

Volume 9 Issue 5

May 2025

Birding Club of Sun City



Buddy Walker

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Vera



It's no Millennium Falcon!

On the covers:

Buddy was out shopping in Lincoln ND and saw several Wild Turkeys in a nearby field. Try the following link for IDing this species.

[Wild Turkey Identification 101](#)

Like the Hobbit's second breakfast, I sometimes can't do without a 2nd cover photo. Vera took this Lark Sparrow or *Chondestes grammacus* at Rio Vista Community Park. I chose it because of the detailed marking on the head such as the eye stripe, Ear patch, medial line, subtle center spot, and white outer rectrices. Males and Females are similar with immature birds having muted facial patterns.

The Falcon's Roost

Hi Birders,

The heat is on so I am planning one cool destination trip each month before the first meeting in October. Last month we went to the Bubbling Springs Preserve and enjoyed countless views of the Blackhawks. We also saw 50 different species in this beautiful area surrounded by Oak Creek. **Bullock's Oriole below.**



The "Goose of America" has been observed for quite a while on her primitive "nest". Finally she has given birth to 4 healthy Goslings! They live in the pond across from the Recreation Center at Rio Vista Community Park. There is a trip planned on the 19th of May to check out their progress into honking adulthood. Check out trip advertisement later in this newsletter.



Upcoming May trip quick-list

Full details on trip Ad pages later in this newsletter

Glendale Recharge Ponds

When: Thursday May 8th 6 am (non-standard day)
Leader - Tom

Hassayampa River Preserve

When: Wednesday May 14th at 6:30 am **Leader - Tom**
Email Tom to join the group locascio2000@hotmail.com

Rio Vista Community Park

When: Munday May 19th 6:30 am **Leader -Tom**
Email Tom for more information locascio2000@hotmail.com

Kachina Wetlands (256 species)

Just South of Flagstaff, this treasure in the cool pines could yield 40 or more mountain species like Pygmy Nuthatch.

When: possibly late May TBA **Leader - Tom**

Maricopa Regional Parks/Audubon trips

Estrella Mountain Regional Park

When: Saturday May 10th at 7 am **Leaders Joe and Tom**

Cave Creek Regional Park

When: Saturday May 17th at 7 am **Leaders Joe and Tom**

White Tank Regional Park

When: Saturday May 24th at 6:30 am **Leaders Joe and Tom**

During the “warm” months of June, July, and August we will only be doing the Estrella field trips each 2nd Saturday, that is all 12 months of the year. Cave Creek and White Tank will be on hiatus June, July, and August and will return in September.

Administrivia page



Upcoming 2025 meetings



Upcoming meetings

Summer break

Wednesday October 8th 2025 10am Fairway Arizona room 1&2

Wednesday November 12th 2025 10am Fairway Arizona room 1&2

No meeting in December

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

Submit photos and information of interest to our newsletter.

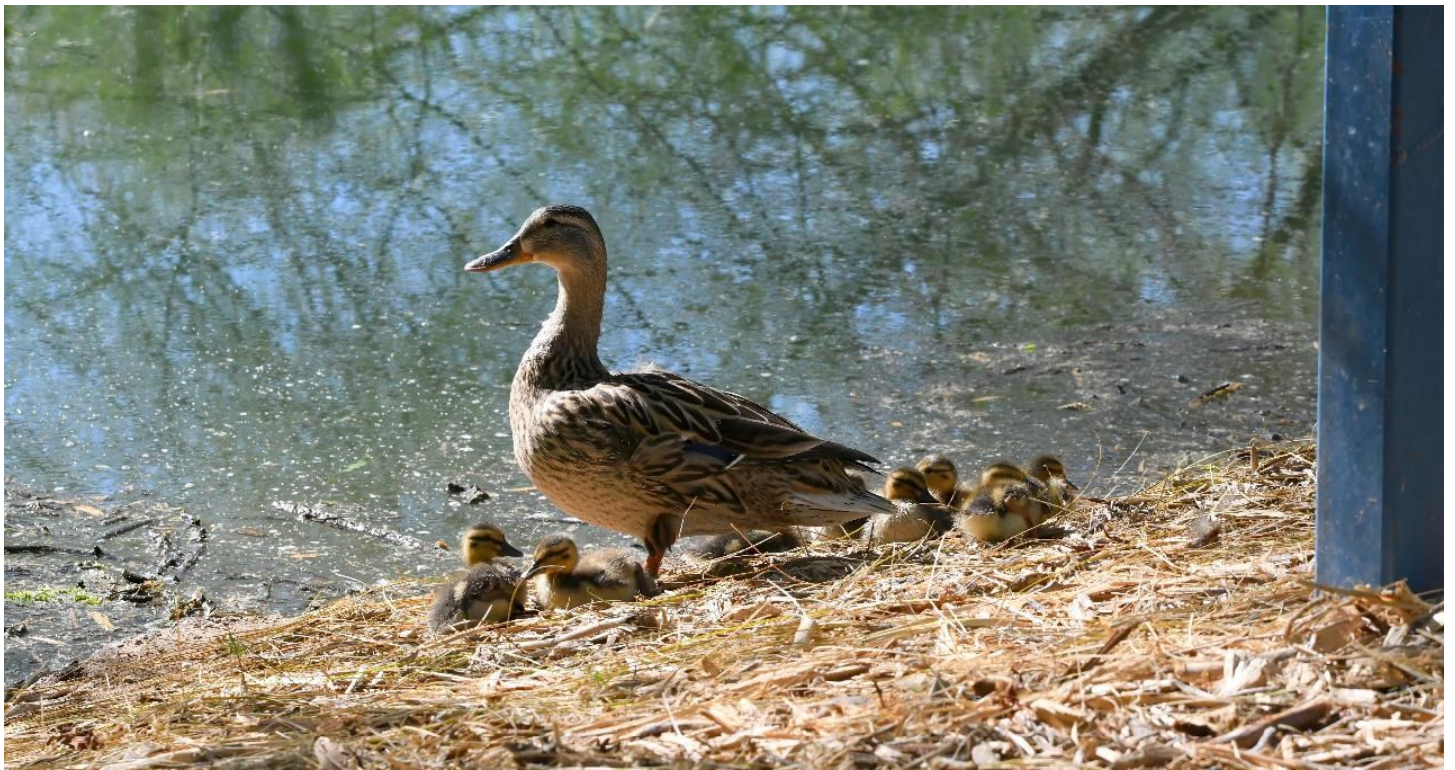
It is much appreciated to receive accounts of birding experiences or impressions of any of our field trips or activities.

They will appear in the newsletter.



Tom Worcester sent these fine photos taken on a recent visit to the Gilbert Riparian Preserve. The ducks have sadly left the area for the cooler climes. Besides stragglers, a few species remain with us in the summer. Although they do migrate, a few Teal stick around. Most ducks migrate to Northern U.S. and Canada in the Summer. **Cinnamon Teal** are oppo ducks. Some fly into Mexico and Southern South America for the summer.

Lots of **Mallard** Moms present this time of years. I once counted 12 new families. This is a great venue to visit on your own. Email me for maps and directions and get there at 6am!



Gilbert Riparian Preserve

part 2



More from Tom W.

On the right: Female Phainopepla having a “good crest” day. The map above shows distribution in 5 states. When it gets too hot, Phainopeplas will horizontally migrate to higher elevations. Same red eye as male.

Below: Orange-crowned Warbler hides his faint wash of an orange crown. ID split faint eye ring, olive greenish on top, variable yellow below. Loves suet feeders!



Rio Vista Community Park 4/7/25



Above: Walk/run/bike path on the West side of the New River Corridor as viewed from the bridge across the river.

Below left: A fine specimen of a male Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Below right: A rather grumpy looking Great Blue Heron—Anthropomorphically musing.





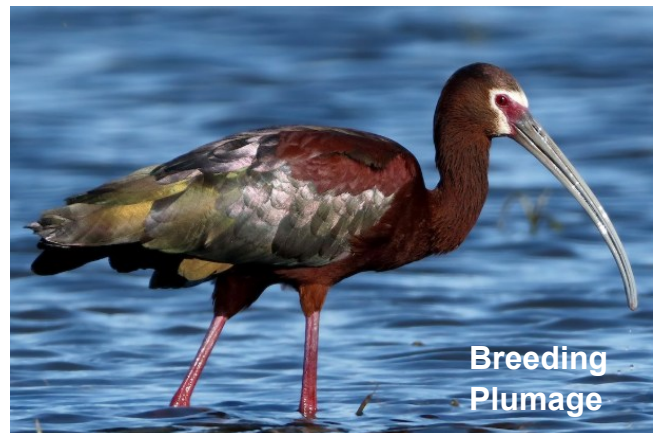
Vera

Above:

While waiting for the van to show up and deliver us to the inner sanctum, we were witness to a fly-over of more than 100 **White-faced Ibis**. We saw several other flocks over the Morning. On the ground it was a different story as the specimen in the lower left Photo was the sole bird sighted.

Below left:

Less common **Lesser Scaup**



*Charlotte Auman
Photographer*



Above: Much to see on the concrete spillways between the basins. With two species of Cormorants and Egrets it was easy to see the size, beak, and leg color differences less apparent at a distance. On the upper corner the size difference is apparent between the Snowy and Great Egrets. **Great** /Yellow beak/black legs, **Snowy**/black beak & legs with yellow feet. Cormorants: **Double-crested**/ Larger/orange skin around beak/immature birds have light greyish breasts. **Neo-tropical Cormorants** are smaller with longer tail ratio to body ratio than D.C. The base of the bill has a white V. Immature birds have brownish chest.



Vera



Above:

Yellow-headed Blackbirds

This impressionist photo was taken by Charlotte through a chain-linked fence as we waited for the Van to show up.

On the left:

Charlotte wanted a clear shot of a Yellow-headed and finally had her opportunity at a stopover called the "Cul-de sac"

51 species were seen. Use link on last page to see the bird itinerary.

Bubbling Springs Preserve 4/27/25

part 1



Vera

It was a great day of birding well worth the 100 mile + journey each way. I know I won't be deceiving anyone into thinking this photo wasn't crudely altered. This was however one of the many Black hawks we viewed all through our visit. The Riparian photo above is the Oak Creek corridor, a wonderful Riparian semi-circle around the Preserve. This is a great birding destination that is a wonderful combination of open area, woods, and riparian habitats.

Bubbling Springs Preserve

part 2



Above:

Ducks are mostly gone now with the exception of Mallards hanging on with us during the summer. The males obscured in their eclipse phase attire to increase their safety are hard to distinguish from the females. Oh I forgot the lovely Cinnamon Teal.

On the right:

This is a great spot to see Wood Ducks, in fact they breed here. I've seen them each time I have visited and the ducklings on one occasion. We saw five adults this day.



Bubbling Springs Preserve

part 3



On the top:

Black-headed Grosbeak

This colorful Specimen shows his glorious orange and lemon yellow chest and belly. We get these in our Valley as well showing up at Hassayampa, the 3 regional parks, and a few in my back yard.

Lower left:

Western Kingbird

We saw several of these colorful birds greatly enjoying each one.

Lower right:

Blackhawk

We saw one in a tree as soon as we got out of the car at the parking lot. At one point we saw 3 in the air at the same time and several other single flyovers. We will return to this birding paradise soon!





But wait, there's more! Photos by Barb Zanoni.

These images evoke the character and ambiance of the land with yes, a plethora of real deciduous trees! These are mysterious woods that all the of the colorful Passerines forage and sleep in. Who has lived in that bird-house? Perhaps the Bewick's Wren that are numerous here.



I believe this used to be the Fish Hatchery until the new facility was built. Numerous experiments still go on here at the old basins. Each one here had a **Great Blue Heron** on duty to help the harvest. These basins were also the home of Wood Ducks that also breed here. A single Spotted Sandpiper and his single friend the Least Sandpiper scoured the basins for their beloved Aquatic invertebrates. Mesquite canopied trails summoned you to enter.



Upcoming May 2025 field trip

Glendale Recharge Ponds

When: **Thursday** May 8th at **6 am** **Leader Tom**

Arrive at: **5:45** as group leaves at **6 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.

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.

A Satisfied Female Northern Harrier after a breakfast of American Coot.

Buddy Walker



Upcoming May 2025 field trip

Hassayampa River Preserve

When: Wednesday May 14 at 6:30 am **Leader - Tom Locascio**

The third best birding spot 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. As of this writing on April 27th the following Warblers were observed:

Lucy's, Nashville, Mac Gullivray's, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Wilson's, Orange-crowned, Townsend's, and Hermit Warbler, Flycatchers seen on this day include:

Vermillion, Hammond's, Western, Olive-sided, Western Wood-Pewee, Grey, Brown-crested, Ash-throated. Other delights include Lazuli Bunting, the heard but not often seen Yellow-breasted Chat, and the Gray & Red-shouldered Hawks.

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

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

Red Shouldered Hawk

Buddy Walker



Upcoming May 2025 field trip

Rio Vista Community Park

When: Monday May 19th at **6:30 am** **Leader - Tom Locascio**

We can expect to see 25 or more species. Shorebirds, Raptors, Green and Blue Herons, 99 Great-tailed Grackles guaranteed, and the usual Riparian and Desert species are a constant, and a Roadrunner pair are a welcome site. Come and see the “Goose of Americas new Gosslings in the pond across from the Recreation Center. Great spot for photography.

Meet at: The open area just South of the Bridge (**X** on map below)

Cost: No cost

Difficulty: A 1 1/2 or less mile walk on flat ground

I saw 30 species including the “Goose of America’s” four new Goslings on my last visit here. Migration is proceeding now. I’m hoping the two **Greater Yellowlegs** that usually show in the catchment basin south of the pedestrian bridge Will be present and bring the **Wilson’s Snipe** with them.



May 2025 Regional Parks trips

Estrella Regional Park

& Sonoran Audubon

When: Saturday May 10th at **7 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: 6:30 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: “Bird Weirdness III”

Cave Creek Regional Park

& Sonoran Audubon

When: Saturday May 17th at **7 am**

Leaders - Joe & Tom

Meet at: 6:30 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: “Rattlesnakes”

White Tank Mt. Regional Park

& Sonoran Audubon

When: Saturday May 24th at **6:30 am**

Leaders - Joe & Tom

Meet at: 6 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)

Program: to follow inside the Nature Center: “Flowers that fire the imagination”

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

April field trip bird list links

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

Rio Vista

April 7th 2025

[eBird Checklist - 7 Apr 2025 - Rio Vista Community Park/Riparian Area - 32 species \(+1 other taxa\)](#)

Estrella Regional Park

April 12th 2025

[eBird Checklist - 12 Apr 2025 - Estrella Mountain Regional Park - 37 species](#)

Tres Rios

April 14th 2025

[eBird Checklist - 14 Apr 2025 - Tres Rios Overbank Wetlands \(permit required\) - 51 species](#)

Glendale Recharge Ponds

April 16th 2025

[eBird Checklist - 16 Apr 2025 - Glendale Recharge Ponds - 43 species \(+1 other taxa\)](#)

Cave Creek

April 19th 2025

[eBird Checklist - 19 Apr 2025 - Cave Creek Regional Park - 24 species](#)

Hassayampa Preserve

April 23rd 2025

[eBird Checklist - 23 Apr 2025 - Hassayampa River Preserve - 28 species](#)

White Tank Mountain

April 26th 2025

[eBird Checklist - 26 Apr 2025 - White Tank Mountain Regional Park - 21 species](#)

[eBird Checklist - 26 Apr 2025 - White Tank Mountain Regional Park--Wildlife Pond - 22 species](#)

Bubbling Springs Preserve

April 27th 2025

[eBird Checklist - 27 Apr 2025 - Page Springs Fish Hatchery--Bubbling Ponds Preserve - 50](#)

Vera loves critters. We enjoyed this pair of Racoons on the Tres Rios trip

