

Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

JUNE 2011 www.ensbc.org



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday

A MID WINTER ESCAPE: DAVE JOHNSON'S NEW MEXICO/ARIZONA SPECIALTY TRIP.

By Gary Hantsbarger

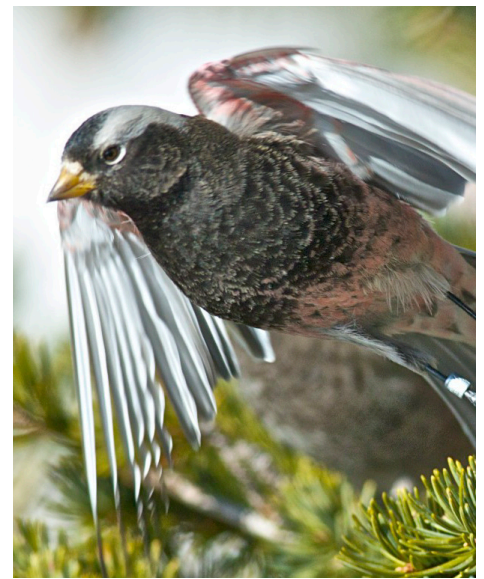
Offering a temporary escape from the Illinois winter, Dave Johnson organized a trip to New Mexico and Arizona for some south-western birding. Fourteen people signed up for this trip, including me. Our group tallied 178 species during nearly 10 days of birding, with 93 species in New Mexico and 155 species in Arizona.

The first leg of our trip was in New Mexico. Our guide during this time was an excellent young local birder, Raymond Van-Buskirk. Raymond, a student at University of New Mexico, was featured in the May-June, 2010 issue of Audubon Magazine for his work banding and studying the three species of Rosy-finch which winter in the Sandia Mountains just east of Albuquerque. With his help, we had three exciting days in the desert canyons east of Albuquerque, the wetlands of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, and, best of all, high above Albuquerque in Sandia Crest House where we sat in the comfort of a cafeteria, watching

flocks of all three species of Rosy-finch fly in to feeders where Raymond's team banded and measured the birds. Several members in our group got to hold and release the Rosy-finches.

On the fourth day of our trip, we drove from Albuquerque to Phoenix. Our remaining days were spent in Arizona.

Our guides in Arizona were Karen Zipser, Diane Touret, and Michael Marsden. We met Karen and Diane near the town of Buckeye, at an otherwise non-descript point in the desert known to have three species of Thrashers: Crissal, Bendire's and LeConte's. The LeConte's is a particularly fine find for Arizona.



Black Rosy-finch by Richard Paulson

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Man Removing Cholla Spines by Richard Paulson



Elegant Trogon at Madera Canyon by Mike Trahan

WINTER ESCAPE CONTINUED FROM COVER

From there, we headed south to the Tucson area. In an agricultural area called Santa Cruz Flats, we were treated to: a Burrowing Owl peeking out from under a broken irrigation tile; Mountain Plovers foraging with American Pipits and Horned Larks on a sod farm; and a Rufous-backed Robin in a fruit tree, trying to stay out of reach of an aggressive Mockingbird. At some cattle pens nearby, we observed four rare Ruddy Ground-Doves.

Over the next few days, we visited some of the famous hot spots in southeastern

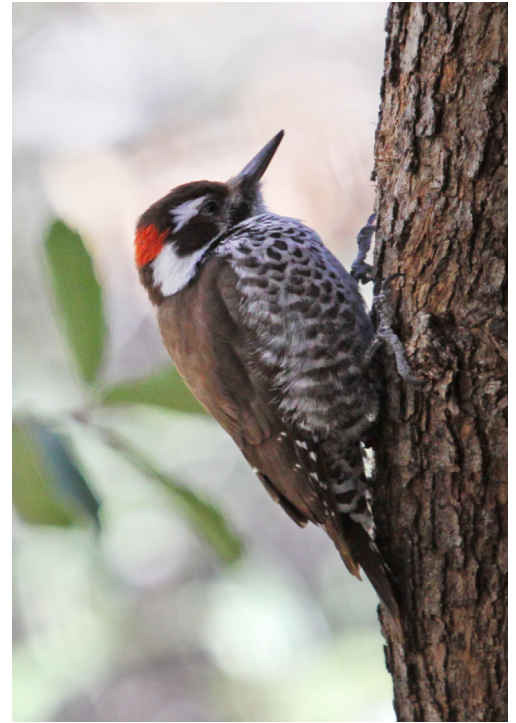


Say's Phoebe by Tim Wallace

Arizona, including the canyons of the Huachuca Mountains, Patagonia Lake, and Madera Canyon in the Santa Rita Mountains. Our time in Madera Canyon got us some spectacular birds, including an Elegant Trogon, a Magnificent Hummingbird, Painted Redstarts, and Hepatic Tanagers.

Near the end of our outing, I paid with blood for my first sight of a Costa's Hummingbird. I wandered into the brush and encountered a species of cactus known as the Jumping Cholla. It clings to a person at the slightest touch and every move you make puts you into contact with more sharp spines. Fortunately, I had a small pair of pliers with me, and succeeded in removing all

the cactus spines by early evening. Such are the things which make travel memorable!



Arizona Woodpecker by Tim Wallace



Sunset at the Bosque by Tim Wallace



The Lucky Group by Mike Trahan

CONSERVATION COLUMN: HOW TO STOP BIRD DEATHS FROM WINDOW COLLISIONS

By Lloyd Davidson

Between 300 million and 1 billion bird deaths each year are caused by birds colliding with glass windows on both residential and commercial buildings. There are ways to prevent much of this carnage, however. Unfortunately, the several silhouettes of birds that people typically place on windows to keep birds away are largely ineffective; to make them effective, the whole window must be covered with such decals.



Rose-breasted Grosbeaks
by Lloyd Davidson



Baby Great Horned Owl
by Lloyd Davidson

Here is a short list of web sites that discuss this issue and its solutions:

http://library.fws.gov/Bird_Publications/Glass.pdf

<http://www.windowcollisions.info/>

<http://www.flap.org/>

Finally, please call to thank Illinois Congressman Mike Quigley's at (773) 267-5926 (local) or (202) 225-4061 (Washington, D.C.) who has introduced legislation that will prevent the deaths of millions of birds that collide with windows at thousands of federal buildings across the country. The bill, the Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act of 2011 (HR 1643), calls for each public building constructed, acquired or altered by the General Services Administration (GSA) to incorporate, to the maximum extent possible, bird-safe building materials and design features. The legislation would require GSA to take similar actions on existing buildings, where practicable. Importantly, the bill has been deemed cost-neutral by the Congressional Budget Office.

HERE IS A LIST OF OTHER EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES:

1. Cover the window with a film like CollideEscape, which looks opaque from the outside but has many holes that allow light in and allow you to see out of from the inside.
2. Hang moving materials in front of windows, such as Wing Chimes (CDs cut into bird and other shapes to make them more attractive) or simply ribbons. Moving items are far more effective than fixed ones.
3. Put a screen or netting over the window, leaving some room between this covering and the window so it will cushion any bird hitting it.
4. Whitewash windows that are particularly hazardous during migration seasons.
5. Make sure your bird feeders and other attractants (birdbaths, nutritious vegetation) are less than half a meter from any window. If the attractant is very close to the house, most of the time the bird cannot build up enough momentum when it takes off to injure itself should it hit the window.
6. If you are putting in new windows, you might consider using Ornilux glass, a glass that contains dense UV reflecting patterns that birds can see clearly but humans cannot.

Inset image of Wing Chime

ENSBC MEMBER PHOTO EVENT: ENSBC members Jeff and Lisa-Jo van den Scott are holding a showing and sale of their photography at the Frame Warehouse in Evanston from June 9 to June 18. There will be an opening with wine and cheese from 7 to 9 p.m. on the evening of Friday, June 10th. This show will largely display their bird photography from Canada's Far North to Florida. Frame Warehouse is located at 606 Dempster, Evanston.

CALENDAR

PROGRAM NIGHTS

Club programs are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Evanston Ecology Center, 2024 McCormick Blvd., Evanston.

FIELD TRIPS

JUNE 5, 2011 – SUNDAY – NEW TRIP!

Swallow Cliff Woods, Palos. This half-day walk will target summer specialties such as Hooded, Blue-winged, and Chestnut-sided warblers in addition to Acadian flycatchers, White-eyed Vireos, and Summer Tanagers. The entrance is on LaGrange Rd. (Route 45) south of the intersection of LaGrange and Route 83. Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the first parking lot as you enter the park. Leader: Amar Ayyash.

JULY 24, 2011 - SUNDAY

Rollins Savanna. This area is one of Lake County's hottest birding spots and is home to many nesters such as bitterns, Henslow's and Grasshopper Sparrows, Bobolinks, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. There also may be early shorebirds. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the Washington Road parking area. The trip will last 4 hours and water and sun protection are good ideas. Leader: Beau Schaefer.

AUGUST 21, 2011 - SUNDAY

Lake Calumet Sewage Ponds. Don't miss this special opportunity to visit the region's premier shorebird site. Meet at Sewage Ponds at 7:15 a.m. Directions: From I-94, exit at 130th St. Go west about ¼ mile to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District sign. Turn right on the paved road and proceed to the guard house. Trip ends around 11 a.m. Limit: 20. Sign-up for this field trip is required. Registration forms will be available through Libby Hill, 847-475-2096 or libbyhill@comcast.net. Completed forms must be turned in by July 10. Forms must be sent by snail mail to 2715 Woodland Rd, Evanston, IL 60201 and must include a copy of a government-issued photo ID.

IS IT ME?

By Eleonora di Liscia

I was doing chores inside my home one spring morning when I distinctly heard several different bird songs emanating from my backyard. I rushed out to see what was there, but as soon as I stepped outside, all went silent.

I returned to my chores, when again I heard bird songs. I ran outside, and again everything stopped. After this happened several more times, I was starting to take things personally.

"Is it me?" I wailed.

Imagine my surprise when a White-crowned Sparrow appeared and said, "Well, as a matter of fact..."

Suddenly, several birds I'd heard singing appeared in the trees above.

"At the risk of finding myself in print, yet again, let me explain," said the White-crown, "Since we noticed how our conversations have a way of ending up in the Bird Calls, we're not sure we want to be around you."

"You read the Bird Calls!?!?" I was astounded.

"We keep up on all our press," said a Blackburnian that had breezed in. "Frankly, I think you made me sound a tad conceited."

"I'm sorry?"

"At least you didn't sound peevish. I'm not peevish at all. Everybody loves me, don't

they?" said a Green Heron that flew in late. "I think I deserve a retraction. It's not fair."

I was stunned. "How in the world do you see the Bird Calls?"

"Oh, please," said the Blackburnian. "My Facebook friend texts it to me on my Blackberry. Or I get Tweets."

"Facebook friend! Blackberry! Twitter! Aaaaarrrggghhh!" I covered my ears. I could not believe what I was hearing. Technology had gone to the birds.

"These I-pods are great. I used to sing myself hoarse setting up territory and finding a sweetie. But now, I just push a button, and I'm set," said a Swainson's Thrush.

"You know what I do? When I see birders coming, I stick my I-pod in a tree, then I fly. Those birders kill themselves trying to find me. Cracks me up every time!" said a Black-throated Blue.

"Better yet, I put up more than one. Then they don't know which way to look. Their heads keep bobbing back and forth. It's a riot!" chimed in a Cape May.

At that point, all the birds started laughing. Then one said, "Oh, she's probably going to put this in Bird Calls too." So the laughing stopped abruptly.

"Can you at least get it right this time?" said the Blackburnian. Then, they flew off leaving me to scrape my jaw off the ground.

White-breasted Nuthatch
Photo by Tim Wallace



GOT A STORY?

Bird Calls welcomes member submissions. Contact editor Eleonora di Liscia at **847-568-0160** or email **diliscialaw@comcast.net**.