

PELLETS

Liberty Wildlife Volunteer News | December 2010

It's December! Another year is ending. As we celebrate the holidays and say goodbye to 2010, it is my wish that all the people of Liberty take a moment to realize how lucky we are to be in this place at this time with a great group of people and amazing animals. Pat yourselves on the back. Your efforts have helped many, many creatures and in the process you've helped yourselves by teaming up with others to do an outstanding job all year long!

So Happy Holidays, Happy New Year and watch out, 2011, here comes the Liberty Team! - Carol

Birding Field Trips

This month's "Pellets" is devoted to the birding field trips being offered to volunteers. There have been two trips thus far, both of which are described below by Claudia Kirscher and Ann Peyton. You cannot have two finer birders show you the ropes and make the experience one to remember! Lucky for all of us, two more trips will be coming up in 2011.

- The first trip is January 22nd and will be located again in Casa Grande.
- The last trip is February 12th at the Glendale Recharge Ponds. The field trips are limited to 12 participants and only Liberty volunteers. (If room is available, friends and family can attend.)

Contact Claudia Kirscher at antclaudia@hotmail.com for reservations and information.

First Birding Trip for Volunteers

Sunday, November 21st was the first-of-season Liberty Wildlife volunteer birding field trip to the Glendale Recharge Ponds and it garnered a total of 42 species over a 3-hour walk

around the ponds. Most-notable bird was the rare vagrant Roseate Spoonbill (see picture) that was flying and feeding with about 80 Great Egrets. It was quite a sight to see them



all swirling in the early morning sun glinting off their wings against the backdrop of rosy-dawn-colored White Tank Mountains.

The raptors included a male and a female Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Kestrel, Osprey, and a Peregrine Falcon that

swooped down right in front of us to hunt sandpipers on the shoreline (an unsuccessful stoop, but impressive in speed and maneuvers). A large flock of American Avocets kept us entertained with their feeding style (head down, like a plow in the water, full speed ahead). The winter duck population has



increased in both numbers and variety with Blue- and Green-winged Teal, Scaup, Bufflehead, Northern Pintail, and a female Hooded Merganser to name a few. Eared, Horned, and Western Grebe were seen in the same pond. All in all, it was a nice morning in the field with good volunteer friends.

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Birding Report from the Field

Date: Sun, 5 Dec 2010 19:15:05 -0800

Subject: AZ - Casa Grande to Santa Cruz Flats

The Liberty Wildlife field trip this morning started with 29 species at the Dave White golf course in Casa Grande which included Buffleheads (7 males 2 females), a female Canvasback, a good assortment of dabbling ducks, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Harrier flyby, and a hunting immature Cooper's Hawk.

At the Arizona City Lake, we added a Horned Grebe. Our first Peregrine Falcon of the day was on Pretzer 1/4 mile east of Toltec. 1/2 mile west of Curry on Pretzer, we had a Prairie Falcon on a telephone pole, a second Prairie Falcon on the very next pole, and then a 1st year Harlan's on the third pole - amazing views through the scope of all three birds at once.

1/4 mile east of Curry on Pretzer, we had 10 of the most-accommodating Mountain Plovers. (See picture) These are a very endangered animal!) While foraging in the sod area, they almost came out onto Pretzer in front of us. In the same field, just northwest of the Tweedy/Pretzer corner was a Ferruginous



Hawk perched out on a sprinkler arch. A quick glimpse of a Merlin (Taiga) in the pecan trees at Curtis & Tweedy. Our second Peregrine Falcon was found soaring overhead with



two ravens on Curtis just west of Curry. A Crested Caracara was seen flying south in this same area. It was a nice day in the field with friends. Many thanks to all the sharp-eyed participants.

Claudia Kirscher & Anne Peyton
Field trip Leaders

Tales from the Hotline: Ongoing Tidbits

A Hotline volunteer retrieved this message:

(Lots of background yelling and shouting)

“Hi, my name is _____ and ISHUT UP AND SHUT THE DOORhave had a love bird for 5 ...HEY DID YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID?... years and he just flew out the door that my kids left open. Can you come and do an emergency rescue?” She tried to leave her phone number, but the background noise was so loud and she spoke so fast that it was unintelligible. Therefore, I could not call her back to let her know that we only deal with native birds. I also suspect, based on the noise and chaos going on in the background, that the love bird had been planning its escape for a long time!