

THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society

April 2004

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 8

COMING EVENTS

BOARD MEETING

DATE: April 13, Tuesday

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

PLACE: Mountain West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

APRIL PROGRAM

DATE: April 19, Monday

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: First Presbyterian Church, 521
Lakeside

PROGRAM: "Issues in Forest Management
and the Idaho Forest Practices Act".

SPEAKERS: Jim Colla, Forest Practices Act
Coordinator for Idaho Department
of Lands.

EARTH DAY FAIR

DATE: April 24, Saturday

TIME: 10:00 a.m - 3:00 p.m.

PLACE: Harding Center on 15th Street
Volunteers needed to help at our booth
Let Lynn Sheridan know if you can help

MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

DATE: May 8, Saturday

TIME: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: Mica Bay, Coeur d' Alene Lake
See program article

CENTURY COUNT

DATE: May 30, Sunday

TIME: Dawn to Dusk

ACTIVITY: We will be out to count 100+ bird
species in Boundary County. This will
involve an overnight stay at The Nature
Conservancy's Ball Creek Ranch on the night
of May 29th and 30th. Logistics require that
you register for this trip (There are beds for
only 10 people so reserve yours early or plan
to bring a sleeping bag) Trip leaders: Lisa
Hardy 682-4808 and Shirley Sturts 664-5318.
We would appreciate knowing how many are
interested in this trip. Please let us know by
April 20 if you plan to take part.

Visit our website: www.cdaudubon.org

MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

MAY 8, 2004



Fuertes' Eastern
Bird Collection

The Coeur d' Alene chapter will celebrate Migratory Bird Day at our "Adopted Wetland", Mica Bay, on May 8, 2004 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Beth Paragamian, a Watchable Wildlife specialist, will join members that Saturday morning.

Highlighting the activities will be the dedication of an informational sign, "*Wetlands—Who Needs Them?*" Lake City High School artists, Larina Helm and Erick Fenenbok, created the lovely depiction of Mica Bay and its native flora and fauna. Our

chapter's education committee developed the text.

Other activities for the day will include raffles of various items, including a bluebird house, an Audubon Mountain Bluebird, posters and books. Members will be available with spotting scopes and will conduct bird walks. Many educational materials will be on hand and there will be special activities for children.

Mica Bay is an important wetland hosting many resident and migratory waterfowl. It is home to Bald Eagles, Osprey, Canada Geese, Great Blue Herons, numerous ducks, grebes and songbirds. Mica Bay is approximately 6 miles south of Coeur d' Alene on Highway 95.

Join us May 8 to say hello, do some birding, view the beautiful interpretive sign, and just enjoy spring. Bring a friend.

Kris Buchler and Janet Callen, Education Committee

4TH ANNUAL AUDUBON CHAPTER GARAGE SALE JUNE 5

It is spring house cleaning time! We would appreciate getting any donated items for our upcoming garage sale in June. We are a non-profit organization. Ask for a receipt if you itemize on your taxes. Remember one man's trash is another man's treasure.

BIRD TRACKS



Audubon Members make a difference

SPRING HOUSE CLEANING AT AVONDALE GOLF COURSE

Lynn Sheridan

On March 12th, four of us cleaned 19 old nests out of 25 birdhouses that we had put up on the Avondale Golf Course last year. Some looked well used, others not. From studying the nesting material and nest construction we were able to identify the nests of swallows, chickadees, one possible bluebird and 2 small mammals. A few nests were wet so we may need to do some caulking of roofs. We plan to check them again in the fall.

Thank you Bill, Roland and Dick

SUMMARY OF MARCH BOARD MEETING

Lynn Sheridan

FEBRUARY 10

1) Conservation: Mike Mihelich will write a letter to Gov. Kempthorne protesting the program to let logging companies harvest the largest trees from protected forest lands.

2) We will pay \$20 to join the Fernan Lake Conservation Committee. Roland Craft will be our representative.

3) Idaho Birding Trail Committee: has chosen approximately 25 sites from around Moscow to the Canadian border, to be listed in the future official state guide.

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

4) Education: The long awaited Mica Bay Wetland pictorial sign is nearing completion.

5) Library: We have a new CD and Tape on Owls by Denver Holt added to our collection.

6) Donation: 2 "singing" stuffed birds and 2 "non-singing" bird clocks were donated to the CDA Library as prizes for reading contest.

MARCH 9

1) We need new board members!!! Please let us know if you are interested in becoming a board member.

2) Planning is underway for Migratory Bird Day on May 8, Earth Day on April 24, spring Highway 95 cleanup, and the annual yard sale on June 5.

3) A \$100 honorarium was made to Scott Rae to help with his flycatcher field research. He did a workshop for us on identifying birdcalls and songs last spring.

4) Discussion re: do we need liability insurance? It was tabled till next meeting, while we check on it.

NEW PUBLICATION ON NATIVE PLANTS

A group of botanists from Boise have assembled a terrific new technical reference entitled: "Landscaping with Native Plants of the Intermountain Region" Technical Reference 1730-3, December 2003. BLM, Idaho Native Plant Society and Boise State Univ.

Copies should be available through your local BLM office or contact Roger Rosentreter at: roger_rosentreter@blm.gov.

SAVING REARDON POND March 15, 2004

Good news! We raised the \$50,000 needed for the option to purchase Reardon Pond, now

known as Audubon Lake.

Inland Northwest Land Trust and Spokane Audubon Society wish to thank the many generous donors who contributed. We appreciate the notes of encouragement that accompanied your gifts and also the efforts of the many Audubon chapters throughout Washington and north Idaho that promoted this project to their membership. The Audubon chapters and their members were major contributors to this effort.

Thank you to the Yakima chapter for issuing the challenge early on. Thank you also to Dean Schwickerath for his outstanding work bringing this project to the attention of some major contributors.

As soon as the details in the agreement are finalized and signed, INLT will pay Susan the \$50,000 nonrefundable option money, which will count toward the \$350,000 purchase price.

Once the option agreement is signed, we will have two years to raise the rest of the money to acquire the property or find a conservation buyer.

Again, thank you for helping us to save Audubon Lake so that it will remain outstanding bird habitat for generations to come!

Vicki Sola
Development Director
Inland Northwest Land Trust
35 W Main Ave Ste 210
Spokane WA 99201
phone: 509-462-1239
fax: 509-328-4733
www.inlandnwlandtrust.org



"If I were to make a study of the tracks of animals and represent them by plates, I should conclude with the tracks of man"

Henry David Thoreau

APRIL FIELD TRIPS

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

1. Please register with the leader ahead of time.
 - a. It helps the leader plan the trip.
 - b. You will be informed if the trip time or location is changed or if the trip is canceled.
2. Fees: (to be paid to the driver of the car) \$5.00 - all day trips \$3.00 - 1/2 day trips.
3. We sometimes use radios to communicate between cars. If the radios are used we are asking participants to contribute \$1.00 toward batteries.

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATES: April 14 and 28, Wednesdays

TIME: 8:00 a.m.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

LEADERS: Shirley Sturts, 664-5318 - Kris Buchler, 664-4739

ACTIVITY: We spend about 3 hours twice a month counting birds in the Mica Bay area. Beginner birders are encouraged and welcome to join us.

BROWN BAG BIRDING TRIP

DATE: April 20, Tuesday

TIME: 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.

MEET: 10th Street Entrance to Tubbs Hill

LEADER: Lynn Sheridan - leave messages for Lynn with Kris Buchler 664-4739

ACTIVITY: We will take our first spring hike around the hill as far as time permits. Come help me look for early spring flowers and early migrants.

HOODOO VALLEY

DATE: April 10, Saturday

TIME: 7:30 a.m.

MEET: carpool @ K-mart parking lot, behind Fast Burger

LEADER: Lisa Hardy, 682-4808

ACTIVITY: This is a half-day trip to look for waterfowl and shorebirds plus early passerine migrants. Bring water and snacks.

WILDFLOWER WALKS

Native Plant Society Field Trips

DATE: April 17, Saturday

TIME: 10 a.m.

MEET: Tubbs Hill 10th Street Parking Lot

LEADER: Guided by members of the Native Plant Society

CONTACT: Kris Buchler, 664-4739 or Roland Craft, 457-8894 for information

ACTIVITY: Learn early spring wildflowers from Native Plant Society guides.

And

DATE: April 25, Sunday

ACTIVITY: Visit Fish Trap Lake, WA to study sagebrush habitat. For more information Call Roland Craft, 457-8894.

To volunteer to lead a trip or to suggest places to go, call or email Lisa Hardy 682-4808 or basalt@earthlink.net

BOREAL CONSERVATION FRAMEWORK

A Vision for Protecting Vital
Breeding Grounds for Billions of
North American Birds



Photograph by Wayne Tree

Stretching from Alaska to the Atlantic Ocean, Canada's boreal forest is one of the world's largest forests. It accounts for 25 percent of the earth's remaining intact forests, covers 1.3 billion acres, and is larger than the Brazilian Amazon. With more fresh water than any place on earth, Canada's boreal forest supports some of the largest populations of wildlife such as grizzly bears and wolves, and provides vital breeding grounds for up to a third of North America's land birds and 40 percent of its waterfowl.

In December 2003, the Canadian Boreal Initiative (CBI) announced a landmark vision to protect this global treasure. The Boreal Conservation Framework proposes a new approach to balancing conservation and economic development: the establishment of a network of large interconnected protected areas covering about half of Canada's boreal region, and the

use of cutting-edge sustainable development practices in remaining areas. The Framework reflects an extraordinary alliance of conservation organizations, First Nations, and timber and oil companies who have signed on to the Framework. (Information about the Framework can be found at CBI's web site: www.borealcanada.ca)

While vast tracks of the boreal region remain unspoiled at this point, the release of the Framework comes at a time when development is rapidly escalating and land use decisions in every Canadian province and territory will determine the fate of much of the boreal region within the next three to five years. With over 90% of the boreal under public ownership, a critical next step will be to persuade Canadian governments to play a central role in making the Framework's vision a reality.

Much of the resource development in the boreal is being driven by U.S. consumption. The U.S. is the leading importer of Canadian forest products and oil and gas. Eighty-one percent of Canada's forest products go to the United States, and most of the wood cut in Canada's boreal is used to make paper, including catalogs, junk mail, magazines, and newspapers. And the U.S. buys more of its oil and gas from Canada -- 60% of which is produced from the boreal -- than any other single source.

Of the 298 bird species that have some of their breeding grounds in the boreal forest, at least 40 species of land birds and several species of ducks are already experiencing population declines in part due to habitat loss from logging and oil and gas development.

While American consumption is largely responsible, it also means that American citizens and companies can influence the fate of this global treasure. The boreal is perhaps the greatest forest conservation opportunity left on earth.

An international campaign focused in the U.S. is emerging. The Boreal Songbird Network is a new network of conservation groups that include: the Boreal Songbird Initiative, the National Audubon Society, the National Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the American Bird Conservancy. These groups are working to build a broad base of international support for boreal conservation and the adoption of the Boreal Framework.

For more information on how you can help protect the boreal forest, please go to the Boreal Songbird Initiative website at www.borealbirds.org

The Boreal Songbird Initiative is a new project dedicated to educating bird conservationists and naturalists throughout the United States about the importance of North America's boreal forest to migratory birds.

ABC RELEASES "GREEN LIST"

Reprinted from: ABC "Bird Calls"
November 2003

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has produced a list of all the highest priority birds for conservation in the continental United States and Canada. The new "Green List" builds on the species assessments conducted for many years by Partners in Flight

(PIF) on land birds, expanded to include species of all taxa.

In the past, conservationists have been faced with a plethora of lists, including the PIF Watch List, FWS's Endangered Species List and Birds of Conservation Concern List, as well as other lists for shorebirds, water birds, and waterfowl. The reasoning applied to each of these assessments has differed, and thus, any single list of birds derived from these individual lists has been beset by problems of inconsistency.

Over the last year, PIF has made significant advances in species assessment, resulting in a greatly improved Watch List. ABC has gone a significant step further by taking PIF standards and applying them to all taxa to produce the Green List. This is the first time that a single, consistent set of criteria has been used for all birds in order to produce a comprehensive set of priority species for conservation.

The list is divided into three broad categories. Species classified as being of the Highest Conservation Concern suffer from multiple problems and include many of the birds listed under the Endangered Species Act. Others birds in this category include the Lesser Prairie-Chicken, King Rail, Golden-winged Warbler, and Tricolored Blackbird. The second and third groups are of equivalent concern to each other, but for different reasons. Moderately Abundant Species with Declines or High Threats include Black Scoter, Marbled Godwit, Band-tailed Pigeon, Red-headed Woodpecker, Prairie Warbler, and Painted Bunting - birds that are still found in relatively high numbers, but are declining at an alarming rate. Species with Restricted

Distributions or Low Population Size, covers species for which populations may be stable and threats apparently limited, but are limited in number or range. Reddish Egret, Costa's Hummingbird, LeConte's Thrasher, and Black Rosy-Finch are examples from this group. To view the entire Green List go to:

www.abcbirds.org/greenlist.htm

USING BIRD CODES

Shirley Sturts



ATSP

Photograph by Wayne Tree

Using four-letter bird codes instead of writing down the entire name of a bird is becoming more and more common among bird watchers. Using bird codes is standard practice if you are doing bird surveys for most wildlife organizations and agencies. Birdwatchers often use bird codes in their personal field notes.

It takes some practice to become comfortable using bird codes. Trying to decipher your field notes after a day of birding can be frustrating. You knew what NRWS meant when you wrote it down at 9:00 a.m. but now you are at home in front of your computer making a list of the birds you saw on your field trip and you don't have a clue to what this code stands means.

When you first start using codes it helps to have a code list with you in the field and at home on your desk.

Bird codes are easy to use and the rules are pretty much straightforward. The rules are as follows:

1. If the name of the bird is one word, the first four letters are used, i.e. Mallard = MALL.

2. If the name of the bird is two words, the first two letters of each word is used, i.e. Tree Swallow = TRSW.

3. If the name of the bird is three words, the first letter of the first and the first letter of the second, and the first two of the last word is used, i.e. Northern Hawk Owl = NHOW.

4. If the name of the bird is four words, the first letter of each word is used, i.e. Northern Rough-winged Swallow = NRWS.

However, there are a few birds that have such similar names that they would end up with the same code using these rules. These you have to memorize. For example Bank Swallow = BANS and Barn Swallow = BARS. Other birds not following the rules are Canyon Wren = CYNW, Great Blue Heron = GTBH, and Lazuli Bunting = LAZB.

The band code system really becomes handy and easy with practice and repetitive use. For the most part, especially with North American birds, there are few duplications and these can easily be learned.

If you want to try using the codes a list of bird codes for our area will be available at our next meeting or you can call me 664-5318 and I'll mail you one.

A complete list of North American Bird Codes can be found on:

www.stanford.edu/~kendric/birds/BBLCode.html

SANDPOINT SATURDAY

Lisa Hardy

The first item on our agenda for our 28 February field trip was to relocate the "Common Teal" first reported by Earl Chapin in December. The teal had been found in Bottle Bay, but more recently, had been relocated across Pend Oreille Lake near the Pack River delta.

The "Common Teal" and the Green-winged Teal were formerly considered two separate species, but are now classified as subspecies of a single species, *Anas crecca*. The "Common Teal" or "Teal", as it is known in Europe, is a rare visitor to the east and west coasts of North America.

The male of the Eurasian subspecies (*A. c. crecca*) has a horizontal white stripe between the flank and the back, whereas our homegrown Green-winged Teal (*A. c. carolinensis*) has a vertical white stripe well forward on the flank. These slashes of white are useful field marks at a distance.

After a brief stop at City Beach, where we found our first Tundra Swan of the day, we proceeded on Highway 200 to the Pack River delta. From several pullouts high above the water, we scanned the rafts of waterfowl for our target teal. The rafts were dominated by Gadwall, Common Merganser, Canada Goose and Tundra Swan. Close up against the muddy shore, we found a dozen Green-winged Teal mixed in with a larger group of foraging Northern Pintail. The range was about 700 yards, and we set up our combined optical firepower and gave it, and our eyes, a good workout. The Green-wings, no doubt sensing our interest, arranged themselves in

especially uncooperative poses, such as head-on or rump-on, or even concealed behind their bigger cousins. Though we searched diligently, the sought-after horizontal stripe did not appear, and we headed south to Denton Slough where several of our trip highlights awaited us.

Denton Slough was dotted with American Wigeon, Gadwall, Common Goldeneye, Redhead, and scaup. Kris found a bright chestnut-headed Eurasian Wigeon male. And Ellen found two pair of Red-breasted Merganser mingling with the Common Merganser. For many of us, this was the best view we had ever had of these rare visitors in migration. Bill pointed out that the Red-breasted are far northern breeders, and he and Joan had seen many of them on their summer trips to the Arctic. While we all had a good look at the four birds, they flew off before we had completely sated ourselves on their appearance.

Ellen had picked the Red-breasted males out of the Common crowd by observing their dark breasts. The field guides all show the males as having a brown breast, yet the descriptions ("reddish-brown" or "salmon-pink" with "heavy black streaking"), and even their name, imply a red component that is not typically observed in the field. This appears to be yet one more example of the naming of birds from their appearance as lifeless specimens in the hand, to the confusion of the modern birder.

On our return north, we stopped one more time at the Pack River delta, relocated our little group of Green-wing, and once again arrayed our 5 spotting scopes along the cliff edge. This time, perseverance was rewarded, and we found the horizontal stripe we were

searching for. We were each able to view the Eurasian bird as it turned broadside, showing its unique white stripe in contrast to the nearby American cousins.

Next we drove along Oden Bay, where we found more waterfowl, and a pair of amorous Bald Eagle near their nest. We added to our tally of Common Loon and grebes. At the dock on the west side of the Pack River delta, we found a lone, optimistic Killdeer.

Our last stop was the 3rd Street dock in Sandpoint. We counted more of the waterfowl species that we had observed already that day, and turned up our only California Gull of the trip. As daylight disappeared, we returned to our warm homes after a successful day of late winter birding.

Trip participants: Kris & Ed Buchler, Janet Callen, Roland Craft, Dick Cripe, Bill Gundlach, Lisa Hardy, Ellen Scriven, Jennifer Soules, Paul Wik.

CHAIN LAKES TRIP

MARCH 14

Lisa Hardy

We started our Sunday trip with a visit to the flooded fields by Tamarack Ridge to look for the Tufted Duck. Local farmers flood these hayfields every spring for several months, providing an attractive stopover for waterfowl on their way to their breeding grounds. We estimated 2000 Northern Pintail foraging in the shallows around the periphery of the flooded area. Center stage at the flooded fields were hundreds of ducks of the genus *Aythya* - Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup and Lesser Scaup. Amongst these cousins, we relocated the male Tufted Duck, probably the same individual that was found here last year. The lighting was

superb, a watery sunshine at our backs, and we practiced our skills at distinguishing Lesser and Greater Scaup.

We birded our way down the river to Rose Lake, then stopped next at Lane Marsh. Terry spotted a Northern Shrike by the bridge. At the marsh, we saw our first Wood Ducks of the day, Hundreds of swans foraged at the south end of the marsh. We saw one dead swan, prompting discussion of the lead-poisoning issue, and what possible prevention measures exist. Lane Marsh is famous for its harvest of dead swans each spring. The swans are more susceptible than other waterfowl, because their longer necks allow them to feed deeper in the muck at the pond bottom, and thus they are more likely to ingest heavily contaminated mud. Kris and Roland were filling out site descriptions for the proposed Idaho Birding Trail, and we discussed how the issue of metals contamination from mine tailings in this area should be addressed in the IBT literature. We agreed that it should be addressed, and presented in an educational light.

Waterfowl were sparse on Cave, Medicine and Black Lakes. During our trip, we found most of the waterfowl concentrated in the seasonally flooded areas. At Medicine Lake we found a few dozen Tree Swallows with one or two Violet-greens mixed in. And a small group of Green-winged Teal at the west end of the lake were our only teal for the day.

We finished by backtracking to the Killarney Lake Road, and driving in as far as the boat launch. The flooded fields along the route hosted more swans, pintail and wigeon, as well as the largest concentration of Wood Ducks of the day (16). It

was a good day of transitional birding, moving our mindset out of winter birding and facing us towards the increasing rush of spring migrants in the next few months.

Trip participants: Kris Buchler, Janet Callen, Roland Craft, Dick Cripe, Susan Cross, Christine & Terry Gray, Lisa Hardy, Jenny Taylor.

BROWN BAG BIRDING

3/16/04

Lynn Sheridan

Laura Bayless, Bill Gundlach, Roland Craft and I started up the rocky Tubbs Hill trail, about 12:15. A few gulls cried out, but the woods were quiet. In the grassier parts some flowers were seen: Blue-eyed Grass *Sisyrinchium agustifolium*, Spring Beauty *Claytonia lanceolata*, Yellow Buttercups *Ranunculus*, Glacier Lily, *Erythronium grandiflorum* and the fuzzy leaves of Arrowleaf Balsam *Balsamorhiza sagitta*.

The downed, burned trees from last autumn's firecracker blaze had a carpet of flowers around them. Bill told us the few red berries hanging from a lone bush on the hillside were poisonous. I thought it might be Baneberry.

As we left at 11th St, a Northern Flicker jeered at us for having a birdless search.

Adieu, till we meet again next month.



OBSERVATION POST

2004 Kootenai County Big Year. The chapter website list will be updated weekly with the new birds being seen. Our total to date is 100

Wood Duck, Flooded fields along River Road, west of Catalo, March 9 (Lisa Hardy)

Gadwall, Flooded fields along River Road, March 9 (Lisa Hardy)

Eurasian Wigeon, Lane March, March 7 (Charles Swift)

American Wigeon, Killarney Lake, March 14 (Chapter Field Trip)

Redhead, Flooded fields along River Road, west of Cataldo, March 3 (Lisa Hardy)

Tufted Duck, Flooded fields along River Road, March 9 (Lisa Hardy)

Greater Scaup, Flooded fields along River Road, March 14 (Chapter Field Trip)

Barrow's Goldeneye, Flooded fields along River Road, March 14 (Chapter Field Trip)

Northern Harrier, Flooded fields along River Road, March 9 (Lisa Hardy)

American Coot, Flooded fields along River Road, March 14 (Chapter Field Trip)

Killdeer, Mica Bay, CDA Lake, February 25 (Mica Bay Survey)

Wilson's Snipe, Thompson Lake, March 10 (Jennifer Soules)

Glaucous Gull, Fighting Creek Landfill, March 14 (J. Harry Krueger, South Idaho Birder)

Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Fighting Creek Landfill, March 14 (J. Harry Krueger)

Tree Swallow, Mica Bay, CDA Lake, March 10 (Mica Bay Survey)

Violet-green Swallow, Mica Bay, CDA Lake, March 10 (Mica Bay Survey)

White-breasted Nuthatch, Coeur d'Alene, Home on Harrison Ave., March 8 (Dick Cripe)

Spotted Towhee, Armstrong Hill, CDA, March 10 (Kris Buchler)

Vesper Sparrow, Fighting Creek Landfill, March 14 (J. Harry Krueger)

Birds observed by Steve Lindsay that we have not found yet.

Merlin, Post Falls, January 12

Horned Lark, Rathdrum Prairie, January 4

Brewer's Blackbird, Post Falls, January 12