilt Editor

## Avian Monikers

The mergansers are found all around the Northern Hemisphere. Among ducks, they are distinctive for their diet of fish. Being big diving ducks, the origin of their name is not unexpected, combining the Latin for diver (*mergus*) and goose (*anser*). As if to emphasize the point, however, the Latin binomial for the common merganser is *Mergus merganser*. Duck, duck, goose!

—Jim Cane  
For more details, see E. Choate's "Dictionary of American Bird Names"

## Uneasy Breathing

*Continued from p. 2*

It was easy to convince ourselves that we weren't addicted. We don't have that big-city 30- or 40-minute commutes so we thought our driving really didn't count. Five miles to work, three miles to the grocery store another five to pick up a pizza and a movie; that's not real driving. The trouble was all 50,000 of us drive the same congested 10 miles.

Of course none of this makes us unique to the American dreamscape.

What does make us different is our geography. The same things that make this a beautiful mountain valley conspire to create a lethal winter inversion soup. Nothing that comes out of our cars, furnaces, wood stoves, power plants and even out of our numerous dairy herds leaves the valley when we have an inversion.

To be fair this doesn't happen all the time and it may be another 10 years before Logan makes these kind of headlines, but saying that is like being the beach lifeguard who tells swimmers that shark at-

tacks are infrequent. It is going to be hard to forget and the EPA is going to have its eye on us from now on.

Mayor Doug Thompson, who is an asthmatic, has been quoted as saying, "We can't do anything about it. We can't stop living our lives."

This was taken a little out of context but the answer is, "Yes, we have to do something or we indeed will stop living our lives."

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dhinkamp@msn.com

# Welcome to BAS

## New Members

Christiine Beorchia  
Alene S Fornoff  
Stephen Peterson  
Marjorie Simard  
Therese Leigh Stamm

## Renewing Members

Cheryl & Brett Adams  
Michael C Amacher  
Patricia Bahler  
Keith L Dixon  
John Ellerbeck  
Al Forsyth

Mr & Mrs T J Gordon  
Ms Barbara S Hale  
Dawn Holzer  
Glenn Jarrell  
Joan Labby  
Deann Lester

David & Kim Lewis  
Louise Murch  
Lawrence A Ryel  
Charles L Salzberg  
Kazuko Toelken

## 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 Wallker, 755-2103

### 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 Jamey Anderson, 881-1244, jameya@cc.usu.edu  
Treasurer Susan Drown, 752-3797, drown6@attbi.com  
Wetlands Alice Lindahl, 753-7744, alindahl@bridgernet.com  
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  
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.



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P.O. Box 3501  
Logan, Utah 84323-3501  
Email: stiltnews@hotmail.com  
Visit our website: <http://www.bridgerlandaudubon.org>

## Ballot BAS 2004 Election of Officers

**Officers**  
(Two-Year Term)

**President**  
 C. Val Grant

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Jack Greene

**Vice President**  
 William Masslich

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Reinhard Jockel

**Secretary**  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Jamey Anderson

**Treasurer**  
 Sue Drown

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Only BAS members may vote and each membership is entitled to one vote. To vote, clip this ballot and mail to Bridgerland Audubon Society, P.O. Box 3501, Logan, UT 84323-3501. Alternately, you may vote at the banquet, Thursday, April 22. All ballots must be received by April 22, 2004.

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