

BlackHawk Watch



Newsletter of the Northern Arizona Audubon Society

July 2022

July, 2022



Ruby-crowned Kinglet
By Eric Gofreed

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<https://www.northernarizonaaudubon.org/>

Cool Facts About Our Cover Bird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet

- The ruby-crowned kinglet (*Regulus calendula*) is a small songbird that can be seen across North America.
- The ruby-crowned kinglet often form mixed-species feeding flocks.
- The ruby-crowned kinglet is monogamous, but each breeding season, they establish new pair bonds. Their nests are usually 40 ft (12.19 m) or higher above the ground. Females build the nests, which are normally found in coniferous trees.
- A 'castle', 'princedom', 'court', and 'dynasty' of kinglets are all collective nouns for a group of kinglets.
- There are over 4 million records of Ruby-crowned Kinglets on e-Bird

Our Mission Statement:

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

Most of the articles in this newsletter have been contributed by our NAAS members. You are invited to join us. Please submit articles or notes to:

nazaudubon@northernarizonaaudubon.org



President's Message

NAAS grows in the Citizen Science Community

NAAS is fostering a new movement in the use of Citizen Scientists and one of the most fun surveys is the Nightjar survey: Bird watchers, master naturalists, and concerned citizens are the hearts and hands of the Nightjar Network and the larger conservation movement. Without volunteers to survey nightjar routes, the program would not exist. It is our hope that long-time surveyors will continue to contribute their time and expertise to the network through this transition and beyond. We also hope that the survey community will build over time and bring the project to new heights. – Center for Conservation Biology (CCB) on a new partnership with Maine Natural History Observatory (MNHO). <http://www.nightjars.org/> This year's NAAS Nightjar surveys on FSR 525 and Bill Gray Rd saw a doubling and tripling of surveyors who were willing to get to bed late in the hopes of seeing and/or hearing Lesser Nighthawks and Common Poorwills. The experience is both thrilling and calming all at the same time. (And frankly, recently, it's been frustrating due to the huge increase of campers on FSR 525. This is the crux of the need to survey nightjars to see if their numbers have significantly declined. This year, as a group we believe that the nightjars were singing farther off the road than in past years.)

Read more about this great project: [Click Here](#)





John Henneberg and friend enjoying the new bench and the old shade. Photo by Rob Gibbs.

A New Shady Rest Stop at Bubbling Ponds Preserve

If you have walked the Black Hawk Trail recently you likely noticed a new bench located under several splendid old Cottonwood trees about half-way around the trail near the junction with Willow Point Loop Trail. The new bench was donated by John Henneberg in honor of his wife Joy Henneberg and offers a most welcome seat in the shade from which to soak in the sights and sounds of nature. John and Joy regularly walk the trail and thought many would benefit from a bench in the cool shade.

Northern Arizona Audubon thanks John and Joy for this wonderful addition to the Bubbling Ponds Preserve.

Submitted by Rob Gibbs, NAAS Bubbling Ponds Steward

Learn more about our sanctuaries and Bubbling Ponds: [Click Here](#)

To see the most recent field trip and event postings, please go to our website calendar by clicking on this green box.

Upcoming Field Trips Above the Rim

Kachina Wetlands July 23 at 7:00 AM

This field trip is sponsored by Northern Arizona Audubon, and all members of the public are welcome. Meet at 7:00 am at the Kachina Wetlands parking area off Tovar Trail. Bring binoculars if you have them, water, sunscreen, and a hat.

Be prepared to walk approximately 2 miles. The trail is a level, gravel road that is wheelchair accessible, although it is uneven in places.

Kachina Wetlands is a wonderful location to view waterfowl and raptors. In July, we can expect to see a number of ducks, as well as Great Blue Herons, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Common Yellowthroats, Ospreys, and recently-fledged Western Bluebirds from the nest boxes.

Directions to Kachina Wetlands: From Flagstaff, take I-17 south and take the Kachina Village exit. At the bottom of the exit ramp, go right, then immediately right again onto Tovar Trail. Follow Tovar north for one mile, and turn right into the dirt parking area. You will see a large green water tower near the entrance.

The field trip leader is Tom Hedwall
tshedwall@gmail.com

Field Trips & Reports..

7 birders enjoyed a pleasant morning at Logan's Crossing today. Although the birds were fairly sparse, we did manage to tally 25 species. Nothing extraordinary, but it was a fun group. No water at all in the Rio de Flag.

Trip Leader: Tom Linda

We had a total of 9 people attend the Clear Creek Campground Cuckoo hunt on June 12. Our plan was solid. We drove up to Wingfield Mesa in search of Cassin's Sparrows early while it was cooler. Then we went back to Clear Creek Campground and walked in the shade listening for Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Willow Flycatchers. The plan might have worked had the birds been there. But by 10:30 we called the field trip to an end without seeing our target birds. Just means we get to do it again. Turns out the Cuckoos were over at Dead Horse SP and the Jail Trail. So we know they are here! Two NAAS members came down from Flagstaff and found nestling Cooper's Hawks all snuggled down in their nest. They also found their lifer Zone-tailed Hawk who was flying dangerously close to the nest. We all enjoyed the babbling creek and shade until about 10:30 when it began to get hot!

Trip Leader: Kay Hawkle



Audubon is on a roll



Brent Bitz

My wife and I moved to Sedona from the Washington, D.C. area on Halloween night in 2006. In our nation's capital, thanks to Edgar Allen Poe, Ravens may be considered a harbinger of bad tidings. Here in northern Arizona, I soon learned that, in fact, Ravens are intelligent, family-oriented birds which hold a respected place among our indigenous neighbors.

Such was the beginning of my personal evolution with regards to birds. My birding path was immeasurably enhanced by my membership in the Northern Arizona Audubon Society. Thanks to Anita MacFarlane, one of our chapters most dedicated early leaders, I soon became very involved by joining the Board and seeing first-hand the chapters growth.

Like myself, our chapter has evolved in the past sixteen years. While our successful program of field trips and thought-provoking monthly meetings have been a hallmark since our inception, I particularly am impressed by our ability to implement our Bird Sanctuary program. It is indeed a tribute to our many volunteers that a small organization of around 240 members has been able to work with public land owners in the Verde Valley and Flagstaff areas to sponsor four areas dedicated to habitat preservation and public education about birds and the wisdom of preserving their homes.

This spring, NAAS launched a grant program called Support Our Birds. Modest grants will be awarded to community organizations or individuals who have a project that furthers our mission. Keep your ears open for more news on this in the months to come as our organization continues to make northern Arizona a better place for birds and birders.

While I will be leaving this slice of paradise and will be moving to British Columbia this fall to be closer to family, I consider my time volunteering with NAAS to be one of the best things that I have done during my years here. So, I would ask each of you to consider donating some time to help our chapter out. As an all-volunteer group, it can only thrive if everyone pitches in. I promise you that you will be rewarded many times over as I have. Thanks so much to my many friends in Audubon. You have helped make my years here so rewarding. See you in Victoria, B.C.

Brent Bitz



You are invited to participate in an already successful campaign to control invasive plant species.

Kachina Wetlands Weed Pulling Events

Saturday, July 2 and July 9th

7 am – 11 am

Join us for any length of time between those hours.



Please bring GLOVES, a hat, sunscreen, and water. Masks are optional. Free snacks for all participants.

Help us keep Kachina Wetlands amazing!

Sponsored by KVID and Northern Arizona Audubon
For more information contact christina.d.vojta@gmail.com

If you are interested, stop by Kachina Wetlands or email Christina, the NAAS Steward for this sanctuary, at

christina.d.vojta@gmail.com



Kentucky Warbler in Yavapai County

Carl Tomoff found a singing male Kentucky Warbler in South Prescott, an extremely rare bird for Yavapai County. We missed a Kentucky Warbler in Prescott twice a few years ago so this was a bit of a jinx. Normally we'd jump in the car, but unfortunately, Nanette was



Kentucky Warbler by Eric Gofreed

sick with a fever. The bird was seen the next day and Janie Stewart went down and saw it easily. Janie calls Nanette and tells her the bird is literally 50 feet from where you park, and therefore, she could sleep in the car on the way there and back and not have to work at all. So Nanette says let's go. We get there at 12:20 PM, not the best time to bird. We walked 50 feet down the slope and Nanette sat on a picnic table while I searched. About 45 minutes later I was also sitting on the picnic table and the

Kentucky Warbler sings somewhere right in front of us! Then it hops up onto a branch right in the open and sings some more. We both got great views from maybe 20 feet away and Nanette even took a few bad pictures with her cell phone. We would have birded more, but Nanette felt lousy and just slept in the back seat all the way home. What ended worse was being in the car with her. I caught the same nasty bug and I have been down for the last 10 days. But for a Kentucky Warbler we would say it was worth it. That is how crazy birders can be.

By Rich Armstrong



My NAAS Board Experience



Jenny Barnes

For most of my life I have been interested in birding, ornithology, and conservation biology. When I moved to the Verde Valley a few years ago, these interests were reignited again as I attended many birding and conservation events, including Northern Arizona Audubon field trips and members meetings. In spring 2020, I was looking for a way to contribute to NAAS and accepted the role of reviewing articles submitted for publication in the Black-hawk Watch newsletter. As my role expanded to more editing and writing, I was asked to become an NAAS Board member and am now near the end of my two-year term. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have only attended one in-person meeting, and that was in Flagstaff. The remainder of the meetings I have attended have been on Zoom. Despite that, and still having not met

some of the Board members in person, I have found my time on the NAAS Board to be an interesting and rewarding experience. There is a lot of behind the scenes work that our Board members do besides attend the Board meetings.

I have learned much about NAAS while on the Board, including how non-profit organizations operate and how NAAS is very involved in the community, not only at the local level, but within the state of Arizona and the southwest region. NAAS isn't just about field trips—although these are very important of course, especially coordinating and leading all of them. The Board also has leadership overseeing school programs, local conservation efforts, stewardship of the sanctuary programs, and recently a Support Our Birds program. There have been many changes to NAAS recently to position the organization well for the future. Even though I am resigning from the Board at the end of my term in October, I intend to continue volunteering at NAAS. Now I know so much more about how I can contribute. If anyone, whether a member or not, wants to volunteer to help NAAS and its mission: "To promote the understanding and appreciation of birds and other wildlife and the conservation and restoration of their natural habitats", just ask any NAAS Board member and they will point you in the right direction or know who to ask.

NAAS Board Member,

Jenny Barnes



Kachina Wetlands: A great place to bird on a hot summer day

Come and take a 4 minute trip to **Kachina Wetlands**, just south of Flagstaff off I-17.

Kachina Wetlands Preserve is a Northern Arizona Audubon sanctuary, the birding is great, the walking flat and easy and—pay attention here—it's cool. NAAS offers field trips if you wish to use one of our birding guides and you can always find one on our calendar :[Click Here](#). Kachina Wetlands is open all day long and admission is free. There is ample parking right at the entrance and you could walk it all in less than an hour—until you stop to look at waterfowl or Yellow-headed Blackbirds and our nesting Western Bluebirds.

Kachina Wetlands is an easy drive up I-17 but you can give your yourself a 4 minute tour by clicking this photo:





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Email us at: nazaudubon@northernarizonaaudubon.org

What Bird Is This?

You will not see this bird walking down the street even though it will have pretty big feet when it grows up. Actually (perhaps thankfully), this baby will look nothing like this when it is all grown up.

What is it? Click on this photo to find out.





New & Renewing Members—June

James	Bartlett
Carol	Covington
Isabelle	Cozart
Jody & Jeanie Humber	
Martha	McCartney
Karen & Doug	Rumble

Help Wanted

NAAS has openings for the following volunteer technical positions for NAAS members

- Webmaster—Maintains and does occasional updates to our main WordPress website. Also updates our 2 supplemental websites. Also maintains our site hosting account. 1 hour/ month
- Vertical Response (email system) - Maintain and utilize (once or twice a month) our email notification system. 1 hour/month
- CRM system manager—Learns management of NeonCRM including design of system emails, discounts, and more. 1 hour/month
- Black-hawk Watch Editor/Publisher—Requires monthly use of Microsoft Publisher or In-design software and familiarity with set-up of a newspaper-like on-line monthly publication. Receives and publishes all NAAS field trip information and all contributed articles. 15 hours/month.

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- Programs & Hospitality BTR: Nanette Armstrong
- Field Trips ATR: Roy May
- Field Trips BTR: Rich Armstrong
- Conservation: Brent Bitz
- Education: Patti Greenelch
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- Membership: Kay Hawklee

Sanctuary Stewards:

- Bubbling Ponds: Rob Gibbs
- Sedona wetlands: Rich Armstrong
- Kachina Wetlands: Christina Vojta
- Picture Canyon: Roy May

