

# Black Hawk Watch

Newsletter of the Northern Arizona Audubon Society

Volume XLVII • Number 5 • May-Summer 2018

## May Programs

### A Naturalist's View of Northern Arizona

**Doug Von Gausig** is a life-long resident of the Verde Valley and he has spent a great deal of his life observing, photographing and recording wildlife in general and birds in particular and he brings this rich background to our membership program on **May 16 (Sedona) and May 17 (Flagstaff)**. This is a program which will be filled with excellent photos and great stories. You won't want to miss it. Doug brings a perspective of a naturalist who is deeply involved in water conservation issues and this will color his presentation.

Doug is the long-time Mayor of Clarkdale, Arizona. He is also the founding President of The Verde River Institute which is a non-profit organization dedicated to a mission of raising awareness of the unique resource which is the Verde River. In that regard, VRI has made our NAAS kayak trips on the Verde possible. He was also a founding board member of The Verde River Valley Nature Organization which, among other things, was a sponsor of the Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival.

Among his many interests, Doug owns Critical Eye Photography which displays a wealth of wildlife photos, and Nature Songs which showcases his work with recording bird sounds in the field. His newest venture is into the world of drone photography and he is a frequent contributor on YouTube with flights over the Verde River. In many respects, Doug is a Renaissance man of the Verde River.



### “Year of the Bird” Action— Speak Up for the Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Amy Zimmermann, Conservation Chair

As part of 2018's “Year of the Bird,” National Audubon Society is asking bird enthusiasts to take a simple but meaningful action each month. For April, that action was to defend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and there's still time to add your voice.

Despite the fact that the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) is the single most significant piece of legislation protecting birds, most people don't know it exists. That's not a surprise—it was passed by Congress back in 1918 as a treaty with Canada to stop birds being driven to extinction. Since then, Mexico, Japan, and Russia signed on, and the treaty was broadened to cover over 1,000 species of birds—nearly all the native birds in the United States.

When the MBTA was originally conceived by the National Audubon Society, the biggest problems facing birds were unregulated sport hunting and the pursuit of their feathers and even bodies as fashion accessories. The passing of the MBTA saved the Snowy Egret with its beautiful and elegant feathers from extinction, as well as the Wood Duck and Sandhill Crane.

Times have changed, and so have the threats to birds. Nowadays, the MBTA is less of a tool for protecting birds from individuals who want to wear them and more of a tool to protect birds from mass deaths caused by industry practices. Some examples of this include oil waste pits, which birds mistake for lakes or ponds and land in them, killing 500,000 to one million birds every year; power lines, which birds collide with in the air, killing up to 64 million birds every year; and wind turbines, which kill an estimated 234,000 birds every year. Recently, the MBTA held British Petroleum accountable in the aftermath of the Gulf oil spill, causing the company to pay \$100 million dollars to clean up the habitat destroyed by their activities. This habitat restoration helps not only birds, but also the entire ecosystem and the people whose livelihoods depend on it.

*Year of the bird, continued on page 2*

### Bubbling Ponds Steward's Report

Lisa Grubbs

Bubbling Ponds Preserve continues to live up to its name, not only as an NAAS Bird Sanctuary and hotspot, but a popular destination for naturalists and visitors alike to enjoy the area. NAAS led field trips throughout the winter and early spring months and the Preserve continues to be a popular field trip destination at the Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival.

Cindy Dunn and her staff with Arizona Game and Fish are supportive and generous partners with NAAS in our on-going conservation efforts to keep the Preserve and trails in excellent condition for migrating and resident species and for the enjoyment of all. They laid out mulch over the winter and sprung and groomed the trails.

NAAS hosted 150 lower and middle school elementary students from Sedona Charter School April 2017. The kids were there to celebrate Earth Day in a way they could experience and contribute to conservation. They picked up trash and some of our chapter members were on hand to show them some birds nearby. Mingus High School will return in May with their Life and Science class for guided bird walks. NAAS guides have generously volunteered to take groups on field trips. Thank you to all of our amazing guides and Board members who volunteered their time with these groups.

Page Springs is a stronghold breeding ground for our treasured Common Black-Hawks and we look forward to a new generation of this beloved buteo. We also were graced with the return of the Louisiana Waterthrush as well as many winter migrants. Spring is always a bonanza at the Preserve not only with migrants passing through but a destination breeding ground for many species.

## MAY PROGRAMS

**Guest Speaker - Doug Von Gausig**

*“A Naturalist's View of Northern Arizona”*

**Sedona - May 16 (Wed) - Sedona Public Library • 3250 White Bear Road**

**Flagstaff - May 17 (Thurs) - Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church • Benson Hall • 1601 N. San Francisco St.**

*Meetings start at 6:45 pm with social time. Formal meeting begins at 7:00 pm.*



# President's Message

Dennis Tomko - May/Summer 2018

The May/Summer issue of this newsletter is an appropriate time to look back on the last 12 months. In fact, it's a good time to look back on the past several years. Our world is changing rapidly, and Audubon is changing with it. Two years ago, the Board met in a retreat session and decided that, in addition to doing all the things this chapter has traditionally done, we would become more proactive with education outreach efforts. In the past 12 months we have taught several classroom and field sessions with various age groups through the local school districts. Additionally, we see our sanctuaries being used with increasing frequency; we even have a Cub Scout pack working with our Kachina Wetlands Preserve. Farther to the South, interpretive signage abounds now in our Bubbling Ponds Preserve.

Education has become a mainstay of our chapter just as our field trip schedule has blossomed over the past several years. Audubon has become ever more focused on bird conservation issues and our chapter developed a Conservation Committee to keep up with that. The Board

adopted a conservation policy that helps our chapter focus on local issues that affect our birds.

In other growth areas, our chapter has put all membership records on line and has made it much easier to join and renew. We have instituted a dues structure which has made it possible for our chapter to operate in the black without asking for supplemental money. We have even written successful grant applications that have resulted in improved wildlife viewing in two of our sanctuaries. A year ago, we updated our By-laws so we could take even better advantage of email. Having board members spread out over northern Arizona can make communication a challenge at times. We offer member meetings with guest speakers from September to May. Field trips are led by our volunteers year round. Conservation work below the rim is a winter activity, while the Flagstaff summers encourage outdoor work.

Much of what we are doing and will continue to do is increasingly focused on making our Northern Arizona world a safer, better place for birds. We will always be a birding organization, and we are aware that birds need help from us and others if they are to remain here as healthy communities that we can continue to enjoy.

## Count Birds on Global Big Day, May 5

by Amy Zimmermann

Ah, Cinco de Mayo—a day traditionally filled with margaritas and celebration... and migrating birds! Global Big Day is May 5! Set aside the cocktail shakers and grab your binoculars and get out there to spot some birds—and don't forget to record and report your sightings on eBird for Cornell Lab of Ornithology so they can monitor migration patterns. (This includes the number of each species you find—will you have one Acorn Woodpecker or twelve? Cornell Lab of Ornithology wants to know!) You can of course bird independently, but if you want to be a part of the citizen science program collecting valuable migrant data, you will need to contact the coordinator for your county. Coordinators are in charge of assigning groups or individuals to specific areas to ensure the best overall coverage and to prevent overlap—and if you don't have eBird and don't want to register on it to report the data you collect, they can report your data on eBird for you! Ask yourself how you want to spend Cinco de Mayo: Do you want to hike around (while looking for birds), sit in a lawn chair in your yard enjoying the beautiful spring weather (while looking for birds), or maybe you want to run out to your favorite spot on your lunch hour or after work (while looking for birds)? Whichever it is, you can help cover the region and report data—just let your coordinator know!



(Photo by Amy Zimmermann)

Coconino County:  
Trevor Hinckley, tch94@nau.edu  
618-967-1157

Yavapai County:  
Rich Armstrong, richarmstrong@q.com  
928-282-3675

## Year of the bird, continued from page 1

There are now efforts to weaken the MBTA by reinterpreting it so that it would not hold industries accountable for the bird deaths caused by their activities as long as the deaths are accidental ("incidental take")—even when the resulting bird deaths number in the millions, and even when the solutions to preventing those deaths are relatively inexpensive and simple. The MBTA was created to protect birds from the biggest threats to them, and Audubon is asking you to stand up for birds by standing up for the MBTA. Audubon has drafted a letter asking legislators to protect the MBTA and to reject HR 4239: SECURE American Energy Act as it is written, due to the risk to birds from industry activity—just add your name to send it to your representatives and tell them that you support a strong Migratory Bird Treaty Act by going to [www.audubon.org/yearofthebird](http://www.audubon.org/yearofthebird) and following the link. The birds thank you!

## Kristine Follett, NAAS Director and Membership Co-Chair

Kristine is a native of Arizona, born in Holbrook. Her teenage years were spent on the Navajo Reservation and she attended high school in Gallup, New Mexico. College was at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces and Loretto Heights College in Denver. Her parents instilled a love of the land and the importance of water and most especially how humans affect the world around us. She is a long time recycler and conservation is very important to her.



The long drought here in Arizona and throughout the Southwest has heightened her interest in preserving habitat and conserving water. She believes that if we lose the Verde River we may lose everything we know and love in the Verde Valley. She believes that the loss of the river will lead to loss of habitat for the multitude of species that rely on it, including humans. While her interest in birds and birding is relatively new due to her husband's interest, she believes that as fragile as birds are, they are like the canary in the coal mine. If they fall, the rest may not be far behind.

Her years in the corporate world have taught her that people will only pay attention to something that is of value to them. Her work with Verde River Valley Natural Organization and NAAS have given her a way to act on that thought. The NAAS sanctuaries, the rise in river sports activities and proliferation of conservation efforts in the valley have helped boost the economy and therefore interest in preserving the river and the habitat it makes possible. Educating people about the economic value of the Verde River and the habitat along it is the way to get everyone interested and passionate about saving the Verde.

She agreed to be on the NAAS Board for several reasons. One was that her husband, Dennis Tomko, was on the board and is now President. However, once on the board she got involved and hopes that she and the board can help to make a difference through education and entertainment about the world around us. From animals to the river, we all have a responsibility to do what we can, no matter how small, to raise awareness about our environment and how we interact with it and the other species with which we share it. Plus, she just plain loves to go out and look for birds!

## Northern Arizona Audubon Society Mission Statement

To promote the understanding and appreciation of birds and other wildlife and the conservation and restoration of their natural habitats.



## Northern Arizona Audubon Field Trips

### Parson's Park, Camp Verde

Sunday, May 6, 7:30-10:30 am

Leader: Chip Engelmann, [birddudechip@gmail.com](mailto:birddudechip@gmail.com)

724-599-7000

Meet at east end the Cliff Castle Casino lower lot and we will carpool in. The trip will follow a path on the banks of the Verde River under a lush Riparian canopy during the height of migration. We will then move inland 100 yards and return under a slightly drier canopy. The trail is one mile and flat, but there might be some uneven ground. If we can get enough vehicles with high wheel clearance we can save the walk in.

### Mingus Mountain

Thursday, May 10, 6:30 am - noon

Leader: Rich Armstrong, 928-0282-2675, [richarmstrong@q.com](mailto:richarmstrong@q.com)

Meet at the west end of the Cottonwood Safeway parking lot at 6:30 am (or at Sedona Wetlands Parking lot at 6:10 am if you live in Sedona) and carpool from there. Morning could be cool. Bring water, snacks, and your binoculars.

### Dead Horse State Park Birds & Bugs

Monday, May 14, 9-11am

Leaders: Nanette Armstrong & Don Singe, 928-282-3675  
[nancearmstrong@gmail.com](mailto:nancearmstrong@gmail.com)

Meet at the west end of the Cottonwood Safeway parking lot at 9 am and carpool from there. Explore a variety of desert to riparian habitat, looking at insects as well as birds

### Red Mountain

Tuesday, May 15, 7:30 am

Leader: Debbie Brown, 928-707-0610, [debbie\\_dsb@hotmail.com](mailto:debbie_dsb@hotmail.com)

We will meet at Bashas' Shopping Center on Humphreys St. in Flagstaff and carpool from there.

### Jail Trail, Cottonwood

Sunday, May 20, 7:30 - 11am

Leader: Chip Engelmann, [birddudechip@gmail.com](mailto:birddudechip@gmail.com)

724-599-7000

Meet at the Main Street Parking Lot at 7:30 am. Under the Verde River Riparian canopy, we may see everything from woodpeckers to Wood Ducks. The trail is two miles of flat maintained trail, but there will be some rocky and uneven stretches so hiking boots are recommended if you want to save some wear and tear on your feet.

### Forest service riparian area south of the Village of Oak Creek

Monday, May 21, 7-10am

Leader: Vic Nelson, [vicnelson3@aol.com](mailto:vicnelson3@aol.com)

Meet at the visitor center at 7 am. We'll bird until about 10am. Expect to see summer resident birds.

### Clear Creek Campground

Saturday, May 27, 7:30 - 10:30am

Leader: Holly Kleindienst, 928-853-6887

[hollykleindienst@gmail.com](mailto:hollykleindienst@gmail.com)

We will meet at the Day Use parking lot at the end of the road going into the campground at 7:30 am. Clear Creek flows past this campground on the Coconino National Forest, south of Camp Verde off of Highway 260, providing a mix of riparian and mesquite ecosystems, and hosts a wide variety of migrating and breeding birds. We should see Common Black-Hawk, orioles, Northern Cardinals, Rock Wrens, Bell's Vireos, and others, with 25-35 species likely. We will walk three miles over fairly level but sometimes uneven terrain, so wear your good hiking shoes. Bring your binoculars!

### Gaddes Canyon on Mingus Mountain

Friday June 1, 7:30 am - 12:30 pm

Leader: Holly Kleindienst, 928-853-6887

[hollykleindienst@gmail.com](mailto:hollykleindienst@gmail.com)

Meet at the west end of the Cottonwood Safeway parking lot at 7:30am and carpool from there. This trail is rated as moderate to difficult due to the steep descent into the canyon, and the uphill return on the way back out. 3-4 miles round trip total. This trip is not recommended for those with mobility, respiratory, or heart issues. The Gaddes Canyon trail sinks from the dry ponderosa pine type on top of Mingus Mountain into more lush and diverse vegetation the further we descend into the canyon, attracting a variety of birds into this cooler area. A day pack for water, snacks/lunch, and shedded layers is recommended. Wear good hiking shoes and dress in light layers, as the morning may be cool.

### Parson's Park, Camp Verde

Saturday, June 2, 7:30 - 10:30 am

Leader: Chip Engelmann, [birddudechip@gmail.com](mailto:birddudechip@gmail.com)

724-599-7000

Meet at the east end the Cliff Castle Casino lower lot and we will carpool in at 7:30 am. The trip will follow a path on the banks of the Verde River under a lush Riparian canopy in search of the elusive Yellow-Billed Cuckoo. We will then move inland 100 yards and return under a slightly dryer canopy. The trail is one mile and flat, but there might be some uneven ground. If we can get enough vehicles with high wheel clearance we can save the walk in.

### Picture Canyon

Sunday, June 3, 8:00 am

Leader: Trevor Hinckley

NAAS Picture Canyon Bird Sanctuary Steward

[tch94@nau.edu](mailto:tch94@nau.edu) or (618) 967-1157

Meet at the main (upper) entrance to Picture Canyon off Hwy 66 at 8:00 a.m. We will take three to four hours to bird and hike around two to three miles at Picture Canyon (duration and distance will depend on weather and quality of birding). Bring water, snacks, and binoculars.

### Kachina Wetlands

Saturday, June 16, 7:00 am

Leader: Tom Hedwall, [tshedwall@gmail.com](mailto:tshedwall@gmail.com)

Meet at the parking area for Kachina Wetlands at the end of Tovar Trail in Kachina Village.

### Butterfly Spring Trail on Mingus Mountain

Friday, August 10, 7:30 am - noon

Leader: Holly Kleindienst, 928-853-6887

[hollykleindienst@gmail.com](mailto:hollykleindienst@gmail.com)

Meet at the west end of the Cottonwood Safeway parking lot at 7:30 am and carpool from there. Mingus Mountain hosts different species than down in the Verde Valley. Butterfly Spring lies in a short moist canyon on the mountain, and the spring attracts spectacular Red-faced Warblers, and Painted Redstarts. There is some rock scrambling at the beginning of this moderately steep trail. We will hike about two miles total. Wear a sunhat, hiking shoes, and wear light layers as the morning could be cool. Bring water, snacks, and your binoculars.

### FINDING YOUR WAY

Directions to many of our field trip destinations can be found on the NAAS website under Conservation; checklists also are available. [northernarizonaaudubon.org](http://northernarizonaaudubon.org)



### World Migratory Bird Day World Migratory Bird Day at Kachina Wetlands, May 19

By Christina Vojta, NAAS Kachina Wetlands Bird Sanctuary Steward

A celebration of World Migratory Bird Day will be held on Saturday, May 19th from 8 am to 2 pm at Kachina Wetlands, with a variety of activities for birders of all skill levels and people of all ages. Whether you have been to Kachina Wetlands dozens of times or have never set foot there before, you will have a great time enjoying the camaraderie of other birders while learning why Kachina Wetlands is such a special place. The event is sponsored by Northern Arizona Audubon Society, Jay's Bird Barn, and the Environmental Education Program of Rocky Mountain Research Station.

Last fall, bird conservation groups decided to formally unite the two largest bird education campaigns on Earth: International Migratory Bird Day (sponsored by Environment for the Americas), and World Migratory Bird Day (an event sponsored by a Eurasian-African group), and place them under a single umbrella known as World Migratory Bird Day.

The new partnership strengthens global recognition and appreciation of migratory birds and highlights the urgent need for their conservation. Because the union of the two bird education campaigns is so recent, the theme of this year's World Migratory Bird Day is "Unifying Our Voice for Bird Conservation."

From this year forward, World Migratory Bird Day will celebrate two events – one on the second weekend of May and another on the second weekend of October. This year, the "official" spring World Migratory Bird Day is May 12th. However, to avoid NAU's graduation and allow for more participation, we are celebrating at Kachina Wetlands a week later, on May 19th. It's OK to think outside of the nest!

Here are some events that are planned for the Kachina Wetlands celebration:

- Two public bird walks, one at 8:30 am and another at 10 am.
- A spotting scope set up all day so that if you can't make a bird walk, you can still see terrific views of birds.
- A live hawk demonstration by the International Raptor and Falconry Center.
- A "Big Sit", where all species viewed all day from a single location are recorded.
- Information tables that focus on birds and bird migration.
- Migratory bird activities for children.

If you would like to participate in the Big Sit, please contact Christina Vojta at [Christina.vojta@nau.edu](mailto:Christina.vojta@nau.edu). If you are an experienced birder, please consider volunteering to be at the spotting scope for an hour or so. For everyone else, just show up. There's no registration fee, and everyone is welcome!

Kachina Wetlands is located six miles south of Flagstaff. Take the I-40 Kachina Village exit, go right onto Tovar Trail, and follow it to the end. For those using cell phones, the address to enter is 2375 Utility Road. Hope to see you there!

### Audubon returns to the Verde River in kayaks

Last year NAAS had a fantastic morning kayak trip on the Verde River. We went for a three-hour float thanks to the support of Doug Von Gausig and Verde River Institute. But that was then, and this is now. We are going to do it again! Save the date: June 2, 2018. We will float from Lower Tapco RAP to Tuzigoot Bridge and enjoy birding and natural history like you have never experienced before. Everything is provided; all you need is you. We will meet in Clarkdale and be driven to Lower Tapco RAP (that means River Access Point). At the end of the morning we will be picked up and returned to our starting point in Clarkdale. The cost is the same as last year: \$45.00 and you will need to register on our website. The journey starts here on our chapter site: <http://northernarizonaaudubon.org/NAAS/kayak/>. That page will give you links to more information and a registration/payment page. One note: this is a membership trip and will be filled by NAAS members first. Enter the link and learn.



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# New & Renewing Members

**Individual  
(Northern Flicker)**

Suzanne Clemenz  
Carole Currin  
MaryHelen Dunn  
Wayne Fischer  
Jed Fulkerson  
Diane Hafeman  
David Hayes  
Rich Heindinger  
Katherine Hilton  
Mark James  
Michelle Koehnle  
Cecile Leblanc  
Kia Lhamo  
Whit Manter  
Dr. Vera Markgraf  
Bob Mathiasen  
Lynda McEvoy  
Jane Miller  
Patricia Neyman  
Kevin Rand

Emily Renn  
Katherine Ruffenach  
Peter Runge  
William Scales  
Carol Scholing  
Paul Silvagni  
Nancy Steele  
Mike Taylor  
Karen Walker  
Nancy Walsh  
Susan Will  
Claire Wright

**Family (Gambel's Quail)**

Ron & Glo Auler  
M. Austin & E. Garrison  
Dr. Ann Beck  
Glenn Condon  
Michael Durgain  
Scott & Carol Gamble

Helen-Marie & Paul Holmgren  
Helene Lesslie  
David Myers  
Pat Scott  
Kurt Starbuck & Roberta  
Stockman  
Jim & Sarah Wilce

**Enhanced (Blackhawk)**

Brent Bitz  
Steven Grayson  
Jackie Klieger & Kathy  
Dunham  
Pauline Rosen  
Beverly Sass  
David & Jeanne Sherry  
Dennis Tomko & Kristine  
Follett  
Priscilla Trowbridge  
Robert Zaccaria

*To see when your membership expires, look at the date next to your address on your newsletter.*

## NAAS Directory

**Officers**

- President - Dennis Tomko
- Vice President - Open
- Secretary - Michele Losee
- Treasurer - Julie Wills

**Directors**

- Nanette Armstrong
- Brent Bitz
- Kristine Follett
- Ruby Hammond
- Kay Hawklee
- Trevor Hinckley
- Michele Losee
- Barbara Hirt
- Dennis Tomko
- Tina Whitley
- Julie Wills

**Committee Chairs**

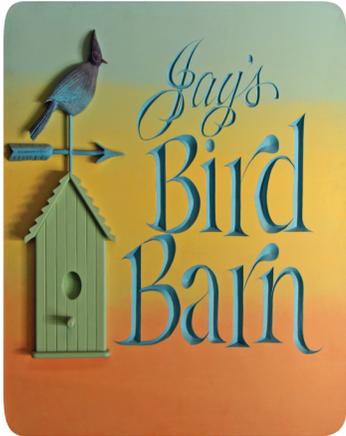
- Conservation: Amy Zimmermann
- Education: Tina Whitley
- Field Trips: ATR - Sue Ordway BTR - Rich Armstrong
- Hospitality: ATR - Janet May BTR - Nanette Armstrong
- Membership: Barbara Hirt and Kristine Follett
- Programs: Nanette Armstrong
- Publicity: ATR - Phyllis Kegley BTR - Kristine Follett

**Sanctuary Stewards**

- Bubbling Ponds Steward: Lisa Grubbs
- Kachina Wetlands Steward: Cristina Vojta
- Picture Canyon Steward: Trevor Hinckley
- Sedona Wetlands Steward: Rich Armstrong

**General**

- Books: Brent Bitz
- Facebook: Nanette Armstrong
- NAAS Email: monitored by Dennis Tomko
- Newsletter Editor: Phyllis Kegley
- Newsletter Publisher: Debbie Compton
- VVBNF Representative: Kristine Follett
- Webmaster: Dennis Tomko



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NAAS is now on Facebook. Check out our page frequently because there is always new information on it.

**Have a story you would like to share?**



- The **BlackHawk Watch** is published bi-monthly September through May.
- Articles are welcome from members and non-members. Send proposed articles by email to Phyllis at keglelyphyllis.com. Deadline for copy is the 15th of the month.



**Birders, Go to  
northernarizonaaudubon.org  
and check for new  
Field Trips on the calendar!**

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BLACKHAWK WATCH

*Have you visited our web site?*

**northernarizonaaudubon.org**

## Girls, Scouting out the Birds

*Nanette Armstrong*

Rich and Nanette Armstrong worked with the Girl Scouts at their encampment at Willow Springs Campground in Prescott on April 7. They divided the troops up, Rich leading half on a "perils of migration" game. On a short walk through the woods, the girls learned that migration is difficult, saw some problems the birds meet on their paths, and learned ways they can help the birds along. Nanette presented a hands-on bird beak demo with the girls pretending they were scientists, studying and learning bird behavior. The teams ended with learning about and using binoculars. Five groups for a total of 70 girls and their troop leaders, learned enough to earn a Journey Badge.



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Individual \$25

(Northern Flicker)

Family \$40

(Gambel's Quail)

Supporting \$100

(Blackhawk)

Please make checks payable to **NAAS** and mail to:

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I am interested in Volunteer opportunities

Check here if this is a

change of address

Check here if this is a

renewal