



The Rock Wren

The mission of Red Rock Audubon Society is to protect, restore, and improve natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife, and to educate the public about our unique Nevada environment.

Red Rock Audubon Society
P.O. Box 96691
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Special dates of interest:

General Meetings:

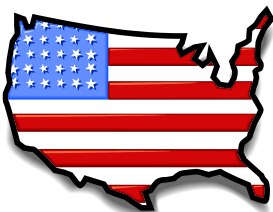
Sept 13th: 6:30 pm
Oct 11th: 6:30 pm
Nov 8th: 6:30 pm

Field Trips:

Sept 8th: Sunset Park
Sept 25th: Mt. Charleston
Sept 29th: Tule Springs
Jan 2011 - San Diego
Feb 2011 - Salton Sea
Mar 2011 - S.E. Arizona

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RRAS General Meetings

The Red Rock Audubon Society General Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month, except June, July, August, and December. Social hour begins at 6:30pm, presentations begin at 7pm. It's free and open to the public. Join us for snacks, conversation, education, and great raffle prizes. Meetings are held at Nevada Power Building, in the Wengert Room, at 6226 W. Sahara Ave.

Sept 13th, 2010 - Wildlife and Landscapes of Kenya's Masai Mara

Take a unique journey through Kenya's Masai Mara with award-winning artist and naturalist, Sharon K. Schafer, who will present Artist in Africa: Wildlife and Landscapes of Kenya's Masai Mara.

As a wildlife biologist and wildlife artist, Sharon had always dreamed of visiting the Masai Mara to photograph and sketch the wildlife. After a rewarding trip last June, she is anxious to share her experiences via a multimedia experience developed from the photography, video, and audio collected during her stay.

Schafer's travels took her into Africa's Great Rift Valley and to a small, secluded, camp on the private Mara North Conservancy that flanks the Mara River and borders the Ma-

sai Mara National Reserve. The conservancy is home to the renowned Leopard Gorge, which has been the stage for numerous BBC Big Cat Diaries and National Geographic documentaries. The camp is also home to the Mara Predator Project, a long-term study that is monitoring the region's lions. The area's lions represent approximately 10% of Kenya's entire lion population.

Schafer brings a wealth of talents and experience to her work; specializing in beautiful, artistic, yet scientifically accurate, images that appeal to the art collector and the environmental educator alike. In addition to being an artist, photographer, and naturalist, she is a wildlife biologist, river guide, and writer. Schafer is a member of the prestigious international Society of Animal Artists and the Artists for Conservation.



Coming up...

October 11th, 2010 - Dr. Denis E. Beller, Research Professor of Nuclear Engineering will present an interesting viewpoint on the environmental and other impacts of energy exploration.

Board Members

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Vice President: Je Anne Branca
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MYSTERY SOLVED

Where do all those wonderful Raffle Items and Great Refreshments come from at our general meetings?

YOU!
THE MEMBERS donated them!

If you can donate a raffle item or provide some beautiful refreshments, please contact Marilyn Mackett at (702) 256-8970. All types of refreshments and raffle items are enjoyed by the members.



Birding Overseas?

Here's a useful link to hook up with bird watchers overseas, who will share their country's birding info. <http://www.birdingpal.org>

Stay informed and don't miss out on any activities!

RRAS sends out reminders for meetings, activities, volunteer opportunities, and special events. Let us know your email address and we'll include you on our email news bulletins and the distribution of the email version of this newsletter. Visit www.redrockaudubon.org and click on the "sign-up" link, email us at info@redrockaudubon.org or leave us a voice mail at 702-390-9890.

Recycle your old sports shoes!



Photo: Flickr/[undertheturnpike](https://www.flickr.com/photos/undertheturnpike/)

There are several recycling possibilities for the materials that make up your kicks, especially rubbers and foams. Both rubber and polyurethane can be reclaimed and reused, and manufacturing with reclaimed rubbers and foams is often more energy-efficient and much less expensive than using virgin material.

"The recycled shoes are given new life," says Simon Lofts, director of Nike Inc. Sustainable Business & Innovation. "They are reborn into sports and playground surfaces around the world." These surfaces range from neighborhood playgrounds to professional athletic surfaces for the NFL and MLB.

Visit <http://www.nikereuseashoe.com/> for a cool demonstration and more information.

President's Perch - Past and Present

Submitted by: Pam Nickels

Where has the time gone? I cannot believe it has been four years already. When I started as President, I was still in my forties and as my 2nd term comes to an end, I am firmly in my fifties. Because of my association with the RRAS, my life has taken on a totally new direction from where I was in 2006. My appreciation for all things great and small has grown tremendously and I now feel even closer to nature.

I would like to especially thank those board members who stepped up to the plate and helped even more when I was not available. Maureen, Marilyn, Je Anne, Christiana, Jeri & Carol – thank you so much! Also, I would like to thank John Hiatt for his continued service as our conservation chair, Felix Owens for still collecting the aluminum cans, John Bialecki for his input and Sanctuary stewardship, Rita Schlageter for her continuing Scouts and in-school programs, and to Carolyn Titus for her guidance. We would not still be here as an organization if it was not for everyone's support, volunteer hours, and donations.

I would also like to welcome Christine Mault as our new Treasurer and Bob Wilkin as our incoming President. I feel great things are a comin'...

I truly appreciate all of you and I sincerely wish you joy, peace, and calmness in your life, especially during these transitioning times. Remember, bird watching can be very relaxing.

Namaste, Pam Nickels



Bob Wilkin and Pam Nickels. Photo by Dave Mackett, April 2010

Submitted by: Bob Wilkin

I am excited to have been chosen to be the new president of RRAS! I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to those of you who have not met me. I was born in Ohio in 1963, but my life didn't really start until I married my wife, Jennifer, in 1983. My formal education is in Chiropractic healthcare. I graduated from Life Chiropractic College in Marietta, GA in 1989 with a Doctor of Chiropractic degree. I practiced in Dallas, TX for ten years where my wife joined me in practice after she graduated from Parker Chiropractic College in Dallas. I have always been interested in science and devoted myself to the study and teaching of biochemistry. This is an interest that I still indulge to this day. While in practice in Dallas, we developed a friendship that would be responsible for my love of birding. Don and Marilyn Lee are birders in Dallas, and they came to visit us in Las Vegas. While here, Don wanted to know where he could see the birds of Nevada. We went to Corn Creek, Mormon Well, Beatty, and Henderson Bird Preserve. I was hooked! And shocked, I might add, that I had been living only a few miles from the HBP for seven years and had never been there. I was amazed at the variety of birds that I saw right here in Henderson, in view of the strip! I was on a mission. My other passion is photography. I set out to photograph all the birds that I could see. I photograph the birds and then on my computer, I crop the photos and use them to identify each bird with the help of a few good bird books. Occasionally, I need more help and call on Don Lee, Martin Myers, and Carl Lundblad for clarification. I am getting better, but seagulls still confound me!

My wife and I love to travel. We have been to Europe, Belize, Mexico, Canada, and Fiji. I am grateful to my friend Don for encouraging me to study birds. I enjoy every destination so much more now that Jennifer and I are birding! I have only one regret—that I didn't get introduced to birding when I was a child. I have missed so many terrific birding spots. I am now making up for it!! I also have a burning desire to be sure that other youngsters are exposed to birding early in their lives so that they will

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President's Perch ... continued

not miss out on the excitement of birding. It was like a whole other world was right there in front of me, and I didn't see it!! I would occasionally capture a bird on film like the Bare-throated Tiger-heron (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) in Belize, but I had no idea how to research the bird and identify him by name. That is why I feel that the Education Committee is one of the most important outreach functions of our organization.

I need your help. Our Education Committee needs a chairperson. We need someone who is well-qualified to decide which materials, events, and functions that the RRAS should employ to have the most impact in our community. No amount of signs, fences, or law enforcement can protect the habitat of birds and other wildlife like one child who has a heart felt connection to the birds. If you are or know someone with these qualifications email me at president@redrockaudubon.org. We need volunteers in this and other areas of our organization. If you would like to volunteer to help with any of the upcoming projects just send me an email. I will get it to the right committee chair.

My conservation efforts began when I was certified in scuba diving as a sophomore in high school. I was taught that if you touch a coral head, the oil on your hand kills the coral polyp. What took hundreds of years to grow could be killed by careless touching. I knew from that early age that our actions have long-lasting effects on our environment. I found later in life that our positive actions have just as far reaching and lasting impact as well. Together, we are going to positively affect our community and the wildlife of Southern Nevada. And we are going to have a lot of fun doing it! - Bob Wilkin

Birding Abroad

Submitted by: Bob Wilkin

Belize is small English-speaking Central American country that hosts some 574 species of birds. Just over half are migratory and are only seen in the winter months. Belize is bordered on the east by the Caribbean Sea, on the north by Mexico, and the west and south by Guatemala. The coast of Belize boasts the second largest barrier reef in the world.

My wife and I spent 11 days in June birding southern Belize. We landed and made our way from the airport to the Belize Audubon Society headquarters and gift shop in Belize City. I bought "Birds Of Belize" by H. Lee Jones. This 317 page book was my bible as I birded this tropical paradise. The Belize Audubon Society owns and operates nine wildlife preserves in Belize! They have some of the most knowledgeable and skilled birders working in Belize.

We stayed in humble surroundings in Hopkins Village just south of Dangriga. If you are going to Belize, remember that this is a third world country. Not much had changed since our trip in 1995. There was a little more blacktop and a few more flush toilets, other than that, it is like camping. I was very excited by the ease with which we were able to get to the birding areas. Trails are continuously groomed by the staff at the preserves. The birds are spectacular! Just driving from the village to the main road (Southern Highway- don't be fooled by the term highway. It is two lanes) we saw numerous species daily!

We saw and photographed 111 species in the 11 days we were in Belize. We saw two of the three toucans that call Belize home, the Keel-billed Toucan and the Collared Aracari. I photographed the mating ritual of the Rufous-tailed Jacamar and watched a Blue-crowned Motmot preparing an underground nest for his mate! We only saw one of the four Trogons that are in Belize, the Black-headed Trogon, but we saw this beautiful species daily!

Hummingbirds are plentiful and my favorite quickly became the White-necked Jacobin. The 17 species of tanagers are varied and quite amazing. We were lucky enough to see 6 species, none of which are the ones we see here in the USA. Falcons and other birds of prey were easy to spot. The longest hanging nests belong to the Montezuma Oropendolas. They are several feet in length hanging from the branches of isolated trees. Their calls, along with the toucans, give you the classic jungle sounds that you expect to hear in the rain forest.

By far the most engaging bird, and the one that took great delight in getting us to stand still and interact with him, is the White-collared Manakin. He makes "1. Loud toy-machine-gun-like bursts of 5-6 hard, dry notes; 2. in display makes a sharp snap or pop

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Field Trip Schedule

Sunset Park

September 8th, 2010: Wednesday 7:30 am - 10:30 am

We will have a *MEMORIAL FIELD TRIP IN HONOR OF HUGH HAWKINS*, led by his birding buds, Huston Shoopman, Je Anne Branca, and Rita Schlageter.

Bring water and snacks. We will meet at 7:30 am. Call Je Anne at 702-451-6843 for reservations and meeting place.

Mount Charleston

September 25th, 2010: Saturday 7:00 am - Noon

We will be doing two short, moderately strenuous, hikes and birding in the mountain area.

Bring snacks, water, and lunch. Wear hiking boots or sturdy shoes. We will meet in the McDonald's parking lot off of US 95 at Durango & Farm Road (SE corner) at 7:00 am. Call leader Christiana Manville, call 702-672-1411 for reservations.

Tule Springs / Floyd Lamb City Park

September 29th, 2010: Wednesday

Join Rita on her fall walk through the area. Great trip for beginners and seniors.

Bring snacks and water. Call leader Rita Schlageter at 702-382-3327 for reservations, time, and meeting place.

Remember to bring your friends, too

Hualapai Mountain - 06/03/10

Submitted by: Je Anne Branca

Field Trip Report: Hualapai Mountain – June 3rd, 2010

On Thursday, June 3, 2010 Barb and Steve Wright, and I met and drove to Laughlin to pick up Dee Dee De Lorenzo and then off we went to Kingman, AZ. We no more than got into the Hualapai Mountains when we saw a Zone-tailed Hawk.

If you are going to get a flat tire (as I did) just hope it's near a good birding area (it was). While we were waiting to get the tire changed we got in some great birding. We watched a House Wren going in and out of it's nest, and also saw a few Cactus Wrens.

Besides the great looks at the Acorn Woodpeckers we saw 2 Hepatic Tanagers and a Calliope Hummingbird. We also explored Wild Cow Springs, but should have been there a few weeks earlier) area. We ended the trip with 34 species!

Thanks for the great day Je Anne Branca.

Birds at the Springs Preserve

Submitted by: Pam Nickels

Once again, RRAS will be leading the free "Birds at the Las Vegas Springs Preserve" walks starting in September. The easy walk, lead by a volunteer of the Red Rock Audubon Society, is held from 8:00am – 9:30am on the first Saturday of every month, except June through August.

Come join us, meet fellow birders, make new friends, and see many of the birds common to the Las Vegas Valley - you never know if you'll see a Sora!

It's free to go into the Gardens and Trails at the Las Vegas Springs Preserve. The Preserve is located at 333 S. Valley View Blvd (between US 95 and Alta Drive) in Las Vegas, NV. Call Springs Preserve Adult Education at (702) 822-7786 for reservations.

Out-of-Town Field Trips

San Diego, California: January 18th - 21st, 2011

Join us on our yearly trip (last year we end up with 112 species) to the great birding area of San Diego. Some of the highlighted species we will be going for are the Clapper Rail, all three Cormorants, many shore birds, gulls, California Gnatcatcher, Towhee and Thrasher and the Black-throated Magpie Jay (finally found last year).

We will rent a van and drive over early Tuesday morning, leaving a 6:00 am and returning by 5:00 pm on Friday. We have great places between here and there to bird going and coming back. Contact Je Anne Branca at 702- 451-6843. This trip is limited to 6 people so call early for you reservations.

Salton Sea, California: February 15th - 18th, 2011

We have not been back to the Salton Sea for a couple of years. We will check out the Longspur areas, look for Tri-colored Blackbirds, Yellow-footed Gull, and several other species. We should end the trip with at least 100 species.

We will rent a van and leave at 6:00 am on Tuesday morning and return by 5:00 pm on Friday. Contact Je Anne Branca at 702- 451-6843. This trip is limited to 6 people so call early for you reservations.

To Capitalize or Not To Capitalize, That Is the Question

Submitted by: Marilyn Mackett

To ensure accuracy in the spelling of bird names, it is suggested you visit the website of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) bird list at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/na-bird.html>.

There are a few general rules of written bird names. When writing you own name, you always capitalize the first and last names, e.g. Lucy Birder or Sally Brown. That is true when writing the English name of a bird species. Always capitalize the first and last names, e.g. Scarlet Tanager or Pinyon Jay. This avoids confusion with other modifiers in the sentence, such as "the secretive, tiny, Black Rail". If you refer to "those herons over there", use lower case.

If a species has a three-word unhyphenated name, all three words are capitalized, e.g. "the American White Pelican." Many birds have compound or hyphenated "first" or "middle" names. Only the first letter of the compound name is capitalized, such as Long-billed Curlew. However, the exception is when both parts of the "last name" are compounded, then each are capitalized, e.g. Western Screech-Owl or American Golden-Plover.

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with the wings...3. distinctive wing whirl in flight (male only)-brrr brrr brrr brrr." H. Lee Jones, *Birds of Belize*, pg. 181. You can't help yourself—you snap your fingers a couple of times and wait... here he comes, snapping and popping to let you know that you are in his territory! We had three at once that were around us and really giving us a show. The first time I heard one, I thought that something had stepped on a twig and snapped it. But it soon became obvious that it was a bird and then he used the brrr brrr brrr of the wings on us... It sounds loud, like a card in bicycle spokes! What fun!! I got some okay pictures too.

The other wildlife in Belize is also very interesting. While Jennifer and I were moving slowly, photographing butterflies and birds, we encountered a jaguar. Now, I know that we were in the "Jaguar Preserve" formally named "Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Preserve," but no one ever sees the jaguars and especially not at 1:30 in the afternoon. She walked right up the path toward us. Then just when I was getting a little nervous, she turned sideways and walked into the jungle. Those photos are spectacular! We went to where she disappeared into the bush and looked to see if we could get another glimpse of her, but the jungle is made for the jaguar. She could have been 5 feet from us and we would not have seen her.

I highly recommend a trip to Belize, no language barrier, beautiful birds, butterflies, and jaguars. Be sure to bring insect repellent and clothes that dry quickly. And say "Hello" to our counterparts at the Belize Audubon Society. They are doing some great work!

Quilt Raffle

Our new Treasurer, Christine Mault, has donated a 36"x47" hand-made, whimsical bird quilt for raffle at our September General Meeting. The blocks are machine embroidered, complete with batting, then hand and machined stitched together with a band of dark Sage green. The quilt is much prettier than photo! Please join us at the September 13th meeting to see the whole quilt in person and purchase your raffle tickets to help support RRAS.



Pizza Pizza

Many people assume that pizza boxes are recyclable. In fact, most boxes have recycling symbols on them and are traditionally made from corrugated cardboard. They are, in and of themselves, recyclable.

However, what makes parts of them non-recyclable is the hot, tasty treat that comes inside them, specifically, the grease and cheese from pizza that soil the cardboard.

So there you have it, pizza boxes that are tarnished with food, or any paper product that is stained with grease or food, are not recyclable – unless you remove the tainted portions.

But why is this? And what are the implications for the general, pizza-loving public? Mmm, pizza.

Food is one of the worst contaminants in the paper recycling process. Grease and oil are not as big of a problem for plastic, metal and glass, as those materials are recycled using a heat process. But when paper products, like cardboard, are recycled, they are mixed with water and turned into a slurry. Since we all know water and oil don't mix, the issue is clear.

Grease from pizza boxes causes oil to form at the top of the slurry, and paper fibers cannot separate from oils during the pulping process.

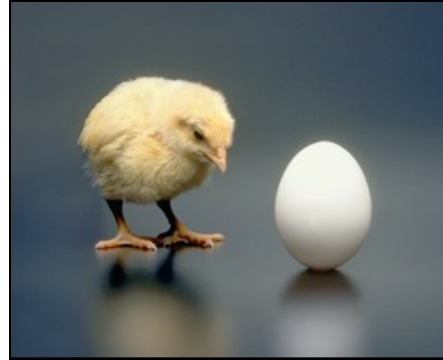
Essentially, this contaminant causes the entire batch to be ruined. This is the reason that other food related items are non-recyclable (used paper plates, used napkins, used paper towels, etc). Many people admit trying to "sneak" their pizza boxes in with cardboard boxes and such. In reality, this does more harm than good as the contaminated cardboard could ruin the whole recycling batch. In fact, contamination in the recycling business is a big problem. Some estimates put the costs of irresponsible contamination in the neighborhood of \$700 million per year industry-wide. The easiest remedy for this problem is to cut or tear out the soiled portions of your pizza boxes and trash them. For example, you can tear the top of the box off, recycle that and throw away the bottom part containing the grease. If the entire box is grease-free, the whole box can be recycled with a guilt-free conscience. (Compiled from [http:// Wwww.Earth911.com](http://Www.Earth911.com))

Chicken or Egg?

From: Discovery News

Computer Simulation Cracks Chicken-Egg Puzzle

New tech reveals how a protein kickstarts the formation of calcium carbonate particles.



THE GIST

- Scientists knew that a specific protein played a roll in eggshell formation.
- A simulation shows how that protein acts as a catalyst to prompt eggshell growth.

What came first, the chicken or the egg? Scientists in Britain think it was probably the chicken, after using new computer technology to try and crack the age-old riddle.

Researchers at the Universities of Sheffield and Warwick, in northern and central England, say the secret lies in the eggshell -- specifically the vital role played by a chicken protein in forming it.

Scientists already knew that the protein, vocledidin-17 (OC-17), plays a part in eggshell formation, but the new technology allowed the team to demonstrate exactly how the protein makes it happen.

In a computer simulation, the OC-17 protein acted as a catalyst to kickstart the formation of crystals that make up an eggshell by clamping itself on to calcium carbonate particles.

The OC-17 protein then dropped off when the crystal nucleus was large enough to grow on its own, freeing up the protein to start the process again.

Eggshells are created when this happens many times over within a short period of time.

"Understanding how chickens make eggshells is fascinating in itself but can also give clues towards designing new materials and processes," said Professor John Harding from Sheffield University, one of the authors of the research.

"Nature has found innovative solutions that work for all kinds of problems in materials science and technology -- we can learn a lot from them," he added.

Introduction to Shorebird Mapping Project

Introduction to Shorebird Mapping Project

Varied sources warn the birding world about the serious decline of the shorebird populations. Whether we are talking about Europe, North America, Australasia, the Oriental region, the Arctic or South America, shorebirds are declining with very few exceptions. There is little effort regards the monitoring of breeding shorebirds on a global scale, but www.WorldWaders.org are now trying to improve this situation in long term.

Objectives of the Shorebird Mapping Project

- Monitoring the range changes of breeding populations of shorebirds worldwide.
- Monitoring trends of shorebird populations.
- Updating our knowledge on key habitat types used for each shorebird population.
- Identifying key areas for breeding as well as migrating species.
- Preparing conservation projects and supporting habitat management and governmental bodies decision making.
- Identifying key threats and risks for different populations to support the development of pragmatic action plans.
- Making monitoring as a key tool for conservation in areas where it is not or poorly used.
- Popularize shorebird monitoring by providing easy to use online tools.



Data collection and usage

Shorebird breeding records collected via WorldWaders.org are analyzed and the data used to support the objectives mentioned above. Data will be summarized on a regular basis and published online on this site. Conclusions of data analyses will be shared widely as a tool to support shorebird conservation activities. The Scientific Board of [WorldWaders](http://WorldWaders.org) ensures proper understanding and usage of data and creation of well defined recommendation.

Volunteering

Every single record counts. We are encouraging anyone living close to a shorebird habitat, monitoring and recording shorebirds around local paths, to participate in this initiative and share records through [WorldWaders](http://WorldWaders.org). By pooling these shorebird records and systematically analyzing the data, the conclusions and trends will be essential in improving conservation policies and management practices. Please join us today and add your data by following just a few easy steps.



[WorldWaders Posterous](http://WorldWaders.org) is a multi-authored news blog with many contributors from around the world. The aim of the blog is to offer an ultimate platform for news about shorebirds/waders related research outcomes, project initiatives,

education or events, conservation activities and more. By achieving this goal, raising public awareness for the protection and sustainability of shorebird sites, all over the world, is a key task.

Visit <http://www.worldwaders.org> or on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=118733871495865>

Artwork designed by Jon Villasper: jmvillasper.multiply.com

Any Old Patch of Flies and Twigs

Submitted by: Dr. Kathleen Blair

It was a small realization in many ways, one I had known for years on a certain intellectual level, but still I felt a sense of wonder, of revelation, the first time I saw barn swallows in Brazil. They were sitting on the wire and nearby twigs of an old coffee tree near my house in Caparaó National Park, just as they do anywhere. I recognized them at once, half-a-dozen of them together, midnight blue above and rusty orange below, and dismissed them with a common, casual glance only to be brought up short by a secondary reaction with the next step. Barn swallows. In Brazil. They had flown here from North America - two thousand miles, three thousand miles? Had they come from Texas? Minnesota? These could be the very same individuals I saw hatched under the eaves of the greenhouse where I worked in Oklahoma the summer before. Possible, anyway. I went to eat lunch of fresh bread and butter and melted goat cheese sitting with my back to the cool, old adobe wall, watch the hummingbirds do battle, and think.

I had known all my life, it seemed, that many birds flew south for the winter, even as far south as South America. Among my first books were two little volumes, one yellow and one blue, my grandmother had given me as a child that were field guides to common birds. I still have them somewhere, worn and cherished, packed away in a battered cardboard box that has followed me about in my own migrations for many years. But to really see the results of migration for the first time myself, to have made the journey myself - even with Pan Am doing the flying, moved me deeply.

The swallows, the *andorhinos* they are called in that far country, had flown every inch of the way on their own muscles and desire, every beat of every wing. How worn must their feathers be from the friction of the winds. How powerful their small wills. Had they crossed the sea or followed land? Did the clouds taste different over the Tropic of Capricorn? Were they weary? Joyful? Just relieved to rest a while before having to start back? How did they really find their way? Sure, I had read about the experiments with magnetic fields and guidance by the stars, but did they know they were coming here before they started out? Had they been here before and no other wires and twigs but these between this house and corn crib would please them as well? Or did they just go until they were too tired to go further? Or to any old patch of flies and twigs that looked appealing? Did each parent generation teach their young the passage, mountain by mountain, star by star, memories in the genes passed down since the last ice age? What happened if they arrived and there was nothing here for them? No forest, no twigs, or flies?

I looked out over the Vargem Alegre valley that stretched for miles away to the south and east of the Serra do Mar; coffee and grease-grass pastures, a few small, widely scattered patches of trees, one of which was being burned even as I watched. The barn swallows were probably happy and secure enough, as long as nobody sprayed their flies with pesticide. They have adapted well to the open, bug-rich habitat humanity creates, but what about those others that once came looking for the forests of tree ferns and *cecropia* and *bakupari* trees that used to grow here? The flycatchers, warblers, and tanagers? Very few of the forest species would be able to adapt to the drastic change from wild forest to coffee, sugar cane, and pasture between one year and the next. Now there were only small patches of native trees left even in the protected valleys of the park. This was once almost continuous tropical forest from southern Mexico down the entire eastern coast of South America all the way to the Rio Paraná. There had been different kinds of forest along the stretch as well. The Atlantic Rainforest of Brazil was almost completely gone. What must it have been like even just a hundred years ago in Bahia when Darwin stepped off the Beagle to become so puzzled and inspired? What must it have been like to those individual birds of dozens of species that once came migrating south on nothing but worn feathers and faith and the taste of distant clouds each year only to find, one year, no place waiting when they arrived? When it comes to a species survival, there are no small deaths.

I could only wish *boa viagem*, good journey, to those small ones that are the traveling companions of us all. What did Henry Beston say in [The Outermost House](#) about the animals?

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To Have Been Where Great Birders Birded

Submitted by: Marilyn and Dave Mackett

On a trip to Louisiana and Mississippi, Dave and I had the amazing experience of visiting the Oakley Plantation in Louisiana, called the Audubon State Historical Park. It is located on Highway 10 and local Highway 61 outside of Francisville, LA. Beautiful spotted roosters crowed and greeted us as we walked to the old house on a sunny April day. The grounds were covered with lush foliage, ancient crape myrtle, and huge moss covered oak trees. The Plantation was handed down through the daughters, not the sons from 1821. The grounds were beautiful with white azaleas winding their way along the wooden fence which surrounding the white three story house.

Here Audubon stayed with the Oakley family who had 250 slaves and were owners of a great cotton plantation. He tutored their daughter for four months in 1800 while he began many of his paintings featured in his Birds of America collection. With Audubon was Joseph Mason, a young man who helped him kill the bird, then Audubon drew the bird and put in the detail, and slight background. Mason was left to continue working the background and generally help Audubon with colors.

The Civil War brought destruction to the grounds and barn area, but the Plantation house remained saved and was eventually restored to the Federalist Period with pieces of fine period furniture and holds many Audubon prints. While at the Oakley Plantation he drew the Pileated Woodpecker, where the birds still occur. Inside, most rooms have Audubon prints: among them were Plate 26, Carolina Paroquet (now extinct) Chipping sparrow, Plate 21 Mockingbird (see image on right), Plate 22 Purple Martin. We saw the small room he and Mason occupied while living there, and I could feel his presence.

Our other wonderful experience of sensing the presence of a great birder was in the hills of Kentucky, outside of Frankfurt. We drove on the rolling back roads of Kentucky on a magnificent May day, and there among the quiet bourbon distilleries and flowering Red Bud trees, was an Audubon Preserve. We drove in on the wet, gravel road to a small bird blind. Sprinklers were throwing sprouts of water and we snuggled into the bird blind small bench with the carved words: "Roger Tory Peterson sat Here", and watched the marvelous variety of Kentucky spring birds. Beautiful! Among the sparrows dancing in the water that day were Goldfinch, Indigo bunting, Rose-breasted grosbeak and Cedar waxwing.



(Continued from page 9)

For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours they are more finished and complete, gifted with expressions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with us in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendor and travail of the earth.

They do us no harm, but turn us no profit either, except perhaps in their grace and the proper functioning of the biosphere upon which we each depend for the long sweet breath of life - both gifts freely given. I returned to my work, trying to help one acre, even one tree, at a time. To make sure there would be a patch of twigs and flies still here when the next time came. I could not see such faith forsworn.

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Special Photographs & Sightings



Fork-tailed Flycatcher - Pahrnagat NWR, NV
June 2010 Rarity
Photo by Mike Swink



Cliff Swallow Nesting - Las Vegas, NV
Photo by Nora Cooper



Left: Hooded Oriole Pair - Las Vegas, NV
Above: Crissal Thrasher - Las Vegas, NV
Photos by Faye Kramer

Thank you to the photographers who graciously provided us with these beautiful pictures!

