



the Pelican

Lahontan Audubon Society • P.O. Box 2304 • Reno, Nevada 89505 • www.nevadaaudubon.org • 775-324-BIRD

Mission statement: To preserve and improve the remaining habitat of birds and other wildlife, restore historical habitat, and educate the public, with emphasis on children, providing vision to all about our unique Nevada environments.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2007

vol. 45, no. 1

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*Submissions for the November/
December issue are due Oct. 1, 2007*

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Date: Fourth Tuesday of the month
Time: Social at 6:30 p.m. Program starts at 7 p.m.
Location: South Valleys Library
15650A Wedge Parkway, Reno
Exterior door, west side of building

Directions to South Valleys Library: Take Hwy 395 to the Mt. Rose Hwy. Head west on the Mt. Rose Hwy and take the first right turn onto Wedge Parkway, just past Raley's shopping center. Go about one mile on Wedge Parkway and look for the boldly designed, mustard yellow library on the right.

September 25—Michelle Petroelje—The Lake Davis Pike Eradication Project
Michelle Petroelje from the California Fish and Game Department, Portola Office, will present a slide show and talk discussing the problems with pike in Lake Davis and the efforts to eradicate them. By the time we meet in September, California Fish and Game will have treated the streams leading into the lake and probably also the lake itself. Michelle will describe the eradication effort and give us an update on the success of the program.

October 23—Kris Coston—Preparing Defensible Space for Fire Protection
With the memory of this past summer's fires (the Angora fire at south Lake Tahoe, the Hawken fire in Reno, and thousands of acres burned elsewhere) fresh in our minds, how fire-safe do you consider your home? Kris Coston, a fire fighter since 2000, will show you how you can help avoid the tragedy of a home lost to wildfire. Kris will discuss the benefits of defensible space in the urban wild land interface, talk about the proper standards for home clearance, and show us the techniques necessary to achieve adequate fire protection. Kris will illustrate his talk with a slide show.

Celebration of LAS Volunteers—During social time and prior to the **October 23** program, please join us in a celebration of LAS volunteers with recognition activities and special refreshments.

FIELD TRIPS

Christiane Omer
Janet Hudson

775-354-2634
775-303-1541

happycpo@aol.com
cookiejargirl@yahoo.com

Field trips are free to Audubon members and non-members. Birders of all skills levels are encouraged to participate. Trips are subject to change or cancellation; please pre-register with field trip leaders. Pre-registration provides leaders with contact information so the leaders can reach you in the event of trip changes or cancellations. Remember to dress for the weather and bring something to eat and drink. For additional information, please view the Lahontan Audubon Society website at www.nevadaudubon.org, or contact Field Trip Coordinator ChristianeOmer.

Saturday, September 8

Silver Saddle Ranch, Carson City

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Leader: Nancy Santos (775) 884-1570, nancylas@att.net

Co-sponsors: Lahontan Audubon Society and Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch

We will meet in the ranch parking lot at 7:30 a.m. The ranch is located on Carson River Road, off East 5th Street. Plan to spend the morning exploring the ranch for birds and learning a little about the ranch history. Habitat at the ranch includes sagebrush, agricultural lands and a riparian corridor adjacent to the Carson River. The variety of habitat allows for a diverse number of bird species. Please contact Nancy Santos to register or for more information. The annual Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch Breakfast will follow the bird walk. All field trip attendees are encouraged to stay, eat and visit. Donations for the breakfast are appreciated.

Saturday, September 15

Oxbow Park, Reno

Time: 8 a.m.

Leader: Dave Jickling (775) 848-0069,

djickling@charter.net

Meet at the Oxbow Park parking lot at 8 a.m. for this easy nature trail walk. Take I-80-West, turn south off the Keystone exit, and turn right on 2nd Street, which turns into Dickerson Road and ends at the park. This park is a great local hotspot to find fall migrants and to learn about Reno's backyard birds. Plan to spend a few hours, so bring your binoculars, a scope if you have one, and water. A great walk for beginner and experienced birders alike.

Saturday, September 29

Mt. Rose Wilderness Area

Time: 7 a.m.

Leader: Harold Peterson (775) 815-1677, peter188@unr.nevada.edu

Come to the Mt. Rose Wilderness to see migrating warblers and sparrows, as well as the start of the finch migration. Highlights may include Hermit Warblers, Fox Sparrows and Pine Grosbeaks. If flowers are still present, Rufous Hummingbirds will likely be visiting them. Hike will begin at 7 a.m. at the Mt. Rose Summit parking lot on NV 431 and will last around four hours. Total hike will be around six miles, with moderate hill climbs. Dress appropriately for the weather, which may change rapidly during the fall. This hike is contingent upon good weather as well as the reopening of the Mt. Rose Wilderness following the Hawken Fire.

Saturday, October 6

Swan Lake and Lemmon Valley Marsh, North Reno

Time: 8 a.m.

Leader: Bob Goodman (775) 972-7848, Pandion36@aol.com

Meet Bob (look for his van) at 8 a.m. at the McDonald's parking lot in Lemon Valley. Drive north of Reno on Hwy 395, take Exit 74, you will see McDonald's on your right. We will carpool the short distance to Lemmon Valley Marsh. Bring a spotting scope if you

can and prepare to be out until mid-day. This is a good time to see fall migrants and winter resident birds on the marsh and wetlands. This is an easy bird walk and birders of all experience are welcome.

Saturday, October 13

Taylor Creek, South Lake Tahoe

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Leaders: Sue Stevenson (530) 577-5394, sssfromslt@sbcglobal.net and Sheryl Ferguson (530) 541-8462, s-sferguson@sbcglobal.net

We will meet at the Taylor Creek Visitor Center kiosk at 8:30 a.m. From Reno or Carson City, take Hwy 50 over to South Lake Tahoe. Follow Hwy 50 South and turn right onto 89 (Emerald Bay Rd.) at the "Y" intersection in South Lake Tahoe, shortly after Staples. Drive 2.9 miles from the "Y." After Richardson's Resort, look for the U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Visitor Center sign on the right side of the road. Turn in at the sign. This easy bird walk follows a nature trail (with handicap access). We'll enjoy lunch at a local burger stand, or bring your own lunch if you prefer. Since this is a fall trip, added bonuses include looks at the Kokanee Salmon spawning run and gorgeous fall colors. After lunch, we will bird in Cove East.

Saturday, October 20

Wetlands Trip, Fallon Area

Time: 8 a.m.

Leader: Mike Goddard (775) 423-5128, mike_goddard@fws.gov

We will meet at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Stillwater Wildlife Refuge Office, in Fallon at 1000 Auction Road off Hwy 50. Birding in wetlands is always spectacular. Come and see what species are migrating through the area. Bring a scope if you can, binoculars, a bag lunch, water, and extra clothes for unpredictable weather. *(More Field Trips and Reports on Page 5)*

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Pelican is the official newsletter of the Lahontan Audubon Society and is published six times annually. Subscriptions are paid for as part of the dues of LAS or the National Audubon Society. LAS welcomes gifts, donations, and bequests in general, or gifts in honor or memory of relatives and friends. Such donations will be used as specified or, if unspecified, will be used to support LAS education and conservation projects. All donations are tax deductible.

WHERE TO WRITE:

Keep conservation to the forefront. Write your elected officials and tell them how you feel:

Senator Harry Reid
400 S. Virginia St. #902
Reno, NV 89501
Toll-free: 1-866-736-7343

Senator John Ensign
400 S. Virginia St. #738
Reno, NV 89501
Reno phone: 775-686-5770

Representative Dean Heller
400 S. Virginia St. #502
Reno, NV 89501
Reno phone: 775-686-5760

Governor Jim Gibbons
101 N. Carson St.
Carson City, NV 89710
775-684-5670

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS PROGRAM

Robin Powell

775-247-2798

rpowell@audubon.org

FIRE AND BIRD HABITAT

With the severity of the wildlife season this year, there has been a lot of discussion about the impacts to bird habitat. Indeed, I have had the same concerns. I have recently visited several Important Bird Areas that have been affected by wildfire this year. During my trip to the Mary's River Important Bird Area, I witnessed the barren, charred landscape with intermittent "islands" of shrubs scattered throughout the area. The sadness wasn't just from the loss of habitat from the wildfire but from the anticipation of what the habitat could be in the future: a sea of annual invasive grasses which increases the fire frequency and burns more uniformly across the landscape. On my drive back from Elko, I began to contemplate the issue of fire ecology and impacts to bird habitat.

Many of us are acutely aware of the devastation catastrophic wildfires can have on habitat such as the destruction of habitat for cavity nesters from forest fires or the loss of sagebrush for sagebrush-obligate species during range fires. However, there are benefits. Fire, in a wild landscape, is often essential for habitat health. In fact, fire is often used as a method for tree thinning to maintain healthy ecosystems in some areas in the West. Other tools used for fire management, such as fire suppression, can be a

complex issue with both positives and negatives. For example, fire suppression throughout the sagebrush ecosystem is typically beneficial but fire suppression activities in the Sierra Nevada have created a sea of conifers that have impacted the aspen groves which are vital to a complex of bird species. Furthermore, the lack of open forest can impact the fire-tolerant species like the Olive-sided Flycatcher, or the lack of the shrub understory can impact nesting bird species.

Fire ecology is a complex issue, especially in relation to bird's relationships to their fire-altered habitats. Wildfire impacts depend on a multitude of factors such as the frequency of the fire, elevation, the season and climate, vegetation community, management practices or other human influences, and the period of time the fire took place. Fire can convert one habitat into another and alter the ecological succession of that habitat which will change the species composition of the area. Forests can be transformed into low-growing shrub and herbaceous cover which provides new habitat for low-nesting species that will displace the tree nesting species. Human influences, such as fire suppression or prescribed burning, can lead to favoring one avian species' preferred habitat over another's. For example, the sagebrush habitat is crucial for Sage Sparrows or Brewer's Sparrows whereas pinyon-juniper

habitat is preferred for the Pinyon Jay or Black-throated Gray Warblers.

Fire as a management tool can be useful in managing encroaching trees and maintaining open ground for sagebrush or herbaceous cover. To minimize the negative effects on soils, native grasses, and wildlife, prescribed burning is the best management practice for most areas of Nevada. Many land managers are faced with the issue of implementing prescribed burning to lower the amount of fuels on the landscape to avert a catastrophic fire while avoiding any adverse impacts on wildlife and birds. This has become one of the greatest balancing acts in the western United States.

In conclusion, ecological processes vary through time and are highly complex. The effects of fire on habitats and birds in the Great Basin are no exception. Fires are inevitable, but we must conserve what remains and restore what was destroyed with consideration for the important bird species within the area.

—*Robin Powell*

Nevada Director of
Bird Conservation

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH

Summer Session

All together now, "Where *did* summer go?" Despite heat-related languor, a great deal went on behind the scenes for LAS.

In preparation for our annual Strategy and Planning Retreat, a review of the 2006-2007 plans revealed that we could check off many items on our collective to-do list, including two very big projects. We developed a through and effective search plan, which culminated in hiring our IBA Director of Bird Conservation Robin Powell. We also edited and published the second edition of *A Birding Guide to Reno and Beyond*. Committee chairs wrote up their annual activity reports to be incorporated into our chapter's 2006-2007 Annual Report, which will be available in September on our web site at the end of the "Chapter Info" section. There you will be able to read about a number of chapter accomplishments, such as our special program of school classroom field trips at the Washoe Valley Mitigation Wetland.

At our Planning and Strategy Retreat, we began with a brief "Values and Vision" exercise, which proved encouraging and energizing. We plan to engage in a similar membership-wide conversation next spring. Board members and committee chairs addressed a wide range of chapter-related topics from the IBA program, to our financial health, to conservation, education, field trips, membership, program meetings, reading group, LAS sales, and all manner of related items.

In June, the Board approved the appointments of two new Board Trustees, Kathy Oakes and Linda Badzioch. Kathy was introduced in the previous issue of *The Pelican* as the new membership chair. Linda taught school for a number of years in the San Luis Obispo, California, area in a variety of subjects, principally sciences. She has been an active volunteer for LAS since moving to this area, particularly in the Education Committee and at various outreach events. She enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and being outdoors as much as possible.

Kenn Rohrs, who had been serving in vacated Trustee Seat #7, was elected to a new full term in May. Kenn and his wife Georgia have been very active LAS volunteers. Kenn got hooked on birding about three years ago during International Migratory Bird Day. Kenn is now retired after a career as a judge in northwestern Ohio, an administrator, and Dean of the National Judicial College in Reno. A voracious reader, Kenn founded LAS' Birds & Books Reading Group. Besides reading and volunteering, Kenn likes both to fish and to *catch* fish, especially salmon and walleye.

So, September is upon us and it is back to the even more active season, more field trips, program meetings, volunteer projects, and other activities. Come, join in for another great year.

— Karen L. Kish

Birds & Books

The title for the September 18th LAS Birds & Books Reading Group meeting is *The Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinction* by David Quammen. For October 16th, the group will read *Restoring North America's Birds: Lessons from Landscape Ecology, 2nd Edition*, by Robert A. Askins.

The group meets for casual discussion at Sundance Bookstore in Reno 7-8:30 p.m. the third Tuesday of each month. For a complete list of 2007 selections, a summary of each book, and other details, check the Birds & Books section of the Meetings page on the LAS web site at www.nevadaudubon.org. If you plan to attend, please contact Kenn Rohrs at 775-849-9530 or karohrs@charter.net.

Donors

American White Pelican \$100 - \$499

Lynn Schiek, Marlene Siddall, and Dr. W. Trimmer

Mountain Bluebird \$20.00 - \$49

Bonnie Wagner, John Currie

American Avocet \$50 - \$99

Kathy Oakes

Ruby-Crowned Kinglet \$10 - \$19

John Davis

Help a Friend

Many, if not all, of you know **Bob Goodman**, wildlife photographer, longtime key LAS volunteer, and "guardian angel" of Swan Lake NSA. On the evening of August 11th, Bob's mobile home was totally destroyed in a terrible fire which also took the lives of three of his neighbors. Bob arrived from giving a slide presentation to witness the flames. Bob's cat Houdini returned the next day unharmed. Bob's home of 33 years was also the location of Desert Images, his freelance photography business.

Those on our e-mail list already know that Bob is staying in a comfortable situation with close friends. His two adult sons also arrived quickly. Bob faces a daunting amount of detail in addition to the traumatic impact related to such a loss. Nonetheless, he has taken every opportunity to send along thanks for all the expressions of concern and offers of assistance.

Bob has donated an astonishing amount of time, talent, and energy, spiced with a good sense of humor, to LAS and the entire community. Now it is our turn. LAS in cooperation with Spring Wings Bird Festival is spearheading a fund drive to assist Bob. Janet Schmidt (USF&WS and Spring Wings Bird Festival director) is processing donations through the Spring Wings banking account and maintaining a full accounting. These donations are not tax-deductible donations to Spring Wings. This is a banking and record-keeping framework to flow 100% of monies received to Bob in a safe, convenient fashion.

Send your **donations to assist Bob Goodman** as follows:

- Payable to: Springs Wings
- Memo: Bob Goodman assistance
- Mail to: Spring Wings / P.O. Box 6332 / Fallon, NV 89407 / Attn: Janet Schmidt

For additional information on Bob's status and other assistance efforts, please contact Karen Kish at klkish@pyramid.net or 775-841-1180 in Carson City.

CONSERVATION CORNER

Birding Nevada: Wildly Unexpected

Connecting people with nature- that's what LAS is really about. So it is fitting that our organization has been very involved with promoting bird watching in Nevada for many years. To that end, and with many very important partners, we have published resources to further the human/nature connection including, *A Birding Guide to Reno and Beyond* (get your copy of the second edition!), the *Nevada Birding Map* and the *Important Bird Areas of Nevada*. These publications might not have happened without great partnerships with federal and state wildlife and land management agencies and other organizations such as conservation groups and tourism authorities.

One particularly successful partnership began in 2004 where the creation of a marketing strategy for bird tourism took flight between Rick Gray of the Fallon Convention and Tourism Authority and Janet Schmidt of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The strategy, developed by the consulting firm Nature Tourism Planning identified the Reno, Fallon, and Carson Valley area as being a prime location for promoting wildlife viewing. Criteria that factored into the strategy were clearly identified birding areas (thanks to our birding guide, map and website) and plenty of affordable services such as hotels, restaurants, and a large airport within roughly an hour-long drive. This strategy also identified a variety of events, activities and materials that could be developed to better promote the area as a birding destination.

In 2005, Rick Gray applied for and received a tourism grant to promote what is now referred to as "Birding Nevada: Wildly Unexpected" at bird festivals around the country. He created wonderful display banners that promote the Reno/Fallon/Carson Valley area as a birding destination. These banners are set up as part of the vendor booth displays at festivals and the Nevada Birding Map is handed out to festival attendants. I've been fortunate enough to attend a few festivals promoting birding in Nevada as a representative of LAS. I have really enjoyed connecting with folks and talking about wonderful places in Nevada where a wide variety of bird species can be seen. As you might expect, many people are 1) surprised to see a "birding Nevada" booth at a festival and 2) that we actually have birds... All that changes once

we show them the birding map. Most often people walk away with a smile on their face while remarking, "Wow, who knew there were so many great places to bird in Nevada. I'm going to make a point to stop off at a few of these places next time I find myself driving through Nevada." We like to point out to people that it doesn't really matter which way you travel through... east, west, north, south... there is a place to stop and bird.

This latest effort to expand the promotion of Nevada as a birding destination is just one more component of the overall promotional package which includes area festivals such as the Spring Wings Bird Festival in Fallon in May and the Eagles and Agriculture tour in late February in the Carson Valley. This coming year we will be attending a few more festivals around the country, continuing to educate people about our great state and what we have to offer in terms of our bird resource and Nevada's overall outdoor experience. We also take the opportunity to participate in the festival events so that we can continue to bring fresh ideas back to our own local festivals.

When people visit places like the Lahontan Valley Wetlands, Oxbow Nature Study Area or the Pahrangat National Wildlife Refuge, they often leave with a greater appreciation. How that impacts them we might never know, but, if it touches them and if they are moved to action whether it be at home or here in Nevada, to protect birds and bird habitat, well, that's a pretty good thing in my book. We need to keep connecting people with nature. And, if we can do that, and it contributes to our economy while leaving these places in better shape for future generations, Nevada may be all the better for it and our organization is proud to be a part of it.

—Ali Chaney

Field Trips and Reports

(continued from page 2)

Saturday, October 27
Markleeville, CA

Time: 8 a.m.

Leader: Jim Woods (775) 265-3914, (775) 691-6809 (work hours),
jwoods@pellettconstruction.net

We will be hiking and looking for birds in both riparian and alpine habitats. There will be birds in mixed plumages, so bring your field guides, binoculars, cameras and scopes. The areas we will cover are Grover Hot Springs, Pleasant Valley, Carson River and Markleeville Creek. We will meet at the Markleeville Library. From Reno, go south on Hwy 395 to Minden, bear right (South) at the

first light onto Hwy 88. Continue south 14 miles to Woodfords, the junction with Hwy 89 (blinking yellow light). Turn left (south) on Hwy 89 and go approximately 7 miles to Markleeville. Turn right (west) on Hot Springs Road, and go one block into the parking lot of the library. Expect to spend the day (until approximately 3 p.m.) so bring a sack lunch, water, and insect repellent.

Trip Reports

Sheldon Wildlife Refuge, June 22-24, 2007

Leader: Mike Goddard

Sixteen Sierra Clubbers and two LAS'ers journeyed to the far reaches of northwestern Nevada to camp and work at the Sheldon Wildlife Refuge. This unspoiled area of high desert sage and grassland is the home of the pronghorn antelope. As we were approaching the camping area at Little Sheldon, one jumped directly in front of the car. Thankfully, we were driving slowly on the ungraded dirt road and we were able to enjoy his beauty.

This year we took down 3 to 4 miles of fence wire and posts near Catnip. As usual, the unomog broke down. The metal poles could be pulled up, but the unomog could not pull up three or four strands of wire at a time. Saturday evening was a potluck supper enjoyed by all. Brian Day, refuge manager, brought us up to date on the feral horse status. They can round up about 300 horses a year; this is the maximum their facilities can hold. There are about 1,200 horses on the refuge. There are about 13 students doing research on passerine birds on burned and unburned areas. Little Sheldon has about 5 workers. They are out early in the morning and early evening listening for bird songs.

Despite working hard removing fence on the refuge on Saturday, we were able to get a little birding in on the way to the refuge, around the historic cabin where we camped at Catnip Reservoir, at Swan Lake, and at our worksite. No Black-throated Sparrows, but lots of other sagebrush birds, most singing and nesting vigorously. Around the cabin we found Common Poorwill, Sage Thrasher, Brewer's Sparrow, House Wren - with box nestlings, Cassin's Finch, Red-tailed Hawk with two nestlings, American Kestrel, Common Nighthawk, Bullock's Oriole, American Robin, and a singing warbler. A trip well worth the effort.

—Linda Badzioch

Washoe Lake, July 21

Leader: Steve Ting

We had a great outing to the wetlands viewing area at Washoe Lake. The weather was great we had an exceptional turn out of 60 people (though only 32 signed in). Even though we had so many people, there were enough scopes to go around and we had lots of good feedback. Highlights were an exceptionally large number of Black-crowned Night-Herons. We were able to compare adult and juvenile plumages as well as all the different postures that night-herons can assume. There was also a large number of Wilson's Snipe. Other notable birds were Ruddy Ducks with chicks, two families of Pied-billed Grebes and a good number of Snowy Egrets. In all we found 33 species.

—Steve Ting

BIRDS IN TOWN

by Alan Wallace

We usually think of Spring and Fall as the times of avian transition in northern Nevada towns. Yet the middle of summer serves up an interesting and subtle blend of fledging, dispersal, and early migration, a diversity of movement away from the nest that often goes underappreciated. In June, fledglings leave their nests and burst onto the scene in full force, ranging from the dapple-breasted **American Robins** to the golf-ball-sized feather clusters of baby **California Quail** to the picture-perfect miniature **Killdeer**, all at some point or another begging for food delivered by one or both of the parents. In the case of **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, the female does the feeding once the young leave the nest, and the male, who (to give him some credit) has shared nest duties for a month, splits away from the family. As the fledglings learn to find the worms, seeds, and, in the case of the hawks, rodents, on their own, they become independent and the second stage of the dispersal begins. But not always: in the case of the quail, swallows, and, unfortunately, **House Sparrows**, family units start to coalesce into larger groups, often composed of multiple generations from the breeding season. The parents, depending on species, either try for a second (or third) brood, or they just call it quits and hang around or just leave town.

And that begins another dispersal. Some species, such as the **American White Pelicans** that nest at Pyramid Lake, begin to arrive at in-town lakes and ponds to take advantage of the hatchery-supplied fish. Other birds similarly drift away from their breeding sites: **Ash-throated Flycatchers**, which normally breed in more rural areas of the state, show up in a few urban locales, and **Western Tanagers** and a few **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, which nest at higher elevations, begin to scatter to lower-elevations habitats along rivers and in neighborhoods in late July. Birds dispersing from other regions start to arrive in northern Nevada towns on their routes south. The **Rufous Hummingbirds**, arriving from the Pacific Northwest, are ones that we typically see as they take over feeders for their month-long stopover. This year, the first one arrived in Baker on July 2, and several more showed up at western Nevada feeders later in the month. Although few in numbers compared to what is to come, these early signs of migration do denote the waning breeding season and the transition from breeding sites to local to much more distant feeding and wintering grounds.

Another type of dispersal is taking place with the **European Collared-Doves**. This species, as noted before, has gradually been expanding its range from the southeastern US, producing occasional in-town reports in northern Nevada. This summer, however, those reports have been very common, coming from Elko, Winnemucca, Reno, and Fallon, as well as from a feeder near Baker. Debbie Pontius reports that they're actually breeding in Lovelock, where the collared-doves, not **Mourning Doves**, are the common dove. So, keep an eye on your back yard: all of those doves may not be what you think they are! In addition, the increased reports of **Great-tailed Grackles** in western and northern Nevada towns suggest that this more southerly species continues to expand into new, more northerly and westerly areas.

June and July brought several other interesting sightings. **Bobolinks** frequent the lush hayfields near Lamoille, yet one, perhaps a late migrant, was found in less-than-lush Mina in early June. Another late migrant was a **Ross's Goose** seen in Montello in early June. For reasons unknown, the numbers of **Black-throated Sparrows** appear to have increased in northern Nevada the past couple of years. While these are more desert sageland birds, a number were spotted on the fringes of northern Nevada towns in July. **Cassin's Finches** frequent western Nevada feeders in the spring before departing for breeding grounds in the Sierras; a number also may disperse eastward, such as to Unionville, where adults were bringing an excellent crop of fledglings to feeders by mid June. At Rancho San Rafael Park in Reno, Fred Peterson watched a pair of **Pied-billed Grebes** frantically try to keep their semi-floating nest (with eggs) afloat as the pond's water level fluctuated with the park's irrigation cycle. And Ed Kurtz watched two **Black-chinned Hummingbirds**, in the true spirit of David versus Goliath, harass and ultimately drive off a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** at Oxbow Park in Reno.

Despite dispersing farther afield themselves in June and July, birders did see and report 101 species from northern Nevada towns and yards. Sources of information for this column included **John Anderson, Richard Brune, Becky Calvert, Pat Cashman, Alan de Queiroz, Mary Jo Elpers, Joel Geier, Dennis Ghiglieri, Bob Goodman, Alan Gubanich, Jake Highton, Ed Kurtz, Martin Meyers, Jill Neumann, Chris Nicolai, Fred Peterson, Harold Peterson, Debbie Pontius, Melissa Renfro & John Free, Carol Roeder, Dennis Serdehely, Jean Sherman, Tom Stille, Rose Strickland, Steve Ting, Myra Ulvang, Dave Worley**, and me. Contributions are welcome, so send a postcard/note to 1050 Sumac St., Reno, NV 89509 or an email to wallacealan@sbcglobal.net, or continue to post items on the Nevada bird list-serve. The deadline for the next column is **September 25**. Good birding!

LAS MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

Lahontan Audubon Society Membership: All funds remain in the community. Members receive *The Pelican* newsletter and may elect to receive e-mail activities notices. Please complete and mail this form with payment.

- LAS Renewal New Membership Send me a National Audubon application
- Individual/Family - \$20/year Full Time Student/Senior (over 62) - \$15/year

LAS Donations: Please select level:

- Ruby-crowned Kinglet - \$10 Mountain Bluebird - \$20 American Avocet - \$50
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September/October 2007 issue

Make check payable to Lahontan Audubon Society and mail this form to:
Kathy Oakes, LAS Membership, 4120 Plateau Road, Reno, NV 89519

LAS SALES FORM

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<i>A Birding Guide to Reno and Beyond--Second Edition</i> Published by Lahontan Audubon Society, 2007	\$10	\$2	_____
<i>Nevada Birding Map--Second Edition</i> Published by Lahontan Audubon Society, 2007	\$ 4	\$1	_____
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Seat #2 to 2008	<i>Vacant</i>		
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