



The Stilt

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Newsletter of Bridgerland Audubon Society

It's Spring Planting Time

Audubon Urges People Coast to Coast to Help Birds by Creating a Wildlife Friendly Habitat in Their Backyard

All across North America, one of the sure signs that spring is here is the return of migratory birds to our woods, meadows, and parks. Another is the return of gardeners and landscapers to their backyards. This year, the National Audubon Society is asking people to keep birds and wildlife in mind as they begin their spring planting.

The most significant factors in the decline of bird and wildlife populations are habitat loss and habitat degradation. About 2 million acres are converted to residential and commercial use in the United States each year. This means that many birds are losing many of the places they rely on for rest, food and rearing their chicks.

Fortunately, there are many ways to help make backyards, gardens and parks into healthy habitat for birds and other wildlife. By ensuring that the necessities for

survival—food, water, nesting areas, and shelter—are available, people can temper the habitat loss caused by urban and suburban expansion.

Whether a person lives in an apartment building, a suburban subdivision, or on a country road, what they do to and with their outdoor space affects a larger ecosystem. What people do at home is directly connected to the health of our larger environment.

The Audubon At Home program urges people to take the following steps to help ensure a successful spring migration and provide safe habitat for our feathered friends, as well as other wildlife:

• **Eliminate or Reduce Pesticide Use** - Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of all U.S. households use some type of pesticide, often unnecessarily. The vast majority of pesticides are toxic to species beyond the tar-

geted pests. The use of insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides, or other pesticides, potentially exposes birds, pets, and people to risk. By eliminating pesticides in their backyards, people can reduce the amount of toxins that can end up in streams, soil, food chains, and on children's hands.

• **Conserve Water** - More than 7 billion gallons of water are used daily in the U.S. for outdoor purposes, mostly landscaping. Lawns require two-and-a-half to four times more water than shrubs and trees. By reducing the amount of lawn in a backyard and replacing some grass with shrubs and other plants native to the local area that require less water, people can significantly reduce the amount of water needed for landscaping.

• **Protect Water Quality** - Storm water runoff, in-

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Regional Notes

Great Salt Lake Bird Festival Promises Fun for All

The 9th Annual Great Salt Lake Bird Festival will be held May 17-22, 2007. Birds of the Great Salt Lake ecosystem are the focus of this festival. Field trips cover many popular birding locations and behind-the-gates areas in northern Utah from Utah Lake to the Idaho and Wyoming borders. Workshops, offered on Friday, May 18 and Saturday, May 19 include specific birding topics and some fun activities for youth of all ages.

The current issue of the American Birding Association's *Birding*, covers "The Great Ivory-billed Woodpecker Debate." Is it a critically endangered species or an extinct species? Great Salt Lake Bird Festival keynote speaker is Ron Rohrbaugh, Director of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker Recovery Project at Cornell's Lab of Ornithology.

Ron will give us the latest updates on this project and be available for questions. His keynote address will be at the Dutch oven dinner on Saturday May 19. Order your tickets early.

As an additional bonus this year, Denny Olson aka Professor Avian Guano Bir.D will be at the festival with several presentations. Denny focuses on how nature and people are connected. He is an author, student, teacher, and performer. Denny's presentations are sponsored by Lyon & Healy West Harps and are free to the public. His humor will add something special to the 2007 Great Salt Lake Bird Festival.

This year the festival spotlight bird is the marbled godwit, which gathers in large flocks at Great Salt

Lake. Bridget Olson from Bear River Refuge will talk about the research project where two birds were equipped with miniature satellite transmitters. These transmitters can provide real-time location data for biologists to track migration between Canada, Great Salt Lake, and Mexico.

Workshops held at the Davis County Events Center, 151 South 1100 West, Farmington are free and open to the public. Tickets are now available for field trips and the keynote address Dutch oven dinner.

To order tickets or for a complete schedule of events, go to www.greatsaltlakebirdfest.com or call Davis County Community & Economic Development at 801-451-3286.

Audubon Calendar

May 2007

- 3 Board of Trustees Meeting.** BAS Trustees meet at 7 p.m. this Thursday at Cache Valley Learning Center, 75 S. 400 West, Logan. Enter through the building's west doors. All are welcome to attend.
- 5 Returning Shorebirds.** If you like mud and birds, then this field trip is for you! The Amalga Barrens offer mud, mud, and more mud, full of invertebrates just ripe for shorebirds to scarf down. The Benson Marina or Amalga Barrens are areas in Cache Valley filled with shallow ponds that attract tadpoles, aquatic invertebrates, and birds! In recent months we've seen prairie falcons and peregrine falcons in Benson-Amalga areas. We will leave from the parking lot north of Caffé Ibis (150 North 50 East, Logan) at 8 a.m. and return by lunch. For more information call Buck Russell (435) 512-9641.
- 10 BAS General Meeting - Joint Meeting with Stokes Nature Center.** Join us at the Cache Valley Learning Center, 75 S. 400 West, this Thursday at 7 p.m. for a joint session with Stokes Nature Center. Refreshments provided by Caffé Ibis and Crumb Brothers. Enter through the building's west doors.
- 12 Birding Steel Canyon and Northwestern Cache Valley with Reinhard Jockel.** Reinhard Jockel, a fine birder and a real master of bird songs, will lead us on a trip to observe and learn the songs of migrating songbirds as they pass through birding hot-spots in the northwestern part of Cache Valley. This is a unique area where several habitats come together to make it possible to see lots of different species of songbirds—including the rare blue-gray gnatcatcher. Meet in the parking lot between Caffé Ibis and the Logan Fire Station (50 East 150 North) at 8 a.m. Bring water and a lunch. For more information call Buck Russell (435) 512-9641.
- 17 Great Salt Lake Bird Festival.** The ninth annual Great Salt Lake Bird Festival will be held May 17-22 in Farmington, Utah, with field trips throughout northern Utah—from Utah Lake to the Idaho and Wyoming borders. Featured Guests include: Ron Rohrbaugh, director of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker Recovery Project at Cornell's Lab of Ornithology and Professor Avian Guano. Contact Davis County Community & Economic Development or call 801-451-3286 for more information.



If you'd like to come along on a field trip but do not have binoculars, call Buck Russell (435) 512-9641. He'll try to find a pair for you to use.

Conservation Notes

Spring Planting

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cluding runoff from backyards and gardens, which often includes chemical pesticides and fertilizers is a leading cause of pollution of the nation's waterways and water bodies. According to the EPA, approximately 40 percent of recently surveyed rivers, lakes, and estuaries have water quality problems. Plant choice, soil health, and the type of walkways, patios, and other landscaping features a person chooses can dramatically affect the amount of runoff a backyard or garden generates.

- **Remove Exotic Plant**

Pests - Purple loosestrife,

English ivy, kudzu, Japanese honeysuckle - these and other familiar plants pose a growing threat to native wildlife. Invasive plants are typically defined as non-native species that compete vigorously with other species for space and resources, and consequently spread rapidly and take over habitat. Invasives are a growing problem. Invasive plant, animal, or microbial species contribute to the decline of approximately 42 percent of the plants and animals federally listed as endangered or threatened.

- **Plant Native Species** - A native plant species is one that occurs naturally in a particular region, state, ecosystem, and habitat without direct or indirect human actions. Today, people everywhere are discovering the benefits of "going native," and native plant

sources are becoming more numerous. Natives, after all, offer birds and other wildlife greater benefits than exotic cultivars, and without the exhaustive care requirements. By establishing native plants in their yard, people can decrease water dependence, reduce the need for fertilizer and pest control, and create a renewed sense of place for birds and other wildlife.

For more information on how to create a healthy yard and keep birds safe, visit the Audubon At Home website at <http://www.audubonathome.org/>. To take Audubon's Healthy Yard Pledge, please visit <http://www.audubonathome.org/pledge>. Audubon At Home is funded in part by the National Resource Conservation Service.



Whose Nest Is It?

Answer: Black-billed magpie

Welcome to BAS

New Members

Kurt & Ann Morrison
Molly Hysell
Tracy Carroll
Helen Edwards
Jake Gibson
Clyde R. Hatch
Joanne Hughes

Renewing Members

Mr. Lyle Henderson
Glen Johnson
Masako Nakashio
Marie Veibell
Fred C. Brasfield
Loren W. Richardson

Diane Browning Oblock
Nathan & Chris Hult
Joyce & Bert Stokes
Edward & Deborah Evans
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Taylor

Bridgerland Audubon contacts

Trustees

2004-2007 Dave Drown, 752-3797; Jack Greene, 563-6816;
Reinhard Jockel; Stephen Peterson, 755-5041
2005-2008 Jim Cane, 713-4668; Richard Mueller, 752-5637;
Dick Hurren 435/734-2653; Jennifer Hoffmann, 713-
4935
2006-2009 Ron Goede, 752-9650; Bret Selman, 435/257-5260;
David Liddell, 245-2705

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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 15th of each month. Send to stilt@bridgerlandaudubon.org.

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.

My check for \$20 is enclosed (this is a special first-year rate).

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

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

Note to new National Audubon members: To get on *The Stilt* newsletter mailing list without the usual 8-week delay, contact Susan Durham, 752-5637, sdurham@cc.usu.edu.

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



The *Stilt*

Newsletter of Bridgerland Audubon Society

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

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