

# BlackHawk Watch

Newsletter of the Northern Arizona Audubon Society

Volume XLVII • Number 1 • September -October 2018

## September Programs

### Watching the Birds of Costa Rica

Costa Rica is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, with hundreds of species of plants and animals, including nearly 1000 species of birds, many of them endemic to Costa Rica and the immediate region. Its geographical location connecting South America and North America, its geological history of isolated island-units and tectonic mountain-building, explain endemism and this diversity. As a consequence, especially for birders, Costa Rica is a fantastic place to visit.

The September talk by **Roy and Janet May** will feature this diversity and its origin. It will explore, with many photographs, the birdlife of the country's various bioregions and will include suggestions for places to visit for good birding. It also will mention something about current birding, birdwatching, and ornithology in Costa Rica and indicate resources for learning about the birds and natural history of the country.

Flagstaff residents Janet and Roy May lived in Costa Rica for over 30 years and are longtime active members of the Ornithological Association of Costa Rica (AOCR). Roy was president of the AOCR for a dozen years and is the editor of *Zeledonia*, the ornithology journal for the Mesoamerican region. Janet maintained the organization's website for many years and was responsible for diagramming the ornithological journal and the annual publication of the Official List of the Birds of Costa Rica. Roy also is the author of *En los pasos de Zeledon* (2016), a history of ornithology in Costa Rica. Join us **September 19 in Sedona** and **September 25 in Flagstaff**, 6:30 social time, program starts at 7:00.



© Jeffrey Muñoz  
*Resplendent Quetzal*

## October Programs

### Birds on Travels Down Under

Long time Flagstaff resident and NAU mathematics professor **Terry Blows** first took an interest in birds during his time as a student at the University in Aberystwyth, Wales in 1980. He credits the European Oystercatcher as the bird that got him hooked. Since then he has looked for birds wherever his travels have taken him.

Terry first went to Australia in 1988 on a family visit, and has returned several times since including taking sabbaticals in Brisbane in 2000 and in 2009. The country gives him the combination of British culture (i.e. cricket) together with the wide open spaces of the American west, but it is the wildlife that is the jewel in the crown.

Terry will talk about his experiences down under and will share stories and pictures of some of the wonderful birds to be found there. Join us **October 17 in Sedona** and **October 23 in Flagstaff**.



*Kookaburra*

## ATTENTION FLAGSTAFF MEMBERS!!

The meeting night – but not the time or the place – for our Flagstaff Audubon programs has been permanently changed. You have become accustomed to meeting on the third Thursday of each month and starting with the September meeting, that evening will change to the 4th Tuesday. We will still meet at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church at 7:00 PM just as we have been doing, but the day will change to the 4th Tuesday of the month. Thank you for your continued support.

## SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER PROGRAMS

### Guest Speaker - Roy and Janet May

*"Watching the Birds of Costa Rica"*

**Sedona - September 19 (Wed)** - Sedona Public Library • 3250 White Bear Road

**Flagstaff - September 25 (Tues)** - Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church • Benson Hall • 1601 N. San Francisco St.

### Guest Speaker - Terry Blows

*"Birds on Travels Down Under"*

**Sedona - October 17 (Wed)** - Sedona Public Library • 3250 White Bear Road

**Flagstaff - October 23 (Tues)** - 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 - September/October 2018

Our chapter, like most non-profits, uses July 1st as the beginning of the year. In that regard we are pleased to announce some new people and sad to see some veterans leave.

Julie Wills (Sedona) is stepping down from her long-time position as Treasurer. Julie has been a hard-working rock on our board and we are pleased that she has moved into a position on our Conservation Committee. Julie has been replaced by Joan Stoner (Flagstaff). Joan brings a wonderful background in financial recording for non-profits and she will be great as our new NAAS Treasurer.

Barbara Hirt (Sedona) has stepped down as Membership Chair and Board Member after many years in those positions. We are forever

grateful for her service. Her positions (both) are being filled by Karin Slavey (Sedona) who is enthusiastic to be taking on these responsibilities. Karin is a past Membership Chair from years ago and has returned and we are grateful.

The steward for Bubbling Ponds has been Lisa Grubbs and she has done a fantastic job there. Lisa has taken on new employment responsibilities now and has had to leave her steward position. It is our good fortune that Rob Gibbs (Cornville) has come forward to assume the stewardship at Bubbling Ponds. Rob brings a rich background as a Park Naturalist, a Wildlife Ecologist, and a Natural Resources Manager for various government agencies and we look forward to his tenure at Bubbling Ponds.

We welcome all these people. You can see the entire NAAS leadership on our website at: [www.northernarizonaaudubon.org](http://www.northernarizonaaudubon.org)>Menu> About Us> Leadership Directory.

## Chapter promotes conservation efforts

Brent Bitz

As a proud part of the Audubon family, Northern Arizona Audubon regularly receives requests from both our National and Arizona offices asking for our endorsement of public policy initiatives that support the protection of bird habitat. While in the past, your chapter has periodically considered these requests our support has been sporadic.

The frequency of these conservation requests has now reached a point where your Board believes that more proactive action is required. Consequently, upon receipt of these requests, the Conservation Committee will now be promptly considering these often time sensitive requests and, generally speaking providing an endorsement. This means that a letter of support will be signed on behalf of our chapter and sent to the National or Arizona offices for inclusion in a larger campaign.

These requests can relate to a wide variety of activities. For example, recently we were asked to endorse a letter to Congress supporting "permanent reauthorization and robust funding" for the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund is a major money source for protection of bird habitat across the country.

Because these are important issues, we will be communicating our actions to our members generally by way of an e-blast. Sometimes, the e-blast will show individual members how you can join in and provide your endorsement as well.

Northern Arizona Audubon has a long and proud tradition of supporting protection of our natural habitats and this is a continuation of that tradition. Amy Zimmermann chairs the Conservation Committee with Kay Hawkelee, Julie Wills and Brent Bitz as committee members. If you would like to join our efforts, please ask any one of us for more information.

## State Audubon Council News

Dennis Tomko

Did you know that there are eight Audubon chapters in Arizona and that there is also an office of National Audubon in Phoenix at the Pulliam Audubon Center on Central Ave? The eight chapters are organized into an entity called The Arizona Council of Audubon Chapters. The ACAC exists to give the chapters a unified voice and to provide a forum for inter-chapter support. Your local chapter President, Dennis Tomko, serves as the President of this organization as well. NAAS hosted the semi-annual meeting of the ACAC in August in Cottonwood. As is typical of these meetings, we had several presenters including a National Audubon Vice President and the Executive Director of Audubon Arizona. The day was a good opportunity for the exchange of ideas and issues from chapters in our state. It was also a great opportunity to showcase Northern Arizona Audubon. Our star shone brightly.

## NAAS installs a Monarch Butterfly Garden at Page Springs

Denise Gibbs

It all started with a conversation between Sam Hough and myself, Denise Gibbs of Monarch Watch, a University of Kansas conservation program. After swapping specifics on local bird sightings, our conversation flowed into another topic—butterflies, particularly Monarch butterflies. So, my next comment to Sam was, "Since you already have some excellent nectar sources to sustain migrating monarchs, all you need now to have a Monarch Waystation is some native milkweed (caterpillar food plant) for summer-breeding monarchs."

So the idea of creating a Monarch Waystation at Page Springs was planted, and was soon embraced by members of the NAAS Board of Directors. This was not surprising, since three of the NAAS Conservation Goals would be achieved: 1) Sanctuaries—"protecting and preserving habitat; engage with the environment and learn about nature", 2) Partnerships— in this case with Monarch Watch, and 3) Education— educating people about the importance of Monarch conservation with interpretive signs and citizen science (future migrating monarch tagging programs).

Unfortunately, even though the City of Sedona was most cooperative, irrigation of a prospective milkweed garden at the Wetlands was quite impractical so we decided to try for a Monarch Waystation at Page Springs Fish Hatchery. Because the Bubbling Ponds Preserve is such a success, Arizona Game & Fish was most supportive and a location beside the Visitor Center parking lot was selected.

NAAS has budget money for conservation programs and we hired a local landscape contractor to do all the hard work of preparing the site and planting the garden. It currently has 125 donated plugs of six native milkweed species and seeds of 20 native species of plants that provide nectar. We are currently working with Monarch Watch and Southwest Monarch Study to install informative signage.

The Monarch Waystation is a work in progress, and volunteers are needed periodically to maintain it. We need a few volunteers who would be willing to take turns watering the garden with a hose once a week during September and October. Also, we will need volunteers to help with weeding and mulching next spring. If interested, please contact Bubbling Ponds Sanctuary Steward, Rob Gibbs at [robgbbs54@gmail.com](mailto:robgbbs54@gmail.com)

Please feel free to contact me with questions/comments at [MonarchTagger@gmail.com](mailto:MonarchTagger@gmail.com),

Monarch Conservation Specialist, Monarch Watch.

<https://www.monarchwatch.org/cs/>

For more information: <https://www.monarchwatch.org/waystations/> & <https://www.swmonarchs.org/>

## 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

### “Lizarding at Tuzigoot”

Saturday, September 1, 7:30 - 9:30 am

Leader: Jeff Tanner 602-677-4053

Meet at the Tuzigoot River Access parking lot at 7:30 am. That's right. This trip will focus on the Verde Valley's beautiful lizards! First we'll "lizard" the Tuzigoot River Access point (near the Tuzigoot bridge), briefly exploring the riparian habitat. Then we'll head over to the Monument, and look around the desert scrub. At least eight species are possible. The duration and walking distance will be short but keep in mind, lizards like it hot! So bring plenty of water and sun protection. And binoculars. Who knows? We might see some birds out there, too! Restrooms available at Tuzigoot National Monument.

### Mingus Mountains

Thursday, September 6, 6:30 am to noon or so.

Leader: Rich Armstrong 928-0282-2675  
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. Hope for migrating warblers, other migrants and residents, etc. Morning could be cool. Bring water, snacks, and your binocs.

### Kachina Wetlands

Saturday, September 15, 8:00 am

Leader: Tom Hedwall  
tshedwall@gmail.com

Meet at the wetlands parking lot, 2375 Utility Rd., Flagstaff, at the end of Tovar Trail in Kachina Village.

### Sedona Wetlands

Sunday, September 16, 8:30-9:30 am

Leader: Rich Armstrong 928-0282-2675  
richarmstrong@q.com

Meet at Sedona Wetlands parking lot. A short one hour or less quick check of only pond 1 and big pond for shorebirds and other migrants.

### Bubbling Ponds

Friday, September 21, 8:30 am

Saturday, October 6, 8:30 am

Friday, October 26, 8:30 am

Leader: Lisa Grubbs, 928-592-3684.

Meet at the dirt parking lot at 8:30. No restrooms. We will be walking the Black Hawk Trail through the mesquite bosque and the riparian corridor along Oak Creek and finish up at the ponds – about two miles. Migration will be happening – some winter arrivals – maybe some surprises just passing through. Summer

birds should be gone but, alas, we have the usual residents to track down. Bring all the usual stuff. Call Lisa Grubbs for info, etc.

### Kachina Wetlands

Saturday, October 19, 8:00 am

Leader: Debbie Brown debbie\_dsb@hotmail.com

Meet at the wetlands parking lot, 2375 Utility Rd., Flagstaff, at the end of Tovar Trail in Kachina Village.

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## Highlights of BTR Field Trips: May - Aug

On May 4th Chip Engelmann and eight people birded Parson Park in Camp Verde. They saw 42 species including Warbling Vireo and lots of warblers. On May 10th Rich Armstrong and eight folks birded the Mingus Mountains. They saw lots of birds concentrated at what little water was there.

On Aug 10th Holly Kleindienst had four folks and they saw 10 species of warblers with Hermit Warbler being the most abundant for an awesome field trip.

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## Gray Jay name changed back to Canada Jay

*From The American Ornithological Society newsletter*

In 1954, the Gray Jay was adopted as the common name for what is now *P. canadensis* but this violated one of NACC'S nomenclature principles. This year the common name was changed back to Canada Jay. Restoring Canada Jay as the common name was based on three main criteria: (1) both "Gray Jay" and "Canada Jay" were used concurrently for different subspecies of what were formerly *P. obscurus* and *P. canadensis*, respectively, at a time when common names were not applied to overall species names; in 1954, common names were dropped for bird subspecies and the name "Gray Jay" was adopted for the species, despite guidelines calling for the use of English names of nominate subspecies for polytypic species (in scientific nomenclature, when a species is split into two or more subspecies, the originally described population is retained as the "nominate subspecies"). (2) Failure to rescind the substitution of "Gray Jay" for "Canada Jay" ended up violating one of NACC's nomenclatural (naming) principles, specifically to retain the traditional names whenever possible. (3) A precedent was set for another jay species in North America, whereby the Mexican Jay was officially re-designated as the 'Gray-breasted Jay' by the NACC in 1983, but then its original common name was restored to the Mexican Jay in 1998. In addition to its historical precedence, the name "Canada Jay" reflects the scientific name of the species and its main area of distribution.

### 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)



### Kachina Wetlands through the Lens of eBIRD

Christina Vojta

The international database "eBIRD" was established in 2002 by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society as a way for professional and recreational birdwatchers to record their bird observations and explore data. Today eBIRD is the largest and fastest growing biodiversity database in existence, with millions of observations entered every month. Although not everyone enters their data in eBIRD, enough data has been entered to provide meaningful information on the diversity and abundance of birds at specific locations, as well as provide rough changes in abundance and distribution across large landscapes.

In December, I decided to use eBIRD to explore Kachina Wetlands, one of Northern Arizona Audubon's four bird sanctuaries. Data exploration was easy to do because Kachina Wetlands is an eBIRD hotspot with all checklists available through one simple search. This article highlights some of the things I learned through this exploration.

To date (December 18), 1,383 checklists have been submitted for Kachina Wetlands, beginning in 1992. A total of 223 species have been recorded, which makes it the second most diverse hotspot in Coconino County, behind Mormon Lake (225 species) and ahead of Ashurst Lake (216 species). These rankings shift around from time to time depending on which sites have had recent new sightings. Last year, Kachina Wetlands led the pack.

When I explored the last ten years, I found that 208 species had been reported for Kachina Wetlands, which is 15 species fewer than the grand total of 223. This made me curious. Which 15 species have we not seen at Kachina Wetlands in the last ten years? This took extra digging, but most were rare species completely out of their range, like Chukar and Lapland Longspur. Only three of these rare species had been seen more than once: Bobolink (seen in October 1992 and May 2006), Baird's Sandpiper (seen in September 2001 and October 2003), and Semipalmated Plover (seen in August 1998 and August 2003).

Despite not seeing fifteen species that were recorded in past decades, we continue to add new species to Kachina Wetlands, due to the sharp eyes and diligent checklists of our fellow birders. In 2017, four new species were recorded for the first time: Inca Dove (October, Roger Sleeper), Fox Sparrow (October, Parker Davis), Swamp Sparrow (October, Brian Healy), and Rusty Blackbird (November, Tom Hedwall). In all, 166 species were recorded in 2018 through the date of this writing, December 17th.



Water distribution among the ponds began to change in July of this year, with Pond 2 (the marshy pond) now standing empty and replaced with two new ponds to the west. Because of this, we are likely to see changes in species composition and abundance. For example, I've noticed an increase in American Pipits, Brewer's Blackbirds, and Brown-headed Cowbirds due to the bare shorelines along the two new ponds.

November and December had milder weather than in years past, so most of the pond surfaces are still ice-free and are being used by Canada Geese, Northern Pintails, Mallards, Green-winged Teals, Ring-necked Ducks, Pied-billed Grebes, and other waterbirds. If you get out there, be sure to look for the Greater White-fronted Goose (Brooks Hart, December 16).

If you haven't started entering your checklists into eBIRD, consider making this your New Year's Resolution for 2018. Through your contribution, we will continue to learn more about Kachina Wetlands and the diversity of birds that use it.

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# New & Renewing Members

- |                             |                                 |                  |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Robyn Bath-Rosenfeld        | Tina & Peter Whitley-Angerbauer | Jeanne Keller    |
| Gary Botello                | Susan & Rob Meyer               | Lisa Wells       |
| Alice Hagerman              | Dawn Whitman                    | Randy Miller     |
| Donald Hahn                 | Joan Prefontaine                | Jack Humbles     |
| Kat Lemoine                 | Peter Rosenthal & Darlene Ryan  | Jeffrey Foster   |
| Robin Rogers                | Marguerite Younh                | Brian Carlin     |
| Nell Smith                  | Danae Dearden                   | Sara Gabrielson  |
| Janis Watts                 | Kathryn Hart                    | Susan Meyer      |
| Vicki & Keith Hedrick       | Solujana & Terry Blows          | Kyla Allen       |
| John Kinnamon               | Melanie Vuicich-Mallis          | Terry West       |
| Sarah Littenberg            | David Myers                     | Bernice Hall     |
| George Martinez             | Ellen McAlister                 | Alexis McCauslin |
| Roy-Janet May               | Theodere Washington             | Celeste York     |
| Jackie Odom                 | David Black                     |                  |
| Kristin Rothrock            | Amy Zimmermeran                 |                  |
| Richard & Nanette Armstrong | Ron Norton                      |                  |
| Chip Norton & Kathy Davis   | Jody & Jeanie Humber            |                  |

*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 - Joan Stoner

### Directors

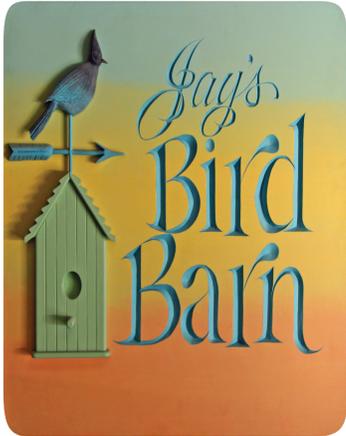
- Brent Bitz
- Karen Slavey
- Ruby Hammond
- Nanette Armstrong
- Trevor Hinckley
- Tina Whitley
- Kristine Follett
- Kay Hawklee

### Committee Chairs

- Conservation: Amy Zimmermann
- Education: Open
- Programs: Nanette Armstrong
- Field Trips: ATR - Open
- Field Trips: BTR - Rich Armstrong
- Membership: Karin Slavey
- Hospitality: ATR - Roy and Janet May
- Hospitality: BTR - Nanette Armstrong
- Publicity/Publications: Phyllis Kegley

### Sanctuary Stewards

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



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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 [kegleyphyllis.com](mailto:kegleyphyllis.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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**northernarizonaaudubon.org**

**Another Global Big Day on October 6**

Global Big Day has set new heights for a single day of birding each of the past four Mays. This massively international collaborative birding event has been so great that we're having another worldwide eBird Big Day! From hundreds of Ross's Gulls in northern Alaska to springtime in Australia, South Africa, and southern South America, October brings fun birding to the whole world. Mark your calendar for the first October Big Day: 6 October. Let's see what we can find together on the first October Big Day!

You don't have to commit to all 24 hours—just an hour or even 10 minutes counts as participating. Visit your favorite spot or search out someplace new; enjoy a solo walk or get some friends to join in the fun.

**Get an eBird account:** eBird is a worldwide bird checklist program used by hundreds of thousands of birders. It's what allows us to compile everyone's sightings into a single massive Global Big Day list—while at the same time collecting the data for scientists to use to better understand birds. It's free.

**Watch birds on October 6:** It's that simple. You don't need to be a bird expert, or go out all day long. Even 10 minutes in your backyard will help. Global Big Day runs from midnight to midnight in your local time zone. You can report birds from anywhere in the world.

**Enter what you see and hear on eBird:** You can enter your sightings via our website or—even easier—download the free eBird Mobile app. You can enter and submit lists while you're still out birding, and the app will even keep track of how far you've walked, so you can just focus on watching birds. While you're downloading free apps, try out the Cornell Lab's Merlin Bird ID app for help with identification.

**Watch the sightings roll in:** During the day, keep an eye on how the lists are growing in different parts of the world. Follow along with sightings from more than 150 countries. Stats will be updated in real-time on our Global Big Day page.

*Have you visited our web site?*

**JOIN US!**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
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If you prefer to join or renew on line, please go to our website at <http://www.northernarizonaaudubon.org/>membership>

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(Northern Flicker)

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(Gambel's Quail)

Supporting \$100  
(Blackhawk)

Check here if this is a change of address  
 Check here if this is a renewal

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