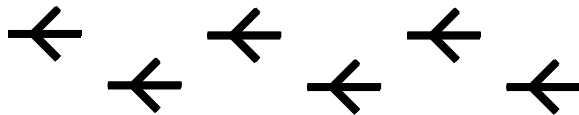
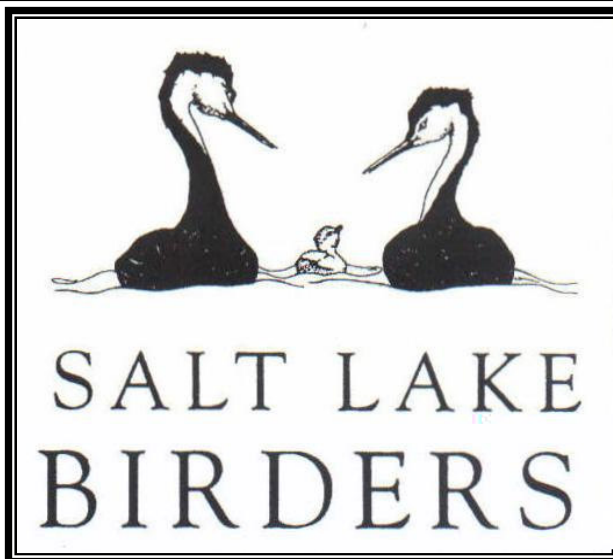


# BIRD



# TRACKS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SALT LAKE BIRDERS



May 2006

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## APRIL AVIAN ANTICS — April Field Trip Report

The combined Salt Lake Birders/Utah Ornithological Society trip was held from Friday-Sunday, April 7-9. The large group of about 18 first stopped at the Burrison Ponds just south of Mona. Numerous birds were seen, including a flock of Cedar Waxwings numbering about 30; a Flicker and a Downy Woodpecker. One bit of surprise were two Double-crested Cormorants. Also noted were Sandhill Cranes and a Golden Eagle, two Swainson's Hawks, Harriers and a Kingfisher. In Mona, just as we were leaving, a Eurasian Collared-Dove was noted on a light pole. The next stop was at Chicken Creek Reservoir sporting the usual array of puddle and diving ducks, plus two Dowitchers, a Long-billed and a Short-billed. The Yuba Lake area didn't produce much except for three Common Mergansers. However, along the gravel connecting road just north of the lake, we came across a Burrowing Owl that everyone saw and some were able to photograph.

Continuing down State Route 28, US 89 and SR 24, we saw numerous Red-tailed Hawks, Kestrels, Turkey Vultures, Ravens and Magpies. The Bicknell Bottoms WMA was a disappointment. Despite being in early spring, the bottoms were quite dry, very little water and very few birds. The Fremont River through Capitol Reef National Park is generally good birding, but we were beginning to get behind in time and still had a long ways to go. A Western Kingbird was making sallies in a cliff area, and the first Wild Turkey we observed was observed. By the time we reached Blanding, it was already dark, and so had to forego Recapture Reservoir. Most of us were pretty tired after being up since very early morning and headed off to the motels in Blanding or Monticello for the night. All except Tim Avery, who hung around Devil's Canyon campground and whistled in a Saw-whet Owl that just about landed on his head.

For our Gunnison Sage-Grouse hunt Saturday morning, the DWR people are very concerned about disturbances among the few leks that are in Utah. They were not allowing anyone to drive off the farm roads to see the birds from April 1-16, during the peak mating time, and here we were right in the middle of that sensitive period. As we drove along the terribly muddy and rutted roads on Pat Jividen's cousin's property, we came across four of the birds right on the road in front of us. Several people in the cars behind us saw them. Then, further on, just as it was getting fairly light in the sky, three more flew across, high enough so that everyone else saw them, as well. And, sure enough, here came a game warden telling each car in turn to not turn off the two or three main farm roads. We knew of the agreement that the DWR had with the land owners, even Pat's cousins, and we were not going to venture off the roads. If any of our group had been 25 feet down a side road, they would have been cited pretty heavily. Leaving the Sage-Grouse areas, we saw three Tundra Swans and several more ducks, new for most of us in San Juan County. A Merlin flew up from a fence post near a wetland spot.

The next stopping place was Devil's Canyon campground. Lu Giddings, our guide for Saturday and Sunday, took us to the actual canyon where the highway crosses it, played the CD for not more than 3-5 minutes, (continued on page 7)

## SALT LAKE BIRDERS

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### MISSION STATEMENT

Our purpose is to provide recreation and ongoing education for our members, to gather and contribute statistical data, and to emphasize conservation in all our activities.

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### MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Salt Lake Birders is open to everyone. Dues are \$15 per year per household if you would like a hard copy of *Bird Tracks*, or \$10 if you opt to receive the newsletter via e-mail. Please make checks payable to Salt Lake Birders and mail to Lyn Christiansen at the P.O. box listed above.

To request a change of address or privacy, please contact Lyn Christiansen, Membership Director.



### SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All articles must be received by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month for the following month's issue, preferably as an e-mail attachment, but by letter, hard copy, also.

## Upcoming Field Trips



### Salt Lake Birders

**May 26-27, Friday-Saturday**, a trip to Utah's Dixie to see the numerous birds that show up only in southwest Utah. Leaders are Steve and Cindy Sommerfeld. We'll meet at the Sugar House Shopko parking lot at 6:00 a.m. Friday and carpool down.

**June 17, Saturday**, we'll hold our annual club breakfast at Germania Park in Murray. Bring your friends, and after we'll bird some of the Jordan River Parkway. This area is often good for flycatchers, warblers and Western Tanagers. More details next month.

**July**, Saturday, we participate with Great Salt Lake Audubon at the annual Brighton Bird Count. We meet at the National Forest Visitor Center at Silver Lake at 8:00 a.m. and split up into three groups to discover what birds are where, compared to previous years. At about noon, there will be a potluck lunch, so bring a treat to share. Also, of note, there are no cooking facilities there, so plan on having some cold things to bring.

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Along with GSLA, we encourage **carpooling** and **helping with gas costs** — we recommend a \$3 donation per person for trips under 50 miles, and \$5 for more than 50 miles roundtrip.

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**Guests are always welcome! Listen for us on FRS Channel 11-22!!**

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### 8th Annual Great Salt Lake Bird Festival

This bird festival, running from May 18-23, is becoming one of the best of its type in the country. There are so many things to do for individuals, younger children and whole families. Numerous field trips, designed by member Deedee O'Brien and her committee, will take participants all over northern Utah to find and see birds. There are several "behind-the-gates" tours at Bear River and Farmington Bay refuges that are normally off-limits. There are even kayak trips in the Great Salt Lake marshes so that people can get closer to birds without disturbing them so much.

The featured guest and presenter will be Arthur Morris, well-known bird photographer, whose photos have been shown and displayed in all birding and most nature magazines in the country. He will be speaking as well as hosting some workshops. Most workshops and some field trips are free of charge. Reservations are quickly filling up, so you may want to call 801-451-3286 for reservations or a program booklet, or check out the website at [www.greatsaltlakebirdfest.com](http://www.greatsaltlakebirdfest.com).

## FEATHER FACTS

### Barn Owl Mortality

For the last several months there have been several reports of Barn Owl deaths, particularly in southern Idaho. This is a report by Scott Bailey, an Idaho DWR researcher and officer.

I have been the non-game biologist in the referenced area for three years now and have witnessed this phenomenon every year (it is a year-round happening, but escalates in the winter). Here is a section of the *Birds of North America* "Barn Owl" account that discusses road mortality in barn owls:

"Collisions with automobiles are a major cause of mortality (Glue 1971, Smith and Marti 1976, Keran 1981, Newton et al. 1997). The proportion of British Barn Owl mortality attributed to road kill increased from 6% in 1910-1954 to 50% in 1991-1996; major roads caused the complete extinction of breeding Barn Owls within 0.5-2.5 km of such roads and some depletion within 2.5-8 km. Only at distances >25 km from the road did Barn Owl populations not feel the impact of vehicular mortality (Ramsden 2003). In Spain, mortality from car collisions increased significantly as the Spanish road network expanded in the 1990s (Fajardo 2001). In a 5-year period on a 150-km stretch of highway in France, 148 road-killed Barn Owls were found; most mortality occurred along embanked stretches of highway that crossed open fields and lacked hedges on either side (Massemin and Zorn 1998). Most mortality occurred from early autumn to late winter with a peak in autumn consisting mainly of immatures and corresponding to the post-fledgling dispersal. A second peak occurred in late winter, mostly of mature birds (Massemin and Zorn 1998).

Another study in France found that Barn Owls were 42% of the 1,598 birds killed by vehicular collisions (Baudvin 1997). In The Netherlands and Hawaii, the major cause of Barn Owl mortality was collision with cars (Work 1996, de Jong 1998)."

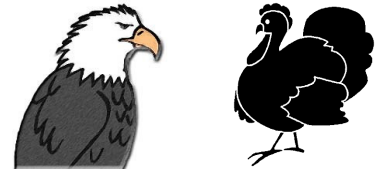
As you can see it is not unique to our state and there are many contributing factors. However, it appears that the number of barn owls killed on our road may be higher than anywhere else (although it is apparently not resulting in localized extinction along the roads — or hasn't yet anyway).

I believe that with this particularly stretch of road there are several factors at play (in addition to some of

the same factors noted above). The barren nature of much of the farmland along the road during winter months probably has a lot to do with it. (There aren't many places for prey to hide in these fields, and when the fields are devoid of cover the road margins and medians provide better cover for prey and may have higher prey densities than the adjacent farmlands.) Also there are no barriers (such as hedgerows) along the road (as noted in the passage above) that limit the ability of the birds to forage at low levels over the roadway. Because the freeway corridor is so wide barriers along the margin probably wouldn't prevent the birds from dropping down into the right-of-way to hunt anyway.



How to remedy the situation is another issue, and one that would likely require a lot of effort and funds.



When the Bald Eagle was approved of as the national bird of the USA, who objected and what did he want the national bird to be?

Benjamin Franklin wanted the Wild Turkey, because of its intelligence and ability to not getting caught easily. (Unlike the white domestic turkey, which is about as dim-witted a bird as they come.)

Now — what is the most common bird in the world? Answer — the descendant of the Red Jungle Fowl, known to us as the domestic chicken. In mainland China, the residents eat on average approximately 3 chickens per week. Rounded off, that is 3 billion chickens per week; plus the amount of time that a chicken grows from hatching to eating size is about 12-15 weeks, add another 3 times the number of weeks = 45 billion chickens fattening and getting ready for the stewpot. And that is in China, alone. Then add India and the rest of central Asia, indo-China, Africa and all of Latin America, and you have something in the neighborhood of 100 billion live chickens at any given point in time.

Studies have indicated that the Red-winged Blackbird is the most common wild bird in North America. As far as western hemispheric duck populations go, not counting millions of domestic Mallards, the Northern Pintail is probably even more common than wild Mallards.

## FURTHER FEATHERED FACTS

The following article was submitted by member Jack Skalicky, who is also the editor of the Buffalo Ornithological Society, despite his living in Salt Lake. With migration upon us now, this will be of interest.

### Nocturnal Migrant Towerkill in Madison, Wisconsin, on the Nights of September 7-8, 13-14, 2005

While searching the internet for a short article that would complement this issue of the Prothonotary, I stumbled onto a website (<http://my.execpc.com/CE/5F/idzikoj/passerines/towerkill.htm>) documenting a substantial bird kill during September, 2005, in Madison, Wisconsin. Nearly 200 migrant warblers, thrushes, and vireos were recovered from the base of a communication tower during the morning of September 14<sup>th</sup>. The following account was written by Andy Paulios:

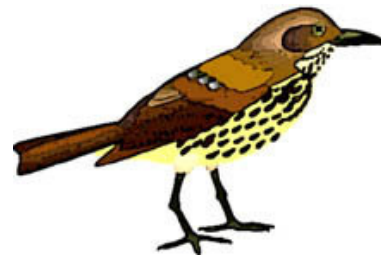
Dead nocturnal migrant birds were found on the ground around the Madison Channel 15 transmitting tower (approx. 1000 ft. tall) on the morning of the 14th. A cold front had passed on the 13th three hours before the onset of migration that night. The skies were clear with good visibility and the birds had a tailwind. Another, possibly larger kill was reported anecdotally from the morning of the 8th under conditions of moderate rain during peak nocturnal migration.

The night of the 13th and morning of the 14th were shaping up to be another high migration event. I arrived at the site on the morning of the 14th at approximately 7:00 AM. Upon reaching the wooded section of the playground, I immediately started to notice dead birds. I was astounded to reach the northernmost ball field and see numerous dead birds and a few live, injured birds on the field from a distance. I then began walking a series of semi-circular transects from the outfield into the infield and covered the entire field very thoroughly. Towards the end of the field I was joined by Carrie Morgan and Mike Foy. Together we proceeded to collect dead birds in a systematic manner on the lower fields and under the tower. All told we thoroughly covered all the baseball fields and the intervening areas to our satisfaction. Crows began to scavenge dead birds on the lower field at 8:00 A.M. and probably took 20-50 dead birds before we could get out there. There were probably many more dead birds north of the tower and east of the tower that we either couldn't see in the woods or we couldn't get to because we didn't search north of the tower.

Totals: Red-eyed Vireo, 18 + 2 wounded; Philadelphia Vireo, 4; Swainson's Thrush, 1; Veery? – unsure of ID/ mangled, 1; Golden-winged Warbler, 5; Tennessee Warbler, 16; Nashville Warbler, 1; Chestnut-sided Warbler, 5; Magnolia Warbler, 7; Palm Warbler, 2; Cape May Warbler, 6; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 2; Blackburnian Warbler, 1; Black-throated Green Warbler, 1; Blackpoll Warbler, 3; Bay-breasted Warbler, 3; Black-and-white Warbler, 21; American Redstart, 13; Northern Waterthrush, 1; Ovenbird, 54; Common Yellowthroat, 3; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 2; Total: 175. Of note are the relatively large number of Golden-winged Warblers found at the site. Five individuals represent almost 1% of the total GWWA picked up at communication towers in the eastern U.S. since monitoring has begun.

Towerkills of this magnitude usually occur in September, the month of peak fall migration under conditions of light rain, mist or fog, often when birds begin migrating behind a cold front and then hit that front as they fly south. The poor visibility drives them lower, well below the 1000-ft height of the taller towers and they are then attracted to its lights. The migrants circle the lights, hitting the tower itself or its guy wires. These taller towers (500-1000 ft.) are tall enough to kill birds on clear nights as the bottom of the migrating swarm is often below 1000 ft., but normally not in numbers such as was seen this night.

Kills can occur in April and May as well when birds are returning north. It is a mystery why such a kill occurred at this tower under benign conditions. Is this tower causing such kills on a regular basis during peak migration and these have been missed due to lack of continuous monitoring? Another possibility is an unusually large number of migrants were making landfall at dawn in the vicinity of this tower and hit the guy wires. There was no fog reported on the official weather observation record for that night but perhaps a local heavy ground fog contributed to this event.



## Collections of Bird Names

The first two columns are the accepted usage of flocks of various birds, alphabetically by usage, then alphabetically by species. In the third column are some made-up names by myself and others. Many of the real names were used in the Jan. 2003 issue of *Bird Tracks*.

Bazaar of Murres, Guillemots  
Bevy of Quail  
Bodelyng of Ducks  
Bouquet of Pheasants  
Brood of Chickens  
Building of Rooks  
Cadge of Peregrines  
Cast of Hawks, Falcons  
Charm of Finches  
Chattering of Starlings, Choughs, Budgerigars  
Clamor of Rooks  
Colony of Gulls, Penguins  
Company of Wigeons, Parrots  
Congregations of Rooks, Plovers  
Convocation of Eagles  
Covert of Coots  
Covey of Quail, Partridges, Grouse  
Deceit (Desert) of Lapwings, Plovers  
Desert of Lapwings  
Descent of Woodpeckers  
Dissimulation of Birds  
Dodge of Chicken Hawks  
Dule of Doves  
Exaltation of Larks  
Fall of Woodcocks  
Flight of Doves, Swallows, Goshawks  
Gaggle of Geese  
Gatling of Woodpeckers  
Gulp of Cormorants  
Herd of Swans, Cranes, Curlews  
Host of Sparrows  
Kettle of Hawks  
Murder of Crows  
Murmuration of Starlings  
Muster of Peacocks  
Mustering of Storks  
Mutation of Thrushes  
Nye (Nide) of Pheasants  
Ostentation of Peacocks  
Parliament of Owls  
Party of Jays  
Pitying of Turtledoves  
Plump of Wildfowl  
Pod (Pouch) of Pelicans  
Raft of Ducks  
Rafter of Turkeys  
Richness of Nightingales  
Scold of Jays  
Shimmer of Hummingbirds  
Siege of Herons or Bitterns  
Skein of Geese (flying)

Sord of Mallards  
Spring of Teal  
Stand of Flamingos  
Stream of Hawks  
Tiding of Magpies  
Trip of Dotterel  
Unkindness of Ravens  
Walk (Wisp) of Snipe  
Watch of Nightingales  
Wedge of Swans, Geese

### Alphabetically by species name.

Bitterns, Siege of  
Chickens, Brood of  
Choughs, Chattering of  
Coots, Covert of  
Crows, Murder of  
Cranes, Herd of  
Curlews, Herd of  
Doves, Dule of  
" Flight of  
Ducks, Bodelyng of  
Eagles, Convocation of  
Finches, Charm of  
Geese, Gaggle of  
" Skein of (flying)  
Guillemots, Bazaar of  
Hawks, Cast of  
Herons, Siege of  
Hummingbirds, Shimmer of  
Jays, Scold of  
Lapwings, Deceit (Desert) of  
Larks, Exaltation of  
Magpies, Tidings of  
Mallards, Sord of  
Murres, Bazaar of  
Nightingales, Watch of  
Owls, Parliament of  
Partridges, Covey of  
Peacocks, Muster of  
" Ostentation of  
Pheasants, Bouquet of  
" Nye of  
Plovers, Congregation of  
Quail, Bevy of  
" Covey of  
Ravens, Unkindness of  
Rooks, Building of  
" Congregation of  
Snipe, Walk of  
Sparrows, Host of  
Starlings, Chattering of  
" Murmuration of  
Storks, Mustering of  
Swallows, Flight of  
Swans, Herd of  
" Wedge of  
Teal, Spring of  
Thrushes, Mutation of  
Wigeons, Company of  
Wildfowl, Plump of  
Woodcocks, Fall of  
Woodpeckers, Descent of  
" Gatling of

### Some modernizations of names:

Asylum of Loons  
Board of Surfbirds  
Box of Corn Crakes  
Centerfield of Flycatchers  
Chain of Bobolinks  
Cluster of Knots  
Construction Job of Cranes  
Creamery of Skimmers  
Delivery Room of Storks  
Frenzy of Swifts  
Game of Solitaires  
Hangover of Red-eyed Vireos  
Loft of Pigeons  
Looming of Vultures  
Lunacy of Cuckoos  
Mew of Catbirds  
Mooring of Cowbirds  
Motor of Scoters  
Ordination of Bishops  
Pasa of Condors  
Peace Gathering of Doves  
Peel of Bananaquits  
Pie full of Blackbirds  
Pouch of Pelicans  
Punchbowl of Dippers  
Rafter of Barn Owls  
Ridicule of Mockingbirds  
Right and Left of Terns  
RSVP of Egrets  
Sailing of Frigatebirds  
Smidgen of Wigeons  
Stealth of Creepers  
Stew of Oystercatchers  
Strand of Silky Flycatchers  
String of Kites  
Subdivision of House Sparrows  
Train Yard of Rails  
Turnpike of Roadrunners  
Twirling of Phalaropes  
Wheat field of Thrashers

Listing of Birders  
Idiocy of Birders

### The following were used in the 11/05 issue of *Bird Tracks*:

Invisibleness of ptarmigans  
Dufflebag of buffleheads  
Gallon of petrels  
Rockefeller of oystercatchers  
Revenge of Montezuma Quail  
Embarrassment of Red-faced Warblers  
Ballet of nutcrackers  
Scoop of skimmers  
Vortex of vultures  
Meow of Mew Gulls  
Illusion of Merlin  
Gulp of Swallows  
Blizzard of Snowy Owls

## KRIS' COLUMN

### Woodpecker is a colorful presence in neighborhood

(Courtesy of the Ogden *Standard-Examiner*, March 1, 2006.)

What's pink and green and red all over? Did you guess a woodpecker? Believe it or not, the Lewis' woodpecker is that bizarre color combination. A touch of silvery gray at the neck provides an understated accent for an otherwise Technicolor bird.

The Lewis' woodpecker is truly an American original. Named for the first white explorer to describe the bird in 1805, this species differs from other woodpeckers in almost every aspect. Meriwether Lewis noted the colorful plumage and behavior during the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Two hundred years later, this stunner of a bird is still wowing watchers with its outlandish appearance and curious actions.

Many woodpeckers are black and white with a dab of red. But the Lewis' is a woodpecker with panache. This bird has a dark green head, back, wings, and tail; red face; bright pink belly; and pale, silvery gray collar. The bird's feet are also silvery gray and coordinate fashionably with the collar. Calvin Klein's sense of style couldn't be better!

The Lewis' foraging habits are unconventional. Woodpeckers are known for excavating insects from trees. But Lewis' seldom search for insects in wood or bark. In summer, the bird seems to transform into a fly-catcher as it sallies from perches to snatch insects on the wing. And in winter this maverick subsists on nuts and fruits that it harvests and caches. Cracks chiseled wider in long-dead cottonwoods, tree bark, and power poles serve as pantries.

A Lewis' woodpecker wintered in my neighborhood for years. Early in fall the bird appeared on favorite power poles and trees and began preparing its winter pantry. The chips flew — wood chips from the power poles, that is. The top of each favored pole became saw-toothed as the bird chiseled existing cracks to make room for acorns. The long cracks down the sides of the poles got the same treatment.

Then the foraging began. A short distance away a thick patch of scrub oak served as the local woodpecker grocery store. Back and forth, the bright bird ferried to and from the produce section. Acorn still attached to a

green oak sprig? No problem. The bird flew to the pole holding the sprig in its beak like a flamenco dancer holds a rose in his teeth. Snip! There went the sprig. Snip, snip! There went the brown acorn shell. Both floated to the ground.

The woodpecker was left grasping in its beak a naked acorn, bright as new wood. Then the bird hopped backward down the pole and pounded the morsel into a crack. A close look revealed many shelled acorns stored there like peas in a pod.

These woodpeckers store fruit, too. Just last week I watched a Lewis' fly to a homeowner's ornamental crab apple tree in Ogden Valley, pluck a marble-sized red apple, and return with the prize to a favorite cottonwood. There the bird pounded the tiny frozen apple into a crack widely expanded with fresh chisel marks.

When not chiseling, foraging or probing every split in every pole and tree near its home cottonwood, the woodpecker sat quietly on a branch in the sun. The bird's dark green back and wings looked shiny, svelte, and shrink-wrapped to fit. In contrast to the neatness of the green, the fluffy pink belly feathers pooched out on either side. The bird quietly turned its head and blinked a pale eyelid while showing the dark red face in bright light.

A neighboring woodpecker could easily spoil this serene scene. Despite wintering socially in small groups, Lewis' defend their stores from each other and will chase away potential marauders. And then a quiet, sunning bird will launch from a branch in pursuit and remind you that this species doesn't do anything, including flying, like any other woodpecker.

There'll be no typical undulating flight for this non-conformist! No, the Lewis' flies level like a crow with steady wing beats and broad wings. And remember all those crazy colors? Gone. The Lewis's woodpecker appears all black in flight, not green and pink and red. How original!

Lewis' woodpeckers can be seen sometimes flashing their colors and sometimes looking all black in Liberty on East Shaw Drive, the road to Swanson Environmental Center. Watch for them carving out the cracks of ancient gray cottonwoods along Thimbleberry Creek and clinging to the sides of power poles along the road.

Just a warning, though — if you see one in bright sunlight that shows off that pink, green and red all over, you might want to have a pair of sunglasses handy!

## READERS' REVIEW

Actually, this one is a Listeners' Review — "Nature-Quest, An Adventure in Nature and Music." *Andrew Lloyd Webber Naturally*. Excerpts from some of his best known compositions for various Broadway and off-Broadway musicals. They utilize numerous sounds from nature including one tune that matches the cadence of a Northern Mockingbird singing right along. Another catches the calls of two Barred Owls and a Chuck-wills-widow. Other have background songs of Northern Cardinal, Mourning Dove, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Loon, Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Mockingbirds again, crickets, coyote, as well as rippling streams, ocean wave action and tropical sounds. The cassette tape is not new, published in 1995, but is not so well known that anyone I've talked to about it has ever heard of it. I don't know if it is even still available or if there is also a CD version. If anyone is interested you can contact:

NorthWord Press, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1360  
Minocqua, WI 54548

We would also recommend two more cassette tapes or CDs in the National Park Series, put out by Orange Tree Productions in 1999, 29395 Agoura Road, #103, Agoura Hills, CA 91301 -- *The Living Desert* and *Native Lands*. The music is very pleasant and quite delightfully lulling, including some Navajo variations, interspersed with a few Navajo chants. Both tapes contain numerous bird songs and calls, tree frogs, cicadas, etc., in the background, and in some instances in the foreground. The bird recordings were done by Utahn Kevin Colver, who has done the recordings for the Stokes Western Bird Songs tapes and CDs. The songs were recorded in several national parks and monuments in the West, including Zion, Bryce Canyon and Arches. I picked up my tapes at the Utah Visitors' Center across the street south from the state capitol building.

## COMEDY CORNER

A couple of weeks ago, Roberta Wherritt called up her husband, Bart, and said, "Honey, the carburetor is flooded and I can't get the car started."

Bart replied, "Oh, come now, you don't know the difference between a carburetor and a carbuncle — or between a carburetor and a generator. Where is the car, anyway?"

Roberta — "Well, I was down at the Jordan River Parkway watching an oriole building its nest, and I guess the car slipped out of gear and rolled down into the river. It's sitting in 4 feet of water, so I'm sure the carburetor is flooded!"

(Continued from page 1)

and in flew an Acorn Woodpecker to check on the call. Everyone got good looks at this elusive resident of southern Utah—a Utah lifer for most.

The rest of the campground furnished us with many Pygmy Nuthatches, at least one White-breasted Nuthatch, Cassin's Finch, Bushtit, Red Crossbill, Mountain and Western Bluebirds. Recapture Reservoir was full of various ducks, as well as Eared Grebes and a Common Loon. The Blanding sewage ponds also yielded ducks, an Avocet, the only Yellow-headed Blackbirds we saw and a Say's Phoebe. By the end of the trip, all the usual ducks were seen except Blue-winged Teal, American Wigeon and Greater Scaup.

The wetland areas near the San Juan River in Bluff produced several Great Blue Herons and a rare migrating Clay-colored Sparrow. One heron came up with a huge flattish fish, possibly a perch or bass of some kind, that was at least 6" in diameter and about 1 1/2" thick. We watched as the bird juggled the fish so that it would go down headfirst, then watched as its 3" thick neck swelled up to the 6" necessary for the fish to slide down the gullet. Amazing! An unusual White-winged Dove was also picked out. This dove and the Collared-Dove are of note, not only due to their uncommon status, but on this trip list, we didn't see any Mourning Doves. Some of the group may have seen some on the way back, but not going down.

Later Saturday night, the group that stayed was treated to wonderful views of Tim's Saw-whet Owl, as well as several Western Screech-Owls.

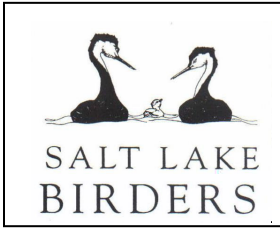
In addition to spotting many good birds in San Juan County, several of us stopped at the Matheson Wetlands on the edge of Moab. Sightings here included a Virginia Rail and three flocks of Wild Turkeys.

Besides the birds already mentioned, others of interest were: one Cattle Egret, Canvasback, 2 Cooper's Hawks, Prairie Falcon, Hairy Woodpecker, Crows in several places, Marsh Wrens, Sage Thrasher, and Great-tailed Grackles.

Birders who enjoyed the outing were, from Salt Lake Birders — Bob Huntington, Bob MacDougall, Pat Jividen, Kelley Holtman, Tuula Rose, Steve Carr. And from the Utah County Birders — Kathy Kanous, LeIla Ogden, Esther and Flora Duncan, Ned and Regina Bixler, Cheryl and Stephanie Peterson. Glenn Barlow and Merrill Webb had some visitors from Connecticut, Richard and Joan Becker. Marie Adams and Laura Herr came down from Evanston, Wyoming. Bob Bradley and Tony Jones, UOS officers attended, as did Tim Avery, Jayla Burley and her friend Doug. All together, we had 26 participants, which, in many ways was exceptional, although it was a bit of a problem handling so many vehicles.

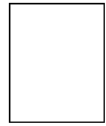
We owe a big thanks to Lu Giddings for taking us to so many places in San Juan County that most of us were not familiar with.





## Bird Tracks

Salt Lake Birders  
PO Box 58343  
Salt Lake City, UT 84158-0343  
Website – www.utahbirds.org



FIRST CLASS MAIL



### BIRD BYTES-

The ancient Israelites understood bird migration:  
Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtledove  
and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming. . . .

(Jeremiah 8:7)



### PUZZLE PAGE

Here is the marvelous solution to the April puzzle. The March puzzle may have been a little ‘easier,’ but most of you got all the answers to the April one, anyhow. Again, we want to thank the Wasatch Audubon Society for the use of their puzzles.

1. Look out, **Oscar! A car** approaches
2. Though the hare enjoyed the **meadow, it cherished** its burrow more.
3. Some actions **occur lewdly** and others just nudely.
4. He pulled an obvious **flimflam in going** ahead with his pyramid scheme.
5. When frustrated, he **turns to necrology** for relief.
6. Let’s digest this **over dinner**.
7. He’s either a **brave nut** or is showing nutty bravado.
8. I like the smell of **hibiscus** but I can’t stand brisket.
9. The besotted dog and the **barfly cat cherished** each other.
10. He’s caught! Don’t **budge! Rig a rope** for him!
11. A week ago Wednesday and last weekend we **ate alone**.
12. I didn’t feel the dog’s **s nip, e**ven though it severed the aorta.
13. Will you fix that **typo or will** I have to take away your

white-out?

14. **Bob ran the** mile in under four minutes.
15. The tropical foliage was strange, but, oh, those **balmy natives!!**
16. Until I learn to **rappel, I can’t** climb Ben Lomond.
17. The angel is the one with the **halo on** his badge.
18. Being **smart in**creases your chances of getting clobbered.
19. He got there **just in time** to claim first prize for promptness.
20. That gambler leaning against Adrian’s **wall ow**es me a mint.
21. You make **both rash errors** and rash blunders when you act rashly.
22. When he took me in **tow, he** educated me in the ways of drawing.
23. Catatonic **rakers** don’t move much grass.

### This is the Quiz for MAY.

The **California Gull** is the official state bird of only one state – Utah.

Which birds are used by more states than any other as their official state bird? Answers next month.