

Questions surround swallow nests at Hard Rock



What appears to be swallow nests at Lake Tahoe Hard Rock. Photo/Elias Klaich

By Kathryn Reed

Swallow nests at Hard Rock Lake Tahoe were there one day and essentially gone the next, according to South Shore residents who documented it with photos.

This could be a big deal because federal law protects swallows.

“If there are eggs or young in those nests, it is illegal to bring down a nest,” Chris Nicolai, regional migratory bird biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Reno, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Right now there is no way to get a permit of removal (of birds) or nests unless for human safety. Depredation permits for swallows would be pretty tough.”

In Nevada, it’s possible to get a permit to take down an inactive nest. This differs from California law where even inactive nests are protected.

“No one is aware of any swallow nests being removed,” Jen Eastwood, spokeswoman for Hard Rock Lake Tahoe, told *Lake*

Tahoe News.

However, a group of friends who had been golfing at Edgewood Tahoe saw what they say is the destruction of swallow nests. This spring they first saw about 80 swallows from the sixth hole.

"I watched the swallows then fly to the exterior of the Hard Rock Hotel and build their nests," Ed Bellow told *Lake Tahoe News*. Two weeks later "I saw two Hard Rock Hotel employees using a power washer to wash down the swallow nests in the area of Hard Rock's valet parking. Keep in mind they were not old nests from last year, as the Hard Rock Hotel repainted to a different color this year. At the time we were there, the swallows were rebuilding those nests that were removed."

While Bellow is a law enforcement officer in California, he does not have jurisdiction in Nevada. He reported the incident to California officials.

Elias Klaich took pictures of what he and Bellow saw.

"I saw them rebuilding nests. I saw (nest) debris on the ground and I saw debris on the side of the building that was freshly painted," Klaich told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Maybe (the Hard Rock) told the contractor to tell their people to do it so they didn't have to be directly involved."

Swallows fall under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

"The law basically is to protect declining populations mostly due to hunting," Nicolai said. "The interpretation is expanding and expanding, so no taking (of these animals) is authorized without a permit."

The making of an adventure dog

By Donovan Webster, Outside

A well-trained dog is the product of its owner's diligent effort and persistence. If you would like to train your dog but are unsure how to begin, consider these recommendations.

Photo: Hannah Dewey/Tandem

About 12,000 years ago, canines came to the fire.

Before long, humans and dogs became very close friends. No one can say exactly where it happened, though it was likely in southern Europe or North Africa. But the terms of the arrangement were simple: The two species would look after one another. Dogs would sniff out and run down game as well as guard the homefront. Man would offer food and shelter. Neither would be lonely.

Since then, it's been man who most often fails to live up to the bargain—not by skimping on kibble, but by allowing his dog to become a do-nothing layabout or even a nuisance. The idea of a dog as purely pet is a 20th-century concept and, frankly, a bad one. Of course, I'm not telling anyone anything they don't already know: Dogs like daily order and work. Hell, they need it. If you're not willing to give a dog a job, whether it's running with you, sitting calmly while you fish, or running behind you while you ski, you should probably stick to having goldfish—or ferns.

But if you're ready to dedicate time to training a dog that's up for adventure, then we've got the drill sergeant you need. Mike Stewart, 58, is a former police officer—he spent seven

years on the force in Oxford, Mississippi, then 18 years as chief of campus police at the University of Mississippi—who's been "piddling around" training dogs since he was a young man. Today, he is widely regarded as one of the best dog trainers in the world. He breeds, trains, and sells British Labradors out of his Wildrose Kennels, a lovely and well-tended farm on 143 acres of fields, ponds, and woods outside Oxford. Stewart's new book, "The Wildrose Way", details how you and your dog can be better in tune with each other in all sorts of situations, from boating to snowshoeing to birding—even just walking along Fifth Avenue in New York. While he trains everything from hunting dogs to diabetic alert dogs, Stewart's favorite pastime these days is training adventure dogs.

Read the whole story

Couples lose thousands on Tahoe wedding deposits

By Sage Sauerbrey, Moonshine Ink

At least 10 couples lost their wedding deposits this March when the man who had claimed to own and reside on the property they booked was evicted following a five-year legal battle. The couples will follow through with their weddings under the new owners of the property, but are not hopeful about getting their deposits back.

Christian Steele, a former physician, author of "Mastering the Power of Life", an ascension teacher, and a Tahoe City resident, had been misrepresenting his ownership of Bear Paw Lodge for five years, profiting from weddings on a property he has not owned since 2010.

According to a deed of sale in the name of Bank of America, Steele lost the Tahoe City lodge in a 2010 foreclosure after defaulting on a \$4 million loan, but Steele said he continued to live on the property until 2015. When four to five years of serial bankruptcy filings finally culminated in his eviction by the Placer County Sheriff's Office on March 17, Steele contacted the couples to inform them he could not honor their reservations. The deposits have not been returned as of April 23, and total somewhere in the range of \$20,000 to around \$60,000, judging from Steele's estimate of \$2,000 to \$6,000 per deposit.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Tahoe Arts Project brings Missoula Children's Theatre's production of "Aladdin" to South Tahoe Middle School's multipurpose room on July 10 at 3pm and 6pm. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. For more info, call 530542.3632 or email tahoearts@aol.com.
- The Bicycle Advisory Committee of the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority will meet July 10 from 9-11am at Lake Tahoe Airport.
- The Fields Advisory Committee of the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority will meet July 15 from 5-7pm at Lake Tahoe Unified School District board room on Al Tahoe Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe.
- There will be a meeting about the Tahoe City Lodge on

July 9 at 6pm at Tahoe City Public Utility District board room, 221 Fairway Drive, Tahoe City.

· There will be an art show at the Round Hill Square from July 10-12, 212 Elks Point Road, Round Hill. The following weekend (July 17-19) it will be at the American Legion, 2748 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

El Nino gets reinforced by cyclones

By Phoebe Sedgman, BloombergBusiness

The El Nino forming across the Pacific has been turbocharged by a series of tropical cyclones that helped to shift the direction of trade winds, potentially adding to warming that's evoking parallels with the record 1997-98 event.

Several cyclones, including a rare storm in the Southern Hemisphere this month, resulted in a strong reversal of trade winds near the equator, Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said on its website on Tuesday. That's set to increase temperatures below the surface, which then may raise sea-surface temperatures further in the coming months, it said in a fortnightly update.

Read the whole story

Veterans resource day in Truckee

There will be a veterans resource day in Truckee on July 13.

People working for Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Granite Bay, have assembled veterans' advocacy groups and community resources to provide veterans with the information to access benefits. Representatives from Nevada and Placer counties veterans service offices will be there to provide information on filing claims with the Veterans Benefits Administration.

Service providers like American Legion and VFW representatives, and community program sponsors that help active duty military, wounded warriors, and military families will be on hand.

The event is at Truckee Veterans Hall, 10214 High St., from 11am-1pm

For more info, call Joel Scott or Adam Pugh at 916.786.5560 .

Presidential hopefuls may want to bet on casino industry

By J.D. Morris, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada is an important state for 2016 presidential candidates, and the casino lobby is trying to make sure its industry is

considered important too.

Geoff Freeman, president of the American Gaming Association, recently sent a letter to candidates arguing that because Nevada is a key battleground state, presidential hopefuls need to recognize the contributions of the state's most dominant industry if they want to succeed here.

Freeman urged the presidential candidates to consult with people who understand gaming and to make appearances at gaming facilities.

Read the whole story

It's official: Latinos outnumber whites in Calif.

By Javier Panzar, Los Angeles Times

The demographers agreed: at some point in 2014, Latinos would pass whites as the largest ethnic group in California.

Determining when exactly that milestone would occur was more of a tricky question. Counting people isn't like counting movie ticket receipts.

The official confirmation had to wait until new population figures were released by the Census Bureau this summer. The new tally, released in late June, shows that as of July 1, 2014, about 14.99 million Latinos live in California, edging out the 14.92 million whites in the state.

Read the whole story

South Tahoe athletes to be memorialized in art

Teacher and student will have their artwork on display at South Lake Tahoe's Champions Plaza.

David Foster at the July 7 City Council meeting was awarded the contract to create the centerpiece sculpture. Mark Allione will design the flags.

Foster is the former chairman of Lake Tahoe Community College's art department, having retired in 2008. Allione is a former student of his.

The plaza was created by the city at Lakeview Commons as a way to honor athletes from the area. The idea came about after the 2014 Olympics – even though Jamie Anderson, Maddie Bowman and Hannah Teter are all from Meyers. And while athletes other than Olympians are likely to be recognized, the winning art piece is called Olympic Flame and is Foster's interpretation of that iconic symbol.

Criteria for those being singled out have yet to be determined.

There is room on the pedestal of Foster's bronze for words that might encapsulate the essence of the plaza.

– Kathryn Reed

Road beat: Scion iA and iM fresh, refined



The sub-compact Scion iA is super fuel efficient. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

New nomenclature means all new cars from Scion. Stodgy is out and fun is in. And these cutting-edge vehicles are from Scion, an inexpensive, high value brand from Toyota. One of the models, the upscale iM is all Scion, but the other model, the iA, is a joint project from Scion and Mazda. Don't get upset as Scion has one other joint product, the FR-S, which is Scion/Subaru. If the FR-S is any indication, the new iA should be fabulous.

So let's start with the iA. Clearly a sub compact in size with

a 101-inch wheelbase and length and width of 172 and 67 inches, respectively, the new iA delivers large. Compared to the original xA, introduced 12 years ago, this new model feels incredibly refined in every way, starting with the stylish new body. No more is it an ugly box with four wheels. The new design is aggressive and sporty to the point you might think under the hood is a fire breathing 300 hp race engine. Besides the aggressive wide mouth snout grille (it has a slight resemblance to the new Mazda Takeri design philosophy), there are three main character lines, one defining the front fenders, another doing the same over the rear and a third above the rocker panel creating some lean muscle with a trim, coke bottle waist.



Specifications

Scion iA

Price \$16,495 to \$17,595 including destination of \$795

Engine 1.5L inline four, DOHC, 16 valves with DI 106 hp @ 6,000 RPM

103 lb-ft of torque @ 4,000 RPM

Transmission

Six speed manual

Six speed automatic

Configuration

Transverse front
engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 101.2 inches

Length 171.7 inches

Width 66.7 inches

Height 58.5 inches

Track (f/r) 58.9/58.5 inches

Ground clearance 5.5 inches

Weight (m/a) 2385/2416
pounds

Fuel capacity 11.6 gallons

Trunk capacity 13.5 cubic
feet

Passenger volume 85.9 cubic
feet

Wheels 16X5.5 inches

Tires 185/60X16 inches

Steering lock to lock 2.84
turns

Turning circle 32.2 feet

Performance

0-60 est 9.2 seconds

Top speed over 100 mph

Fuel economy

EPA rated
(manual//automatic) 31/41/35
mpg//33/42/37 mpg
city/highway/combined. iA
should meet those numbers

Scion iM

Engine

1.8L DOHC, 16 valve inline
four cylinder 137 hp @ 6,100
rpm

126 lb-ft of torque @ 4,000
rpm

Transmission

Six speed manual

Seven speed CVT

Configuration

Transverse front
engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 102.4 inches

Length 170.5 inches

Width 69.3 inches

Height 55.3 inches

Ground clearance 5.5 inches

Track (f/r) 59.6/59.3 inches

Passenger volume 90.4 cubic
feet

Cargo capacity 20.8 cubic
feet

Fuel capacity 14 gallons

Weight (m/a) 2,943/3,031
pounds

Steering lock to lock 2.59
turns

Turning circle 35.4

Tires 225/45X17 inches

Co-efficient of drag 0.30

Performance

0-60 mph est 8.7 seconds

Top speed over 100 mph

Fuel economy (m//a)
27/36/31//28/37/32 mpg
city/highway/combined. It
should meet or exceed those
numbers

Don't get too excited as it gets a super efficient direct injected 1.5L inline, DOHC, 16 valve four banger with all but a 106 hp at 6,000 rpm and 103 pounds of peak twist at 4,000

rpm. It's connected to the front wheels via one of two six speed trannies, a manual or an aggressive lock-up torque converter unit. The early and quick lock up makes the tranny more efficient. It also has tall gearing especially in fifth and sixth gear giving it very long legs.

While no exact performance numbers were extracted in my 100 mile drive from Santa Cruz back to San Francisco, it would be fair to estimate 0-60 mph times in the high eights to the low nines which is at least a full second better than my last xA and closer to the top of subcompacts and slightly better than most compacts.

But maybe the bad news is the small 11.6 gallon fuel tank, but don't fret, this iA averaged 38.3 mpg during that 100 miles of aggressive driving. Range equates to well over 400 miles which is well beyond most humans. That's even pushing into hybrid territory even though I couldn't find any hidden secondary electric power system anywhere. EPA rates the iA at 31/41/35 for the manual and a better 33/42/37 for the auto. Aggressive programming, early lock-up and ultra tall top gear ratios do pay dividends. RPMs drop to about 2,100 rpm at 70 mph.

Driving characteristics are impressive. Suspension is torsion beam semi independent in the rear and MacPherson struts up front, pretty standard in subcompact cars. But don't expect a subcompact type driving performance and it shows in the drive. Aside from the noticeable quiet, the ride and handling is certainly top of the class and equals cars substantially more expensive. Steering is also very quick at 2.84 turns lock to lock and the turning circle is a go-kart like 32.2 feet. One other point adding to iA's performance, fuel economy and handling is its low curb weight of 2,416 pounds with the automatic. Subtract only 31 pounds for the manual.

However, the first thing that you will notice aside from its great looking upscale design will be by your backside. While leather is not an option, the quality of the seats will be

readily noticeable once you are ensconced as they seem to form around you and provide great support with perfect foam densities.

If there is any complaint in the interior, it's the legibility of the ancillary gauges. They are too small and need more illumination. Everything you need is there, including a tach, but they are difficult to read except for the big round speedo which is front and center. One other note is the high quality of the appointments and most materials are soft touch. Trunk is a huge 13.5 cubic feet.

iA is basically sold one way, there are no factory options. Everything is standard like full power except the seats. Cruise, a great sound system, seven-inch display screen, Bluetooth, voice recognition, a pre-collision safety system, tilt telescopic steering wheel, TPMS and even a first aid kit and visor vanity mirrors are standard. Price for the manual is about \$15,700 and the auto is \$16,800. Add \$795 for destination. That's it. All you have to do is pick a color. Is there any rub? A slight one in that the standard alloys at 16X5.5 inches and the rubber is 185/60X16. The wheels are sharp looking, but if they were to offer an option it would be nice to see even a dealer installed upgrade to say a 17X6.5 or 17X7 inch alloy and 205/50X17rubber. It might even improve its already substantial handling and give it a more aggressive look. As with the iM below it is expected in dealer showrooms on Sept. 1.



Scion iM, a quality affordable AAV

While the iA and iM have almost identical dimensions as you will see, they are totally different cars with no relationship other than they are both motor vehicles with a Scion badge. Wheelbase of the iM is only an inch longer than the iA at 102 inches, but its length is actually an inch shorter at 171 inches. Remember the new iM is a hatchback; no trunk. But there are 21 cubic feet of cargo volume behind the second row of seats.

If the new iM design looks a bit familiar, don't think you are hallucinating, it does and that vehicle is the RAV4. If you study the iM's shape it has an almost identical window line, roof line, shoulder and character line and a nearly identical front end. The iM is almost a RAV4 redone to look sleeker (coefficient of drag is a very low 0.30 and sportier while offering utility and fuel economy with a good level of performance and handling.

Powering the iM is a powerful 1.8L 16 valve, DOHC inline four cylinder engine of 137 hp at 6,100 rpm and 126 pounds of twist at 4,000 rpm. It drives the front wheels through a seven speed CVT automatic. While its gear ratios are infinite, under full throttle you can detect it acting like a seven speed geared tranny as it accelerates up to its peak hp rpm and drops to about 5,000 rpm and do it all over again as if it upshifted. A CVT will normally accelerate to near peak hp rpm and then remain there as tranny ratios infinitely numerically lower themselves as the vehicle accelerates. Zero to 60 mph should be in the high eights.

EPA rates the new iM at 27/36/31 for the six speed manual and 28/37/32 for the CVT. During my 100 mile road trip of aggressive hilly driving with more than half a dozen full throttle passes the iM averaged 32.0 mpg or right at the EPA combined rating. And there were a few miles in downtown San Francisco. With the engine spinning just 2,100 rpm at 70 mph, highway fuel economy might be a bit better than advertised. Fuel tank is a larger than average 14 gallons.

Scion has put some high tech quality features in this small compact like double wishbone rear suspension along with the MacPherson front struts. Wheels and tires are big and beautiful 17X7 inch alloys shod with super wide (for this class) 225/45 series tires. They are not just calling it sporty, the data says it is. Besides having an extremely refined overall drive (very quiet and smooth), it also has oodles of cornering power. You want more? Steering is radically quick at 2.59 turns lock to lock. I can see a new class of SCCA type of race car here. It even comes standard with stabilizer bars front and rear.

Ride quality was excellent as this Scion is dialed in just right, plenty of sport without the punishment. Turning circle is a tight 35 feet.

Inside is another quality interior. If I liked and praised the

seats in the iA, the iM cloth seats are even better for the same reasons and they feel a bit larger. They feel like they were custom design for my backside. Materials are mostly soft touch. It does have a real two holer dash with a big speedo and tach. For a vehicle just one half an inch beyond 170 inches, 69 inches wide and just 55 inches tall it has a huge amount of volume with 90 cubes in the passenger area and 21 cubes in the cargo area. That is the volume of a midsize sedan.

Pricing is \$18,460 for the manual and just \$19,200 for the CVT plus \$795 for the boat ride from Japan. As with the iA, there are no factory options. Your choice becomes paint color and transmission. Get the auto and then pick a color (Electric Storm Blue). As with the iA, everything is standard, right down to the heated power mirrors with LED turn signals and back up camera. Everything standard in the iA is also standard here plus a driver knee airbag. Both vehicles do have some dealer installed systems such a NAV and there is a body kit for the iM to make it even sportier. Both are a lot of car for the money.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.