

Friday Field Trips and Walks

Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival Friday April 27, 2012

All walks and field trips leave from the River Day Use area unless otherwise noted. Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to departure.

Agua Fria National Monument Field Trip *✍ ✍*

Tice Supplee

Friday, April 27

Departure: 6am

Rating: 4

Return: 2pm

Cost: \$45

The Agua Fria National Monument is one of our National Park treasures managed by The Bureau of Land Management. We'll bird along the Agua Fria River, which has been determined suitable for Wild and Scenic Status. The riparian corridors are an Audubon Important Bird Area and are dominated by an over-story of cottonwood and willow that shelter many different species of songbirds and raptors. Among these birds are Cooper's and red-tailed hawks, kingbirds, vireos, wrens, warblers and sparrows. Tice brings a fresh perspective to the birding. Box lunch included.

Gap Creek Field Trip *✍*

Geoffrey Bland

Saturday, April 27

Departure: 6am

Rating: 3

Return: 2pm

Cost: \$45

We travel along the alluvial fan of Mingus Mountain to the surprising oasis of Gap Creek where we will find migratory and breeding riparian species. This can be an adventurous ride made for those who don't mind being bounced around. Along the route we will look for black-throated, lark, chipping and black-chinned sparrows as well as raptors and high desert species. This should prove to be some fast, furious birding. Box lunch included.

Sedona Wetlands FT *✍ ✍*

Scott Woolbright

Friday, April 27

Departure: 7am

Rating: 3

Return: 11am

Cost: \$30

The use of man-made water treatment plants as birding sites creating artificial wetlands has proven to be the source of excellent birding across the country, especially when they are planned to provide rich habitat. The City of Sedona, in keeping with the natural beauty of the area, has not only taken care of the basic needs of the public but has done so with nature in mind. The birding is excellent and with a local expert to lead you into this normally restricted area, you should be able to add many species to your day's list.

Tavasci Marsh Field Trip *✍ ✍*

Doug Von Gausig

Thursday, **Friday**, Saturday, Sunday, April 26, **27**, 28, 29

Departure: 7am

Rating: 4

Return: 11am

Cost: \$30

We will leave in shuttle vans that will take us to nearby Tavasci Marsh where water and shore birds, raptors, and flycatchers abound. The Yuma clapper rail has been spotted here in the past as have the river otters. The marsh and adjoining Peck's Lake and Verde River Greenway are part of Audubon's Tuzigoot Important Birding Area. This is one of our most popular trips. Includes lots of walking, a mile each way in and out, but worth every step.

Greenway Walk 🦋 🦋**Phyllis Lindberg**Thursday, **Friday**, Saturday, Sunday, April 26, **27**, 28, 29

Departure: 7am

Return: 11am

Rating: 3

Cost: \$25

One of the many reasons for holding the festival at Dead Horse Ranch State Park is its location in the heart of the Verde River's riparian corridor. A walk along the Verde River Greenway will provide opportunities to spot riparian dependent species. An expert guide will enhance your experience. You should be able to see most of the species of the season on the park's bird list including the common black-hawk that is known to nest here.

Bubbling Ponds at Page Springs Field Trip 🦋 🦋**Bob Miller**Thursday, **Friday**, Saturday, Sunday, April 26, **27**, 28, 29

Departure: 7am

Return: noon

Rating: 3

Cost: \$30

The Page Springs area is a favorite hangout for birds and birders alike. This trip will take you to one of the locals' favorite hot spots on the banks of Oak Creek. Bubbling Ponds has been a project of the Northern Arizona Audubon with trails, invasive plant species eradication and habitat restoration and is part of the Lower Oak Creek Important Birding Area.

Willow Brook Organic Farm and**Randy Miller****Tickaboo Too Field Trip** 🦋 🦋**Denise Gould & Diane Scantlebury**

Friday, April 2

Departure: 7am

Return: 2pm

Rating: 3

Cost: \$45

We will first enjoy the birding along the Verde River in Middle Verde with naturalist Randy Miller. Another side trip to nearby Tickaboo will increase the birding opportunities. Ending with a visit to Willow Brook Organic Farm, the hostess and owner, Denise Gould, and Diane Scantlebury will then show us around the farm and offer up a brunch of some of their delicious, organically grown foods. This trip produces rave reviews. We think you will really enjoy the birding, the leader and the food.

Rocking Ranch Field Trip 🦋**Ruth Valencia**

Friday, April 27

Departure: 7am

Return: 2pm

Rating: 3

Cost: \$ 45

This field trip will explore what was a working ranch on the Verde River outside of Camp Verde. The property is now owned and managed by Arizona State Parks as part of the Greenway Project to preserve the riparian corridor along the Verde River. The site is not open to the public and hosts a cottonwood-willow gallery forest that supports black-hawk, great-horned owls, a large number of neo-tropical migratory birds and, occasionally, a bald eagle. Wear good hiking shoes and be prepared for some walking.

Watching Warblers Field Trip 🦋 🦋**Homer Hansen**

Friday, April 27

Departure: 7am

Rating: 3

Return: 3pm

Cost: \$45

Warblers are challenging to identify and Homer is not only knowledgeable; he can help you to master this skill. You'll visit appropriate habitats, and with Homer's skill, you will soon be able to keep up with the best. Species that might be seen include black-throated gray, Nashville, Grace's, Lucy's, Virginia's, and yellow warbler, painted redstart, common yellowthroat, and yellow-breasted chat. Box lunch included. Homer will be presenting a workshop on Thursday afternoon where he will go over the basics of warbler ID. We recommend attending this workshop in preparation for this field trip.

Armchair Birding 🦋 ♿**Julie Wills**Thursday, **Friday**, Saturday, Sunday, April 26, **27**, 28, 29

Departure: 8am

Rating: 5

Return: 10am

Cost: Free

Let the birds come to you. Bring your favorite camp chair, binoculars, a little refreshment, and just enjoy birding as the hours slip by. We will only have to walk a short distance on the Day Use Accessible Trail to a spot where feeders bring the birds up close. A knowledgeable guide will help identify species. The area is open for birding at any time but the guide will only be available during these hours. Donations to help cover feeder costs are appreciated.

Birding by Bike 🦋**Victoria Norton, Randy Victory**

Friday, April 27

Departure: 8am

Rating: 3

Return: 11am

Cost: \$30

The most popular sport of eco-tourists is birding; the second is biking. With the high cost of gas and the strong desire to get out into nature, bikes are the natural solution. Back by popular demand, the park's biking guru, Randy Victory, will lead the way while Victoria points out the avian sites. You cover more ground yet the bike is unobtrusive to wildlife. The trip takes you a few miles on paved trails and the dirt trail to Tavaschi Marsh. You should be in good physical condition. Bring your own bike. All participants are required to wear a helmet.

Ecology Walk from Tuzigoot National Monument ★ 🚗 **John Lewis**

Friday, April 27

Departure: 8am

Rating: 4

Return: noon

Cost: \$10 (transportation on own)

This walk leaves from the Tuzigoot National Monument parking lot.

Tavaschi Marsh is one of the few fresh water marshes in Arizona. It is a critically important habitat for birds and other wildlife. Join the National Park Service for an ecology tour to this unique wildlife sanctuary. We will visit several different plant communities: grassland, mesquite bosque, cottonwood riparian habitat, and the marsh. We will do casual birding along the way. This is a strenuous walk with many stops. Bring water and hiking boots that you don't mind getting wet. Meet at 8am in the lower parking lot at Tuzigoot National Monument, a short four-mile drive from the festival site.

Botanical Walk ★**Patty West**

Friday, April 27

Departure: 2pm

Rating: 2

Return: 4pm

Cost: \$10

A guided walk to identify many of the riparian and grassland species of plants and flowers found in the park. Learn arid plants' secrets to survival and the challenge of invasive species. If the rains favor us, we could even experience a wealth of wildflowers. Please prepare for warm afternoon weather.

Friday Workshops & Seminars

Workshops and seminars have a fee involved and require registration. Both are held in the Studio located in the far end of the park, unless noted otherwise. Check in for all workshops at the registration tent. Participants will be shuttled to and from all workshops/seminars. There is no parking at the Studio. Restroom facilities are located in the building.

Meet at the shuttle stop in the parking lot of the River Day Use Area near the Aviary 15 minutes PRIOR to the seminar or workshop.

Wildlife Photography ★**Tom Whetten**

Friday, April 27

8am - 9:30am

Location: Cabin

Cost: \$10

Tom will teach us the basics of using digital photography to capture the wildlife we enjoy. Although Tom uses a SLR camera, all types of camera users will benefit from his expertise. His patience and wit makes this class fun for anyone, amateur or experienced photographers alike. See Saturday's schedule for his photography trip into the wild to utilize the skills you will learn.

Having Fun with Nature Photography ★**Nancy Bell**

Friday, April 27

10am - 11am

Rating: 5

Location: Studio

Cost: \$10

Join our keynote presenter, Nancy Bell as she focuses on all the fun folks can have with photography right around their homes, just like she does around their mountain home – photographing the mule deer, rodents, flowers, bears and, of course, the birds

Lunch & Learn: "Help! I've fallen and can't get up!" **Carol Conti**

Friday, April 27

11:30am – 1:30pm

Location: Studio

Cost: \$20

The Lunch & Learn Series is designed to provide you with an intense, skill oriented presentation over the lunch hour, so a box lunch will be provided. Be sure to pick up your lunch and a drink at the Aviary before boarding the shuttle to the Studio.

Do you know what to do when you find a baby bird that's fallen out of its nest? Carol is a licensed rehabilitator who can give you the advice you need to make a good decision. Other animals will be covered in this informative and entertaining talk as well. We should all learn the correct thing to do for our feathered, or not so feathered, friends.

Reptiles ★

Friday, April 27
2pm – 3pm

Sandra Schenone

Location: Studio
Cost: \$5

We often come across reptiles of all sorts on our birding expeditions. Sandra will give you some interesting facts that will make those encounters even more enjoyable. She will have live specimens and a lively message. Find the delight in all Nature's critters by attending her workshop. Sandra comes to us as a volunteer at Boyce Thompson Arboretum and is the Supervising Animal Technologist/Training Coordinator in the Department of Animal Care & Technologies at Arizona State University.

Flycatchers

Friday, April 27
3:30pm – 4:30pm

Homer Hansen

Location: Studio
Cost: \$5

Identification of flycatchers is one of the great challenges of birding. This presentation will focus on characteristics, behaviors, and other clues for the identification of flycatchers and will be useful for the expert and beginner alike. Both visual and audio presentations of flycatcher traits will be given for those really interested in learning about flycatchers. You may want to sign up for Homer's field trip on Saturday.