

## Thursday Field Trips and Walks

### Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival Thursday April 26, 2012

*Today we are featuring educational opportunities. We invite local students to join us at the park to learn about their natural world. When on your trips, be sure to pack out what you pack in and a little more. Enjoy the day and take the time to reflect on what you can do to help Mother Earth.*

**All walks and field trips leave from the River Day Use area unless otherwise noted. Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to departure and check in with the trip leader at the Aviary.**

#### **Fossil Creek Field Trip**

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 6am

Rating: 4

#### **Scott Woolbright**

Return: 3pm

Cost: \$45

This trip visits one of the most unique travertine dominated streams and riparian areas in Arizona. After almost 100 years, flows were restored to the creek by Arizona Public Service when the company agreed to decommission two small hydropower facilities. It is once more a vibrant stream hosting native fish. The trip itself is two hours by van with a total of 30 miles of rough roads but spectacular scenery. Expect a typical suite of riparian birds in early spring, some uneven terrain hiking, and possibly hot sun at times. Box lunch included.

#### **Sycamore, Mingus & More**

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 6am

Rating: 4

#### **David Moll**

Return: 3pm

Cost: \$45

This will be a hard-hitting day of birding. First we travel to Sycamore Canyon, one of our vast wilderness areas with the Sycamore Creek flowing into the Verde River that offers a rare watering hole for many species of birds. Travel is along a dirt road with a hike down to the riparian canyon. Afterwards, we'll drive back out and up Mingus Mt. to continue the birding adventure. By visiting two completely different environs in one trip, you will have the opportunity to bring home a long list of birds. David is one of our most popular guides and will help seek out those elusive species. This should be one spectacular birding trip. Box lunch included.

#### **Condor Caper – the Grand Tour**

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 6am

Rating: 2

#### **Chris Parrish & Randy Miller**

Return: 5pm

Cost: \$90

This is our "Grand" Tour - an all day trip to Grand Canyon National Park on a luxury bus to see the California condor. That's not all. We will be having a gourmet lunch at the beautiful, historic El Tovar restaurant. You travel up the Mogollon Rim onto the Colorado Plateau and along the base of the San Francisco Peaks, the highest point in Arizona. Naturalist, Randy Miller will be along to narrate the natural and geologic landscape. Chris Parrish from the Peregrine Fund will be your host for the Condor viewing. Don't miss this awesome trip. It's a no hassle way to see the condors at the canyon.

**Grand Canyon Geology****Paul Lindberg**

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 6am

Return: 5pm

Rating: 2

Cost: \$90

We will join the Condor trip on the "Grand" Tour - an all day trip to Grand Canyon National Park on a luxury bus and a gourmet lunch at the beautiful, historic El Tovar restaurant. You travel up the Mogollon Rim onto the Colorado Plateau and along the base of the San Francisco Peaks, the highest point in Arizona. Geologist, Paul Lindberg will be along to explain the geologic landscape. Once there, the groups will split up and you will get a private presentation. Paul interprets the unique geology of the Canyon with a perspective that makes it interesting and understandable.

**Tavasci Marsh Field Trip**  **Doug Von Gausig**

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

Departure: 7am

Return: 11am

Rating: 4

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**  **Bob Miller**

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.

**Oak Creek Canyon and Briar Patch Inn**  **Dena Greenwood**

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 7am

Return: 1pm

Rating: 3

Cost: \$50

Upper Oak Creek Canyon offers different varieties of birds than we see in the valley and the scenery is spectacular. We will be birding with one of our best guides in an exclusive private area along Oak Creek at the Briar Patch Inn. First comes the birding then the Inn will serve us a special buffet brunch at 9:30am. Temperatures in the upper canyon can be very cool in the mornings, so bring warm layers. Birds to look for include the dipper, black-throated gray and Virginia's warbler, and painted redstart.

**Special Field Trip with Keynote** 🦋 🦋

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 7am

Rating: 3

**Chuck & Nancy Bell****Host: Phyllis Kegley**

Return: 2pm

Cost: \$60

Our keynote speaker will take you on a very special trip to Page Springs. Chuck is a world traveler birder and knows how a tour should be. Part of the Lower Oak Creek Important Birding Area, this trip will take you to one of the locals' favorite hot spots. A favorite hangout for birds and birders alike, Bubbling Ponds has been a project of the Northern Arizona Audubon with trails, invasive plant species eradication, and habitat restoration. A very special lunch will await you after your morning of birding. We are limiting the number on this trip so sign up early for this special one-on-one.

**Armchair Birding** 🦋 🦋

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

Departure: 8am

Rating: 5

**Anita MacFarlane**

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 accessible Canopy 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.

**Celebrating Arizona's Early Naturalists** 🦋

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 9am

Rating: 5

**Park Staff**

Return: noon

Cost: \$25

As we celebrate Arizona's Centennial, we want to look back to the beginning when the territory was new ground. New species were found here that had not been recorded before. The early naturalist who sought to find and document this new plants and animals were often also the camp doctors at military forts. We will visit *Fort Verde State Historic Park* to learn about these now famous men who opened the door to learning about the unique environments and species of the Arizona Territory.

**Water to Wine I (First Trip)** 🦋 🦋

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 9am

Rating: 4

**Richard Lynch****Victoria Norton**

Return: 1pm

Cost: \$100 Add a Lunch: \$10

This is an adventure trip focusing on water, birding and ending with wine tasting. *Sedona Adventure Tours* is hosting this river trip on the Verde River to *Alcantara Winery*. The staff will pick you up at the park and take you to the launch area. An hour in your safe and stable Ducky Kayak will bring you to the winery, where you will be greeted by one of our expert birders who will lead you to some great birding. Eagles fly through this area and most riparian species can be seen. Box lunches from Grasshopper Grill will be available for you at an additional cost of \$10 (order when you register). Lunch will be delivered at the winery. You will be issued a \$20 gift certificate that can be used toward the wine tasting or a purchase at the winery. Normally, you would pay a lot more for this trip, so we want to thank Richard and *Sedona Adventure Tours* for their support.

**Water to Wine II (Second Trip)** 🍷 🍷

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 11:30am

Rating: 4

**Richard Lynch  
Victoria Norton**

Return: 3:30pm

Cost: \$100 Add a Lunch: \$10

Same as above only it's the second time around. If you can't get on the first trip (or you're not an early birder), we will do it again just for you. Box lunches from Grasshopper Grill will be available for you at an additional cost of \$10 (order when you register). Lunch will be delivered at the winery. You will be issued a \$20 gift certificate that can be used toward the wine tasting or a purchase at the winery.

**First Class on the Verde Canyon Railroad** 🚂

Thursday, April 26

Departure: Meet at RDU 11:30am

Rating: 5

Location: Verde Canyon RR Station, Clarkdale.

**Randy Hale**

Return: 5pm

Cost: \$85

*We will meet at the RDU at 11:30am to arrange carpooling to the station. The Verde Canyon Railroad helps sponsor this adventure. The Railroad reserves the right to change times of departures and arrivals. Please check for any changes at check-in.*

The Verde Canyon is only accessible by railroad or hiking, but why do it the hard way? You deserve to go first class! The train leaves the station at 1pm. Travel through the canyon in a luxury train car furnished with soft couches while munching on treats. You may decide to join local naturalist Randy Hale on the open gondola car where he points out the natural and man-made features along the way. Randy really knows his raptors. Black-hawk and bald eagle nest in the canyon and often greet the train. Two hours later the train turns around in Perkinsville near a heron rookery. The ride back through the canyon gives you a second opportunity to spot wildlife and, of course, birds.

**Verde River Sunset Float** 🍷 🚣 🌍

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 2pm

Rating: 3

**Richard Lynch  
Geoffrey Bland**

Return: 8pm

Cost: \$100

*-Meet at Beasley Flats in Camp Verde. Directions will be provided.*

Cruising down the Verde River in a "Ducky Kayak" is a blast. Doing it at sunset is even better. You will discover a whole new world while gliding down the serene waters of the Verde River, the only 'Wild & Scenic River' in Arizona, in your safe and stable Ducky Kayak. The Verde River is an incredible wilderness of spectacular canyons with a multitude of wildlife. No experience is necessary for this safe and relaxing float down the gentle waters of the Verde. Your guide will assist you with basic paddling techniques and *Sedona Adventure Tours* will provide all of the gear you need to make this a truly enjoyable, memorable, and safe adventure. Total time on the river is 2 to 2.5 hours covering about 5 miles. Check-in at 3:00 PM at Beasley Flats in Camp Verde for a 4:00 PM launch. Bring sunhat, sunscreen, sunglasses, camera in a Ziploc water proof bag. Dress appropriately for the weather and the time of year. *Sedona Adventure Tours* will provide a guide, boats, paddles, personal flotation device (PFD), splash pant, transportation to put-in, snacks, beverage. We will supply a birder to go along and help with identification.

**Decadent Dessert Social and Dedication of Tuzigoot IBA  
Hosted by Jay's Bird Barn**

Thursday, April 26

Time: 3:30pm - 5pm

Cost: Free

It's time to set back and reflect on the day while spoiling your dinner. Sometimes it's good to have dessert first. We will also be celebrating the dedication of Arizona's newest IBA. The Tuzigoot IBA encompasses Peck's Lake, Tavasci Marsh, and the Verde River Greenway. Hosts include Arizona Audubon, the National Park Service, Arizona State Parks, the Arizona Game & Fish Department, Cities of Cottonwood and Clarkdale, and Freeport/MoRan.

**Owl Prowl** 

**Bob Miller**

Thursday, April 26

Departure: 7pm

Rating: 2

Return: 8:30pm

Cost: \$15

We will be prowling our way around the park in an attempt to spot the great horned owl, the barn owl, and perhaps the western screech owl. They have all been seen here in the past. Bring along a flashlight as well as your binoculars.

## Thursday 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.**

### **Birding Basics Seminar**

Thursday, April 26  
8am – 11am

**Eric Moore**

Location: Studio  
Cost: \$15

Here are the consequential ABC's for the beginner birder. You will gain knowledge of the basic techniques of field identification, an increased understanding of birds, and learn how to use binoculars and spotting scopes. The class packs in a lot of information in only three hours. Eric Moore, owner of Jay's Bird Barn in Prescott, shares his birding enthusiasm and expertise.

### **Lunch & Learn: Bird Sounds and Song**

Thursday, April 26  
11:30am – 1:30pm

**Doug Von Gausig**

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.*

Doug will help you train yourself to listen as a means of locating and identifying the birds. His experience with recording and studying bird songs and calls has given him an advantage when birding. Let him teach you what you should know to improve your birding skills. He has recorded bird and other animal sounds that you can enjoy on his website at [naturesongs.com](http://naturesongs.com).

### **Binocular Basics**

Thursday, April 26  
2 pm - 3pm

**Eric Moore**

Location: Studio  
Cost: \$5

Take the mystery out of selecting and buying binoculars and spotting scopes. What does a Diopter do? What does 8x32 or 10x42 mean exactly? Learn why field of view, eye relief and brightness are important factors in choosing the right optic for you. Do you really need a spotting scope? Is a \$500 pair of binoculars really better than a \$200 pair?

### **Watching Warblers**

Thursday, April 26  
3:30pm – 4:30pm

**Homer Hansen**

Location: Studio  
Cost: \$5

Watching warblers is a truly satisfying experience. This presentation will focus on characteristics, behaviors, and other clues for the identification of warblers and will be useful for the expert and beginner alike. Both visual and audio presentations of these diverse birds will enchant you and help with your identification skills. You may want to sign up for Homer's field trip on Friday.