

**Volume 8 Issue 9**

**September 2024**

# **Birding Club of Sun City**



**Buddy Walker**



# Birding Club of Sun City



Buddy Walker



**Above: it's no Millennium Falcon!**

### **On the covers:**

**Buddy Walker** graces both covers this month. The first cover shows a **Semipalmated Plover**. See his closely related brother the Killdeer on the advertisement page for the Glendale Recharge Ponds. On page 2 is our friend the adolescent **Pied-billed grebe. We have watched the Pied-billed family for years.** Buddy also sent the photo below of a non-breeding **Pectoral Sandpiper**, an infrequent visitor to the Ponds. The Ponds represents the best location in Maricopa County to hone your shorebird skills in my opinion. A close second is Gilbert Riparian area.



# **The Falcon's Roost**

## **Hi Birders,**

September has arrived and hopefully have left the overnight lows of 90 degrees behind. There number of field trips will increase as the days grow shorter. A wider range of field trips will be available in October through April featuring the October Tres Rios inner sanctum trip on October 11th. Other September trips past the 18th are TBD at this time but may include the Gilbert Riparian area and some of the local community parks. A reminder at least one week before a trip will be announce via email.

## **Feeder watch:**

The Black-headed Grosbeak Male and Females are still with me on August 4th and a new situation is quite interesting. A bunny of generous proportions was enjoying shade when I noticed that there was a Ash-throated Flycatcher in close proximity. He seemed to like being close to the bunny even though it nosed him away. The Flycatcher would shortly return and seemed to admonish the bunny. The bunny dug a deep hole in the soft dirt to the extent only part of his ears were showing. An hour later they are still together face to face! The Grosbeaks and flycatcher have moved on leaving my remaining feeder participants noticeable in their molt process.

### **The yearly cycle of most birds**

**Return to or find a territory**

**Courtship**

**Nestbuilding**

**Breeding and raising offspring**

**Molting**

**Migration if not permanent resident**

Yearly times vary by location and species. Feathers are restored to their full glory by return to territory and especially for courting. See next page for more molting info.

# I'm Molting.....Molting!



European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) molt once a year, usually in June or July, but they don't shed their feathers like many other birds. Instead, they grow new feathers in the fall with white tips that give them a spotted appearance. By spring, the tips wear away, leaving the feathers dark and iridescent brown. This process is called "wear molt" by scientists

[Who Wore It Worst? Behold the Awkward Glory of Molting | Audubon](#)

Above is a link to an interesting article showing some of your favorites in the molt process. The Eclipse phase of ducks and geese is covered here as well. The question of "where have all the male mallards gone?" can be found as well.

While Starlings do not shed their feathers, most other birds do. This is a phase in our bird's life that may go unnoticed. Molting affects flight and could increase predation. One tends to see less birds on a bird walk. My usual feeder birds all show signs of molting. One of my favorite sightings was a Great-tailed Grackle without his great tail feathers. Even while traveling with the last clutch of offspring, Gambel's Quails are already in the molt process some times sporting a bare neck. White-Wing Doves are greatly diminished. Northern Mocking birds lose their white wing patches. Have a gander before the spectacle comes to a close.

# Upcoming September trip quick-list

Full details on trip pages later in this newsletter

## Paloma Community Park

**When:** Friday September 6th at 6:30 am Leader - Tom L.

**Email Tom to join the group** [locascio2000@hotmail.com](mailto:locascio2000@hotmail.com)

## Glendale Recharge Ponds

**When:** Wednesday September 11th 6:30 Leader - Buddy Walker

**Sign up:** Buddy Walker: [walkerbd@live.com](mailto:walkerbd@live.com) or text only cell:  
602-653-1007 ask Buddy if you need directions.

## Hassayampa River Preserve

**When:** Wednesday September 18th at 6:30 am Leader - Tom L.

**Email Tom to join the group** [locascio2000@hotmail.com](mailto:locascio2000@hotmail.com)

## Estrella Mountain Regional Park

**When:** Saturday September 14th at 6:30 am Leaders Joe and Tom

## Cave Creek Regional Park

**When:** Saturday September 21st at 6:30 am Leaders Joe and Tom

## White Tank Regional Park

**When:** Saturday September 28th at 6:30 am Leaders Joe and Tom



**Buddy Walker's Forster's Tern**

# Administrivia page



## Upcoming 2024 meetings



### Summer meeting break. Next meetings

<b>Wednesday October</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Fairway Arizona room 1&amp;2</b>
<b>Wednesday November</b>	<b>13th</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Fairway Arizona room 1&amp;2</b>

**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](mailto: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 miles \$5 minimum).

Longer trips such as Gilbert Water Ranch \$10, (51-100 miles)

Really long trips such as Boyce Thompson Arboretum could be \$15 or more.

## Wanted: Your photos for the newsletter!

**To join our club or get information:** [locascio2000@hotmail.com](mailto: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.

# Upcoming September 2024 field trips

## Paloma Community Park

**When: Friday September 6th at 6:30 am Leader Tom Locascio**

Bordering on the Peoria Preserve Open Area, there is a surprising representation of waterfowl and desert birds with close up viewing possible. I've seen some interesting birds here such as Pyrrhuloxia, Sage Thrasher, Rock Wren, Horned Lark, American Pipit, Black-headed Grosbeaks, I expect to see 25 or more species. Sorry, ducks not here yet except for Mutant Mallards.

**Meet at: Between the parking lot and man made lake**

**Cost:** no cost

**Difficulty:** A two or less mile walk on flat ground, with 50% walking on dirt trails that are a bit rocky. Wear sturdy footwear.

**Carpooling:** No carpooling available on local trips at this time.

### Directions:

Go North on 99th Ave

Left on Lake Pleasant Pkwy.

After passing West Wing there is a sign saying the park is 1/2 mile ahead. Take a right turn into the park entrance. Follow the entrance road until you see the lake on the right. Park and meet your comrades on the South edge of the lake. Cows and/or Donkeys may show.



# Upcoming September 2024 field trips

## Glendale Recharge Ponds

**When:** Wednesday September 11th at **6:30 am** Leader **Buddy Walker**

**Arrive at:** **6:15** as group leaves at **6:30 am**

**Sign up:** **Buddy Walker:** [walkerbd@live.com](mailto:walkerbd@live.com) or text only cell: **602-653-1007** ask **Buddy** if you need directions.

This is the best “close” birding venue to us and one of the two best birding hot spots in Maricopa County. You will observe waterfowl & shorebirds like Stilts and Avocets, as well as desert residents and migrants. In addition Gulls, Terns, 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.

**Carpooling:** If you need a ride or can give a ride please send an email to: [suncitybirders@gmail.com](mailto:suncitybirders@gmail.com) and indicate whether you need a ride or if you



The Killdeer shown is closely related to the Semipalmated Plover on the cover page. It is not only in the same Family, it is in the same Genus.

**Buddy Walker**



# Upcoming September 2024 field trip

## Hassayampa Regional Park

**When: Wednesday September 18th at 6:30 am Leader - Tom L.**

The third best birding spot in Maricopa county with 293 species observed. We may see Red-shouldered, Cooper's, Gray, and perhaps Black Hawks. As for Warblers, we may see Yellow-rump, Black-throated Gray, Lucy's, and Orange-crowned Warblers. Hermit Thrushes, Dark-eyed Juncos, Cardinals, Hummingbirds, Waxwings, Vireos, & If we are lucky, instead of just hearing them, perhaps we may actually see a Yellow-breasted Chat. Bridled Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Orioles, and Grosbeaks may be on the menu.

**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.

**Below: Last Month's Hassayampa Advertisement page featured a Male Hooded Oriole. This month it is the lovely female Hooded Oriole. We saw both sexes on June's visit.**



**Buddy Walker**

# September 2024 Regional Parks trips

## Estrella Regional Park & Sonoran Audubon

**When:** Saturday September 14th at 6:30 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:** 6 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 IN NATURE CENTER: “RAPTORS, ESPECIALY OWLS”

## Cave Creek & Sonoran Audubon

**When:** Saturday September 21st at 6:30 am Leaders - Joe & Tom

**Meet at:** 6 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, “RAPTORS, HAWKS, FALCONS, EAGLES, VULTURES”

## White Tank Mt. Park & Sonoran Audubon

**When:** Saturday September 28th 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 IN NATURE CENTER---“LOONS OR WARBLERS”

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

**Carpooling is not available for Regional Parks trips.**

# August field trip bird list links

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

**Glendale Recharge Ponds      August 7th 2024**

[eBird Checklist - 3 Jul 2024 - Glendale Recharge Ponds - 33 species](#)

**Estrella Regional Park      August 10th 2024**

[eBird Checklist - 13 Jul 2024 - Estrella Mountain Regional Park - 26 species](#)

**Hassayampa River Preserve      August 21st 2024**

[eBird Checklist - 31 Jul 2024 - Hassayampa River Preserve - 34 species](#)

Yeah, I'm molting.



**The End**