



The Stilt

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Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis

The just-released report (Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis found at http://library.fws.gov/Pubs/birding_naturvey06.pdf) on bird watching offers a great opportunity to build awareness of the Audubon mission and our local efforts to connect people with birds, nature and the power to protect us all. The survey, according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "helps quantify how enjoyment of the outdoors and wildlife contributes to society and promotes a healthy economy."

Released July 15 by the USFWS, the report shows that the total participation in bird watching is strong at 48 million. It also reports that bird watching is remaining at a steady and astounding one of out of every five Americans since 1996. It reveals that birdwatchers contributed \$36 billion to the U.S. economy in 2006 alone, the most recent year for which economic data are available. That's very good news. And birding has no doubt grown since 2006 because a) Baby Boomers and Retirees have continued to grow in numbers, and b) many Americans have chosen not to travel abroad for their vacations this year, but are looking for inexpensive ways to relax.

Bird watching is often described as the second-fastest growing hobby in the USA, after gardening. Audubon often combines the two! If you know of anyone interested in the wildlife they can so easily see in their own backyards, encourage them to join Audubon as a way to learn more about birds, help protect the environment we share, and work with Audubon to diminish climate change. After all, the Audubon mission is to educate how birds across North America are in decline because of habitat loss, how birds are early indicators when the environment we share is damaged, and what people can do to help. Joining Audubon is a great start!

Pet Hummingbirds

If you missed the July 12th issue of the Herald Journal, there was a good story about Corinne Thul, a Logan woman who has trained her yard's charm of 100+ hummingbirds to feed from her hand. There were good photos, too. The link for online subscribers is: <http://hjnews.townnews.com/articles/2009/07/12/news/news05-07-12-09.txt>

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2009 Meeting Lineup

September 10

Presentation: Jen Hajj from HawkWatch International will focus on raptors.

October 8

Presentation: Chris Wilson will discuss Whirling Disease in local fish species.

November 12

Presentation: Chris Cokinos and Shane Larson will talk on meteors.

December 10

Presentation: TBA

Duck Stamp Legislation Passes

On July 30, the House Natural Resources Committee approved the Migratory Bird Habitat Investment and Enhancement Act. NWRA supported passage of the Act, which will raise the price of the Duck Stamp from \$15 to \$25 in 2010 to generate much-needed funding for wetland habitat acquisition.

The Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, also known as the "Duck Stamp," has helped acquire valuable habitat in the National Wildlife Refuge System since 1934. The stamp is currently sold for \$15 and has not changed for the past 18 years, while land prices have skyrocketed and the purchasing power for habitat conservation has been diminished.

Few programs in the federal government have such a great rate of investment - 98¢ on every dollar goes directly to acquire vital habitat in the National Wildlife Refuge System. More than 5.2 million acres of wetland and grassland refuge habitat have been added to the Refuge System with the proceeds from this stamp.



MIDWEST BIRDING SYMPOSIUM



SEPT. 17-20, 2009
LAKESIDE, OHIO

Not Too Late to Register

The Midwest Birding Symposium is coming back to Ohio! On the weekend of September 17 to 20, 2009, many hundreds of bird watchers will gather at Lakeside, Ohio, on the south shore of Lake Erie for what will surely be the highlight of the birding year. Hosted by Bird Watcher's Digest, The Ohio Ornithological Society, and the Lakeside Association, the 2009 Midwest Birding Symposium (MBS) is generating a lot of buzz and interest. Available space for attendees, vendors, and sponsors is quickly filling up. To register or for more information, visit <https://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/mwb/main.php>.

BEAR RIVER SYMPOSIUM

Date: Thursday, 10 September, 2009

Location: 69 N. Paradise Parkway, Garden City, Utah

The Bear River Symposium is a conference sponsored by the Bear Lake Regional Commission. This annual symposium covers water quality issues with a special focus on the Bear River Watershed. This year's symposium will be featuring great presentations from researchers and practitioners from around the Bear River/Bear Lake area

For more information or to register, contact Mitch Poulsen at (435) 946-2198 or visit www.bearriverinfo.org.



BEAR RIVER WATERSHED
INFORMATION SYSTEM

"Providing unprecedented access to data in the Bear River Basin"



Audubon Calendar

September 2009

3 Board of Trustees Meeting: BAS Trustees meet at 7 p.m. at the Cache Valley Learning Center, 75 S. 400 West, Logan. Enter through the building's west doors. All are welcome to attend.

10 General Meeting: Join us at our same great location, the Cache Valley Learning Center (75 S. 400 West), as Jen Hajj from HawkWatch International will be presenting on raptors. The meeting will start at 7 p.m. Enter through the building's west doors. All are welcome to attend and refreshments will be provided by Crumb Brothers and Caffe Ibis. We hope to see you there!

12 Field Trip: Annual Kokanee Salmon Run above Porcupine Reservoir: Come with us and local fish expert Ron Goede to learn about and witness the spawning habits of this inland salmon variety. Ron will explain the ecology and natural history of this unique fish and will take us to places where we can view them up close and personal. This should be an excellent trip for families. Birding in this area is also good, so bring your binoculars and plan to have fun. The last few years we have seen both Bald Eagles and Ospreys. We will leave at 8 a.m. from the parking lot between Caffe Ibis and the Logan fire station. Carpooling will be available and encouraged. Bring a snack and binoculars. We plan to return in early afternoon. For more info, call Ron at 752-9650.

18-20 The Tetons for Elk Bugling and More: Jack Greene will organize and lead our field trip to witness the Elk Bugling in the scenic Teton Mountains. The car pool will leave at 3 p.m. Friday afternoon, September 18th and return Sunday afternoon/evening, September 20th. Witness the Tetons in their best fall dress where rampaging large ungulates (elk, bison, moose) release their fall passion with grunts, bugling, and a nasty disposition. Fall migrating birds along with winter residents will add to the fun. Some participants choose to camp while others choose to stay in a hotel. You will need to provide your own meals. Expect anything from 40 to 80 degree weather; rain, snow, or sunshine. For more information, call Jack Greene at 563-6816.

26 Field Trip: HawkWatch Station in the Wellsvilles: Let local naturalist and avid hiker Reinhard Jockel lead you on a hike up to the crest of the Wellsville Mountains to witness one of the wonders of the avian world. Thousands of raptors migrate along the Wellsvilles during the fall migration season. On a good day, we'll see over 100 raptors of a number of different species. We'll hike up Deep Canyon and plan to eat lunch while watching raptors drift by. The trail gains three thousand feet in approximately four miles, so be prepared and be sure to wear appropriate footwear. Bring plenty of water. Since it is usually cool and windy up on top, a change of layers, a warm sweater, and a good wind shell make the experience more comfortable. Bring binoculars, lunch, and water. Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot between Caffe Ibis and the Logan fire station. Carpooling will be available. For further information, call Lyle Bingham at (435)563-6003.

Scientists to Investigate Wind Power Impacts on Migratory Wildlife

Industry and conservation representatives set research priorities

July 23, 2009—Thirty top wildlife scientists have announced agreement on some of the highest research priorities to help America's rapidly growing wind energy industry produce much-needed alternative energy—while also providing safe passage for birds and bats. This coalition of scientists from industry, government, non-governmental organizations, and universities met recently in Racine, Wisconsin, to address unanswered questions about how continued wind energy development will affect migrating birds and bats. The meeting was hosted by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the American Bird Conservancy, and the The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread.

"We see great potential in wind energy for addressing global climate change and reducing America's reliance on fossil fuels," said Dr. Michael Fry of the American Bird Conservancy. "It's critical we act now to understand the interactions between wind energy installations and birds and bats."

"Billions of birds migrate annually, taking advantage of the same wind currents that are most beneficial for producing wind energy," said Dr. Andrew Farnsworth of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "We know that in some locations a small percentage of wind turbines may cause the majority of bird and bat deaths. For example, Altamont Pass, east of Oakland, California, is an extreme case: in an area used regularly by migrant and resident raptors, only a fraction of the 5,000 turbines are responsible for most of the raptor deaths annually. As wind power develops fur-

ther, we need to know more about how placement, design, and operation impact birds and bats as well as how habitat and weather conditions affect potential hazards."

The scientists addressed the critical information that could be collected using cutting-edge tools such as weather surveillance radar, thermal imaging, and microphones directed



skyward to map migrations by day and night. New research will build upon monitoring and research studies of birds and bats before and after construction of existing wind energy facilities as well as work done by other researchers. The coalition appointed working groups to move this new research agenda forward. Top research priorities identified by the coalition include:

- Studying bird and bat behaviors and more accurately estimating mortality at existing wind turbines
- Using current and newly-obtained information on bird and bat population numbers and distributions to focus

research on critically important migratory routes and timing

- Documenting how interactions of birds and bats with turbines are affected by factors such as weather, topography, and their distribution within airspace swept by wind turbine blades
- Establish standardized methods for pre- and post-construction studies of bird and bat behavior at wind facilities
- Conduct research on the best methods for mitigating the impacts of wind energy development on birds and bats

"Conducting this research will help the wind industry make informed, science-based decisions about where future wind energy projects can be built, and how they can be operated to minimize the impact on migrating wildlife, while still providing much-needed alternative energy," said Dr. John Fitzpatrick, director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "It will also help flesh out specific guidelines for wind farm construction being developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service."

"Imagine if a similar effort had taken place at the turn of the 20th century with the auto industry and air quality," said Kraig Butrum, President and CEO of the American Wind Wildlife Institute, an umbrella organization for the wind energy industry and environmental groups. "We'd probably be in a completely different place when it comes to global climate change and energy dependence, because we considered environmental impact from the start."

The Cornell Lab
of Ornithology

AMERICAN BIRD
CONSERVANCY

The Johnson
Foundation
AT WINGSPREAD

BIONEERS

2009 Utah Bioneers Conference

Our Sixth Annual Conference

November 20 and 21, 2009

More information to come

Bridgerland Audubon contacts

Trustees

- 2007-2010 Chris Cokinos, 245-7769; Jack Greene, 563-6816; Reinhard Jockel
- 2008-2011 Jim Cane, 713-4668; William Masslich, 753-1759; Richard Mueller, 752-5637; Brandon Spencer, 753-2790
- 2009-2012 Ron Goede, 752-9650; Frank Howe, 787-1859; Robert Schmidt, 755-9262; Bret Selman, 257-5260

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- Webhost www.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 15th of each month. Send to birdnerdut@gmail.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.

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____



Please send all checks payable to National Audubon Society with this card to:
National Audubon Society
PO Box 422250
Palm Coast, FL 32112-2250
Membership Source Code: C9ZW520Z

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 the Bridgerland Audubon Society

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