



# Arizona Field Ornithologists

Studying Arizona Birds

Summer 2010

Volume 1, Issue 2

## AZFO STATE MEETING 8-10 OCTOBER 2010

Our fourth annual state meeting will be held at Prescott College in Prescott. We invite both members and nonmembers to attend this enjoyable and educational event. Saturday's program will feature several presentations on Arizona's birdlife and field research in the state, and reports and future plans for the many AZFO activities. An evening dinner will highlight Carl Tomoff, Professor at Prescott College, as keynote speaker. Tomoff, who has four decades of field experience in Arizona and teaches classes in Environmental Studies. Friday afternoon and Sunday morning will be devoted to workshops and mini-field expeditions to lesser known birding areas in and around Prescott.

For more information on the programs, locations, directions, and preregistration on line or by mail go to: [http://www.azfo.org/annual\\_meetings/2010/meeting\\_2010.html](http://www.azfo.org/annual_meetings/2010/meeting_2010.html). The meeting registration deadline is 25 September.

### What's new at AZFO:

- AZFO to begin awarding grants.
- State Meeting 8-10 October
- AZFO Workshops.
- Journal Article. [Bird Species Added to the Maricopa County, Arizona List since 1996](#)

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## SPRING SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS

The above normal precipitation that Arizona received during mid-winter provided an abundance of food, cover, and especially water for spring migrants and returning breeders. The nesting season began early for many resident desert breeders, but in general the bulk of migrants appeared to be several weeks behind schedule with few reports of high concentrations. One noteworthy breeding event was the unprecedented numbers of nesting pairs of **Lawrence's Goldfinches** in northwestern Maricopa Co. at the Hassayampa River Preserve and along lower Morgan City Wash near Lake Pleasant. This species nests very irregularly in Arizona with the last reported in 2005. Another



Green Kingfisher - March 2010, Hassayampa River Preserve, Maricopa Co. Photo/Brendon Grice

significant find at the same Preserve was a long-staying female **Green Kingfisher**, an unexpected first for Maricopa Co.

Several species of casually reported gulls, terns, and shorebirds were discovered this spring. These included an adult **Western Gull** at the Glendale Recharge ponds (Maricopa) that provided a possible first confirmed record for that county and an adult **Mew Gull** at Wahweap on Lake Powell near Page (Coconino Co.). In late May, a **Black**

**Skimmer** and an **Elegant Tern** were at Lake Havasu City (Mohave), with the tern a first for the lower Colorado River Valley.

Another **Elegant Tern** was soon after discovered in Glendale (Maricopa Co.). The rarest shorebird during this period was a **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Willcox (Cochise Co.).

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Mew Gull - April 2010, Wahweap, Lake Powell, Coconino Co. Photo/Shawn Putz

Typically a very casual visitor in Arizona with only about a dozen records, two **Brant** were discovered this spring with one in the Bill Williams Delta/Lake Havasu area (Mohave Co.) and another at Long Lake near Show Low (Navajo Co.), likely a first county record. Another casual but possibly increasing visitor, a singing **White-eyed Vireo** graced the Page Springs Fish Hatchery (Yavapai Co.). Amazingly returning for its eighth consecutive year, a flashy male **Flame-colored Tanager** arrived back on territory in Madera Canyon (Santa Cruz Co.) at the end of March.

For more details about these and other noteworthy photo documented observations, please visit:  
[http://www.azfo.org/gallery/1main/photos\\_recent.html](http://www.azfo.org/gallery/1main/photos_recent.html)

## GALE MONSON RESEARCH GRANTS

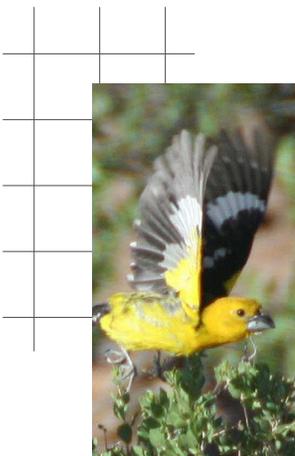
The AZFO is offering financial support to individuals for the purpose of conducting field research that will enhance our knowledge of the status, distribution, identification, and other aspects of Arizona birdlife. We are awarding two \$500 grants annually in honor of long-time ornithologist Gale Monson, often referred to as the "father of modern Arizona field ornithology" ([AZFO Grants Page](#)).

Grants will be awarded based on scientific merit, level of preparation, and financial need. Grant recipients are required to complete the research within one year of receiving an award and to make an oral presentation on their findings at the annual AZFO statewide meeting. Recipients are also strongly encouraged to prepare a manuscript reporting their results and to submit this manuscript for publication, preferentially to *Arizona Birds Online*.

To apply, researchers must complete an application ([AZFO Grant Information page](#)) that includes a maximum 500 word-long description of the project, a statement of how the project will enhance our knowledge of avian life in Arizona, and information on how the award money will be expended and on whether other sources of funding for the proposed work are available. The application package must include a letter of recommendation describing the applicant's qualifications and commitment to Arizona ornithology. Applicants do not have to be associated with an academic institution.

The application deadline is September 1 and funding decisions will be made by October 1. Two-thirds of the funds will be awarded immediately after approval of the research project and the remainder of the funds will be awarded after confirmation that a presentation will be made at the next annual statewide meeting. Grant recipients are required to provide a progress report on their research project within six months of receiving an award.

Send applications (preferably by email) and requests for additional information to: Pierre Deviche, Professor of Environmental Physiology, School of Life Sciences, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-4501; Phone: (480) 965-0726; fax: (480) 965-6899; email: [deviche@asu.edu](mailto:deviche@asu.edu).



Yellow Grosbeak (*Pheucticus chrysopleus*), Stateline Road east of Portal, Cochise County, 05 June 2010, photo by Melvin Moe



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## ROSY-FACED LOVEBIRD CENSUS

The Greater Phoenix Metro area Rosy-faced Lovebird (formerly Peach-faced Lovebird) Census was conducted on 27 February 2010. Approximately 75 participants surveyed 65 designated areas ranging from Glendale, east to Mesa, north to Cave Creek, and south to Chandler. Most of the census area was concentrated around the bulk of the known Lovebird population in Scottsdale, central Phoenix, and Tempe. The size of areas covered varied from entire neighborhoods to single backyards, and counts varied from a single bird to over 100 birds! The total for the day was just over 900 birds, thus exceeding expectations and establishing that a substantial population of Rosy-faced Lovebirds is present in greater Phoenix.

The data from this census will be analyzed and incorporated into a publication on the Rosy-faced Lovebird as an established exotic species in Arizona. The publication and findings will be submitted to the Arizona Bird Committee for evaluation and potential acceptance onto the Official Arizona State Bird List. If accepted onto the Arizona Bird List, the information will be forwarded to the American Birding Association (ABA) Checklist Committee for acceptance onto the ABA Checklist.

The gathering of the above information resulted entirely from the generous assistance of the participants and we sincerely thank all who contributed.

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## SPRING SIGHTINGS NEEDED

Please submit your unusual sightings for the AZFO Seasonal Reports.

The Spring Season has just ended and AZFO welcomes reports of all noteworthy sightings in Arizona made between 1 March and 31 May, including those from North American Migration Counts. We are particularly interested in well-documented reports of rare species, early or late nesting activity, early arrivals or late lingering migrants, irregularly occurring species, unusually high or low concentrations, and birds found in unexpected habitats or areas of the state. Please submit sightings by 15 June so that regional coordinators can compile their reports and include your observations. Sightings for the Summer Season (1 June-31 July) are due 15 August.

The data entry location is: [http://azfo.org/ASPreports/speciesToday\\_list.aspx](http://azfo.org/ASPreports/speciesToday_list.aspx).

Our winter 2009-10 report is being compiled and will be soon be available online.

See [http://www.azfo.org/seasonalReports/report\\_current.html](http://www.azfo.org/seasonalReports/report_current.html) for past reports.

## RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Don't forget to renew your AZFO membership for 2010. We have many exciting events planned for 2010 and including Field Expeditions, newly started AZFO Field Workshops, the October annual state meeting to be held in Prescott and our inaugural AZFO newsletter.

Please continue to support AZFO and keep your membership current by joining online with PayPal at <http://www.azfo.org/documents/membership.html> or sending your tax-deductible 2010 membership dues to our Treasurer, Doug Jenness, at: 4375 E. Rollins Rd., Tucson, AZ 85739. If your postal or email address has changed, please let us know. Thank you for your support!



This Yellow-throated Warbler was discovered at Sweetwater Wetlands, Pima County, by Peter Taylor on 19 May 2010. Photo by Andrew Core



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## UPCOMING FIELD EXPEDITIONS AND WORKSHOPS

**July 23-25 - Return to Winn Falls:** Black Swift search. An ambitious mission to explore a remote wilderness area in an attempt to document breeding evidence for this species (which may or may not be there). Winn Falls is located in the Chiricahua Mountains in extreme SE AZ. Backcountry hiking and camping experience mandatory. **Leader: John Yerger.**

**28 August - Valley of the Sun shorebird identification:** Shorebird ID workshop. Details forthcoming.

**18-19 September - Winchester Mountains (NW. Cochise County).** Unique mid-elevation riparian habitat in a rarely visited se. AZ mountain range. Could be interesting for southbound migrants and local residents. **Leader: John Yerger.**

### AZFO Field Expeditions - NOT your typical birding field trip

So what is the difference between a birding field trip and an AZFO Field Expedition? Field Expeditions are organized with a specific purpose and data-gathering goal in mind. Typically, they will be located in little-known or under-birded areas where the seasonal status of birds is incomplete. Also different from typical birding field trips, most expeditions will be two or more days long and all participants do not remain together. Instead, participants are divided into several teams, each with a qualified leader, which conduct surveys in different areas during the day. Normally, all participants will reconvene during lunch or dinner at a base camp or at other designated locations to review what was discovered.

## GET INVOLVED

*We also encourage your involvement in the following activities:*

- *Write a manuscript on a favorite but little known birding location in Arizona. Contact: Pierre Deviche ([deviche@asu.edu](mailto:deviche@asu.edu))*
- *Assist with entering past noteworthy bird records into our quickly expanding database. Contact: Doug Jenness ([d\\_jenness@hotmail.com](mailto:d_jenness@hotmail.com))*
- *Provide speaker suggestions or assist with planning for our Annual Membership Meeting. The 2010 will be held in October in Prescott. Contact: Doug Jenness ([d\\_jenness@hotmail.com](mailto:d_jenness@hotmail.com))*

