

Volume 9 Issue 3

March 2025



Birding Club of Sun City



Buddy Walker



It's no Millennium Falcon!

On the cover: Guess who?

Buddy has become quite the Wildlife Photographer & program presenter. His photographic skills are on display in all of his work. **The Green Heron** on the cover is one of dozens of gems sent to me for publication the newsletter. His thoughtfully selected subjects are well exposed with great clarity, They are both technically and aesthetically admirable.

Bogo Birds: Walking the road between the main and overflow parking lots at Hassayampa can be quite rewarding. A **Western Bluebird** casts the stink eye on a photo bombing **Gila Woodpecker**.



Marilynn

The Falcon's Roost

Hi Birders

Great weather has arrived and before we get into a string of 100 degree days we must get out into the natural world. On the way there your might get agita while thinking "those two warehouses weren't here last week". We will do the monthly visits to Glendale Ponds and Hassayampa and add a journey to the **Gilbert Riparian Area** to get a 50 species fix.

New for our club is a visit to the Wildlife Pond and Nature Center at **White Tank Mountain Park** at the end of W. Olive. For the last two months I have been adding that area to the monthly Regional Parks walks and I was amazed at the variety and accessibility of some rare and seldom seen sparrows such as **Bell's**. Other delights there are a bumper crop of Gilded Flickers along with the usual desert suspects like Ravens in a dumpster, Kestrels, and Red-tailed Hawks. 17 species in all by the pond last visit. See the two White Tank checklists for the Visitor Center and Wildlife Pond on the last page of the newsletter to get an idea of bird possibilities..

**Our next Meeting is:
March 12th 10am**

**The main program will be:
A mystery**

Short program:

Upcoming March and April field trips and other bird news.



Upcoming March trip quick-list

Full details on trip Ad pages later in this newsletter

Sparrow Spectacle at the Wildlife Pond

When: Sunday March 9th 7am

Leader - Tom L

Email Tom for more information locascio2000@hotmail.com

Gilbert Riparian Preserve

When: Sunday March 16th 7am

Leader - Tom L

Email Tom for more information locascio2000@hotmail.com

Glendale Recharge Ponds

When: Wednesday March 19th 7am

Leader—Tom

Email Tom for more information locascio2000@hotmail.com

Hassayampa River Preserve

When: Wednesday March 26th at 7:30 am

Leader - Tom L

Email Tom to join the group locascio2000@hotmail.com

Boyce Thompson Arboretum

When: Coming in early April

Email Tom for more information locascio2000@hotmail.com

Maricopa Regional Parks/Audubon trips

Estrella Mountain Regional Park

When: Saturday March 8th at 7:30 am

Leaders Joe and Tom

Cave Creek Regional Park

When: Saturday March 15th at 7:30 am

Leaders Joe and Tom

White Tank Regional Park

When: Saturday March 22nd at 7:30 am

Leaders Joe and Tom

Administriva page



Upcoming 2025 meetings



Upcoming meetings

Wednesday March	12th	2025	10am	Fairway Arizona room 1&2
Wednesday April	9th	2025	10am	Fairway Arizona room 1&2
Summer break				
Wednesday October	8th	2025	10am	Fairway Arizona room 1&2
Wednesday November	12th	2025	10am	Fairway Arizona room 1&2

Anyone going on a "Club Field Trip" needs to contact the leader of the trip to let them know that they will attend.

Car pooling process

If you need a ride or can give a ride, please send an email to: suncitybirders@gmail.com and indicate whether you need a ride or you can give a ride to one or more. A member of the Carpool Committee will get back to you and let you know if we can accommodate your request. As soon as an "open seat" becomes available, they will notify you with the name of the driver you will be riding with and where the carpoolers will meet. Generally, this will be at the Bell Center. "Open seats" will be filled first come, first served. If a seat is not available, you will be notified prior to the day of the trip. If a person that requests a ride is able to be matched with a driver, it is expected that the person requesting the ride helps the driver to help cover their gas expenses.

Suggested gas expense assistance for short trips:

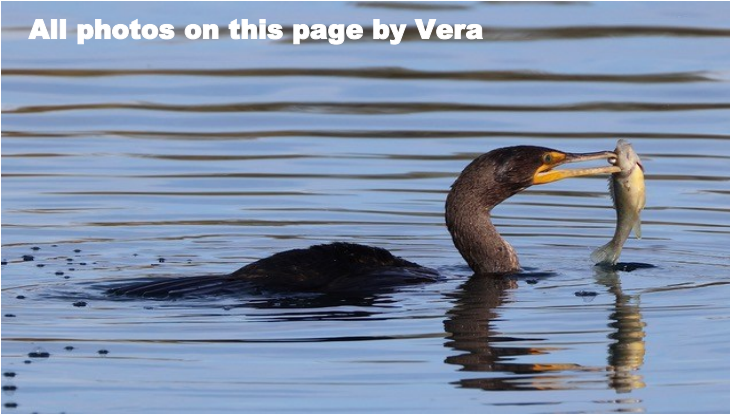
The Glendale Recharge Ponds \$5 (all rides up to 50 RT miles \$5 minimum).

Wanted: Your photos for the newsletter!

To join our club or get information: locascio2000@hotmail.com or text 620-616-7459. Submit photos and information of interest to our newsletter. It is much appreciated to receive accounts of birding experiences or impressions of any of our field trips or activities. They will appear in the newsletter.

Paloma Community Park 2/3/25

All photos on this page by Vera



Top left & right: Double-crested Cormorant dives, catches a fish, then positions it to be swallowed head first.

Middle left: Male Ring-necked Duck escorts a Male Redhead **Middle right:** Rock Wrens are plentiful this year!

Lower left: Tiny Ruby-crowned Kinglet is a manic forager. No, he's not Bipolar, the bugs he wants to eat are

Lower right: A handsome Donkey, or Burro in Spanish. Obviously, if he is a male, he is known as a Jackass.



Rio Vista Community Park 2/10/25



All photos on this page by Vera



Top left: Double-crested

Cormorant drying his wings. Their wings are water repellent to reduce buoyancy and enabling easier diving.

Upper right: Greater Yellowlegs looked disappointed in it's short visit to the water catchment area regularly bulldozed leaving small puddles sans food.

Middle left: Female Black-tailed Gnatcatcher does not have male's black cap. This species seems to be thriving this year & they're not shy.

Middle right: I love Lark Sparrows. Among sparrows they are one of the most vividly colored facially, and boldly marked. That spot is an ID plus.

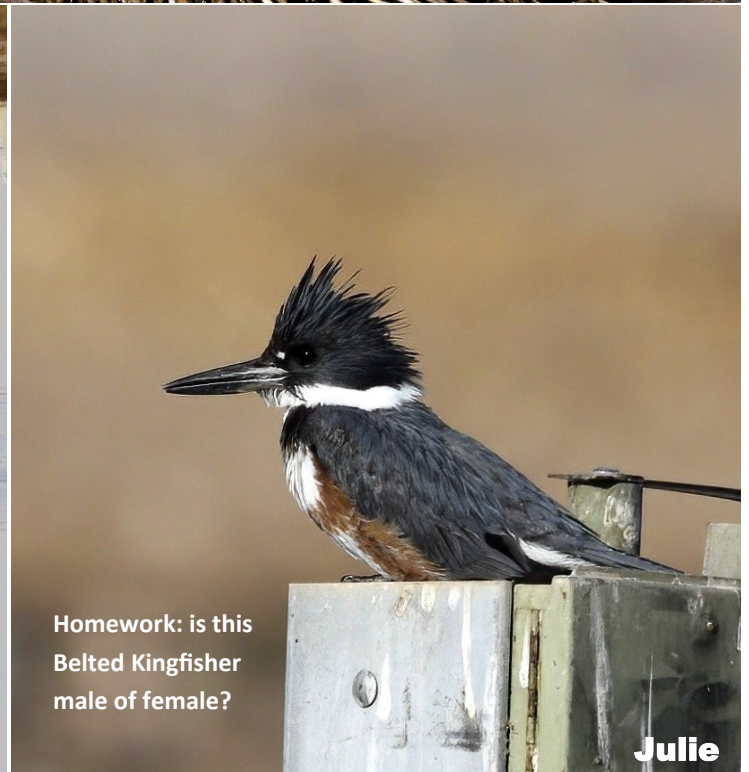
Bottom left: Verdins are doing well. They love my Hummingbird feeders.

Glendale Recharge Ponds 2/19/25 part 1

Thanks to Vera and Julie for all the fine photos covering this trip. I only could include a small fraction here.

On the right:
Greater Yellowlegs taking a break from foraging for those tasty aquatic invertebrates.

Lower left:
Gadwall a duck that often goes unnoticed or unidentified. Seen at a distance it looks gray overall and its white belly can't be seen while swimming. The white inner secondaries seen on the wing near the end of this bird, as well as the black bill are great diagnostics.



Glendale Recharge Ponds 2/19/25 part 2



A **Western Meadowlark** saw us out.

Doppelganger **Great Blue Herons**.

Seeing **Neotropical Cormorants** up close makes them easier to sort out from the **Double-crested** variety. Note white **V** at the base of the bill.



Lakeview Rec. Center 2/17/25



Barb Zanzoni

A well attended event featuring 18 members and 23 species of birds.

The **Green Heron** was all over the 3 ponds and provided numerous photo ops. Click on the list of species for this trip on the last page.

Rock Wrens were seen in several areas on the hill and were of course on a rock. This species seems to be doing quite well and I've seen great numbers (relatively) on many sites.



Vera

Hassayampa River 2/26/25

Great Blue Heron appeared to be foraging for small mammals near the auxiliary parking lot.

Pied-billed Grebe floating in primordial soup. He may well be the vice-mascot of the club.

Western Bluebirds in the auxiliary parking lot. Colorful Male on the right and Female on the left.



Marilynn



Marilynn



Clint Rohrer

Upcoming March 2025 field trip

Sparrow Spectacle at the Wildlife Pond

When: Sunday March 9th at 7 am

Leader Tom

This is an opportunity to get a lifer or two. We will meet on the left side of the Nature Center near the Tortoise enclosure. We may see 15 - 20 species here. Next we will check in at the Kiosk requiring a \$7 fee per car. When we leave the Nature Center, those without passes can carpool together to The area 5 Equestrian center parking lot on the right side of the road to save \$7. From there the Wildlife Pond is a short walk from the Nature Trail head in that parking area.

Meet at: The right side of Nature Center. (Right turn just before pay Kiosk).

Difficulty: About mile or so walk on flat land. Getting up early insures a great time for birding.

Top right: An as the Crow flies view of the Nature Center and the pond & water tower area.

Counter clockwise from the top: Brewer's Sparrow. The next two previously were one species, now split into the Bell's Sparrow (left) and the Sagebrush Sparrow. (right) You will also get your fill of the hyper cute Black-throated Sparrows and of course White-crowned Sparrows.



Upcoming March 2025 field trip

Riparian Area at the Gilbert Water Ranch

When: Sunday March 16th 7 am

Leader - Tom Locascio

Worth all your efforts to get there at 7 am as this gives us a greater chance to see a Least Bittern and other early risers. This is the best birding hotspot in Maricopa County with 328 species documented by eBird. I expect we will see many ducks, Waders, and waterfowl as well as desert residents and rarities. (no promises here) There will be plenty of Raptors, and shorebirds to view and the birds are somewhat used to human presence, making for excellent photo ops. We will endeavor to observe 50 plus different species.

Sundays are not great for everyone but reduced traffic makes the ride there enjoyable. Past participants on this field trip have loved the experience.

Gilbert maintains a beautiful park, (the Water Ranch and Lake) and contained in it is the wonderful Riparian area. Besides the Wonder Bread lake, there are 6 recharge ponds with great vegetation. The pride of Gilbert.

Meet at: The south side of the library parking lot as close as you can to the lake.

I will send you detailed directions for highway or streets if you request them when you sign up and e-mail an extensive directions packet when the trip reminder goes out.

Carpooling: may be available by contacting: suncitybirders@gmail.com

If you are rider, remember to help out on gas keeping in mind it is 100 miles round trip.



Long-billed Dowitchers

Upcoming March 2025 field trip

Glendale Recharge Ponds

When: Wednesday March 19th at 7 am Leader Tom

Arrive at: 6:45 as group leaves at 7 am

Sign up: Tom: locascio2000@hotmail.com

This is the best “close” birding venue to us and one of the two best birding hot spots in Maricopa County with 299 species. You will observe waterfowl & shorebirds like Stilts and Avocets, as well as desert residents and migrants. In addition Gulls, Terns, Geese, Eagles, and Falcons may be seen. A large variety of ducks are present.

The water levels and feeding opportunities change daily and the species present reflect that.

Meet at: On the SE corner of basin #6.

Difficulty: A two or less mile walk on flat land.

Julie Wahlert took a wonderful sequence of this Bald Eagle looking for food and flying around



Upcoming March 2025 field trip

Hassayampa Regional Park

When: **Wednesday March 26th at 7:30 am** **Leader - Tom Locascio**

The third best birding spots in Maricopa county with 290 species. Rare to Maricopa County birds are likely to show up here as it presents a unique habitat that seems to emulate a higher elevation and is a Riparian area. Passerines like the White-breasted Nuthatch and genus brother Brown Creeper may show as well as the flocks of Western Bluebirds and Cedar Waxwings. Hutton's Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Northern Red-shafted Flickers are here. There will be of course Coots, our favorite Pied-billed Grebe and the possibility of a Heron of sorts lurking in the reeds.

Meet at: **Hassayampa Visitor Center Parking Lot or by the feeders in front.**

I will send you directions for highway or (streets) if you request them when you sign up.

Carpooling: Contact Tom W. via suncitybirders@gmail.com to sign up to drive or ride

Cedar Waxwing dining on Bearded Palm date-like fruits.



March 2025 Regional Parks trips

Estrella Regional Park

& Sonoran Audubon

When: Saturday March 8th at **7:30 am** Leaders - Joe & Tom

This is a joint Maricopa Regional Parks/Sonoran Audubon endeavor. This park has a wide variety of species due to the generous representation of habitats such as: Mesquite Bosque, open river channels, riparian “stringers”, mini grasslands, and of course, Sonoran desert.

Meet at: **7:00 am** around the Visitor Center for early pre-walk birding.

Difficulty: A mile and a half of walking

Cost: \$7 per car entry fee to the park. (or use/buy a Regional Parks yearly pass)

Program: to follow inside the Nature Center: “Birds—Memorable Sounds and Colors”

Cave Creek Regional Park

& Sonoran Audubon

When: Saturday March 15th at **7:30 am** Leaders - Joe & Tom

Meet at: **7:00 am** behind the Visitor Center for early pre-walk birding.

Difficulty: A mile and a half of walking

Cost: \$7 per car entry fee to the park. (or use/buy a Regional Parks yearly pass)

Program: to follow inside the Nature Center: “Parrots and Toucans”

White Tank Mt. Regional Park

& Sonoran Audubon

When: Saturday March 22nd at **7:30 am** Leaders - Joe & Tom

Meet at: **7:00 am** next to the Visitor Center for early pre-walk birding.

Difficulty: A mile and a half of walking

Cost: \$7 per car entry fee to the park. (or use/buy a Regional Parks yearly pass)

Following the walks, Joe will present a program in the visitor center.

Carpooling is not available for Regional Parks trips.

These are not club events but are led by Joe Ford and Tom Locascio

February field trip bird list links

Click on the link under each trip for the bird list.

Paloma Community park **February 3rd 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 3 Feb 2025 - Paloma Community Park - 28 species \(+1 other taxa\)](#)

Estrella Regional Park **February 8th 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 8 Feb 2025 - Estrella Mountain Regional Park - 28 species](#)

Rio Vista Park **February 10th 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 10 Feb 2025 - Rio Vista Community Park/Riparian Area - 38 species \(+1 other taxa\)](#)

Cave Creek **February 15th 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 15 Feb 2025 - Cave Creek Regional Park - 20 species](#)

Lakeview Rec. Center **February 17th 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 17 Feb 2025 - Lakeview Recreation Center Sun City - 23 species](#)

Glendale Recharge Ponds **February 19th 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 19 Feb 2025 - Glendale Recharge Ponds - 36 species](#)

White Tank Mountain **February 22nd 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 22 Feb 2025 - White Tank Mountain Regional Park - 22 species](#)

White Tank Wildlife Pond **February 22nd 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 22 Feb 2025 - White Tank Mountain Regional Park--Wildlife Pond - 17 species](#)

Hassayampa Preserve **February 26th 2025**

[eBird Checklist - 26 Feb 2025 - Hassayampa River Preserve - 24 species](#)

A Green-winged Teal swims away bringing the newsletter to **The End**

