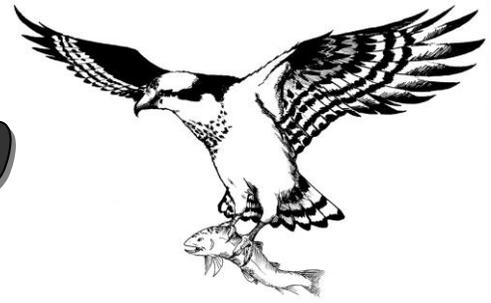


THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society
www.cdaaudubon.org

April 2010

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 8

Articles for the newsletters are welcome. Please submit to the editor, Shirley Sturts at: shirley.sturts@gmail.com by the 15th of each month. All submissions are subject to editing. Thank you and happy reading!

APRIL MEETING

DATE: April 5, Tuesday

PLACE: Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 North Ramsey

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

SPEAKER: Kris Buchler and Audubon members

PROGRAM: Birding Basics Part 2 - A bird watching class

BOARD MEETING

DATE: April 5, Tuesday

PLACE: Mountain West Bank, 125 Ironwood

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

website: www.cdaaudubon.org

BIRDING BASICS - 2010

April 6, Tuesday, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Session II -
Birding in the Field



Eastern Kingbird
Photograph by Bill Linn

More species of birds and their habitats, identification and field marks

Types of binoculars, spotting scopes and costs.

Birding aids such as iPods, CDs and computer programs

Birding with groups and on field trips

Birding etiquette and ethics on trips

Birding opportunities: field trips, seasonal counts and monitoring

BIRDING BASICS 2010 CLASS FIELD TRIP

DATE: April 10, Saturday

TIME: 9:00 a.m. (2-3 hour field trip-bring water and snack.)

MEET: Fernan Ranger Station (Sherman Ave.)

Itinerary: Observe Great Blue Heron Rookery, Bald Eagle nest sites and waterfowl. We'll explore the wetlands of Fernan Lake and listen for marsh birds such as Virginia Rail and Sora. We'll look for forest birds on the road leading to Fernan Saddle.

LEADER: Kris Buchler

Please register at 664-4739 or eagleroost@roadrunner.com

GREEN-COLLAR VS. BLUE-COLLAR

Migrating swans hard at work in the Chain Lakes

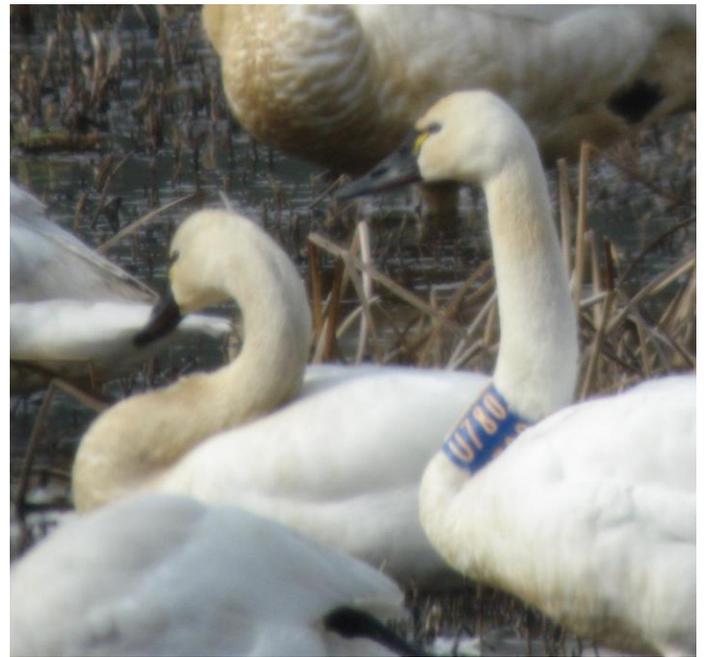
Article and Photographs by Lisa Hardy

Our chapter field trip set out on a blustery Saturday morning (13 March 2010) to discover the state of the swan migration in the Chain Lakes. The day improved as we went along, and we tallied a total of about 5000 swans, a respectable number.



Note the difference in neck posture between the Tundra Swan in front, and the collared Trumpeter Swan in back. The Tundra has the characteristic small yellow loreal patch.

Our first stop was Canyon Marsh, where we found many swans dotted across the flooded fields in noisy swaths. It turned out that over half the day's swans were tallied here. Scanning the thousands of Tundra Swans was cold work as the wind blew in our faces and sapped the warmth from our fingers, but we were rewarded with one of the day's highlights when Bill found a collared swan on the far edge of the field. The collar was white-on-green, not the usual white-on-blue used by the biologists marking Tundra Swans in Alaska, and with further study, we identified the swan as a Trumpeter Swan. The collared adult (O 4H) was accompanied by another adult, and a juvenile.



Tundra Swan at Lane Marsh – the collars look uncomfortable, but they slide freely up and down the bird's neck as it feeds.

While we had been diligently searching for Trumpeters, we would not have picked out these birds without the help of the tell-tale green collar. Once we had identified these three, we were able to study them in comparison to the surrounding Tundras, and several features were apparent. First, they appeared slightly larger, and second, their heads and necks were pristine white in contrast to the Tundras which showed more or less staining. The bill profile and border were rather too subtle field marks at this distance, but another subtle feature, the curvature of the neck, was distinguishable (see photo). The one feature that, in the absence of the handy identifying collar, might have led us to identify these birds as Trumpeters was the gray feathering of the juvenile (see photo). Tundra juveniles may still have gray head and neck feathers, but their body and wing feathers are usually white by this time of year.

We reported the sighting to Martha Jordan of The Trumpeter Swan Society who has forwarded it to the relevant researchers. It turns out that our bird winters at Summer Lake in Oregon, and is one of a group that was captured as a fledgling at Harriman State Park and released at Summer Lake in the 1990's.

Continued on Page 3

SWANS

Continued from page 2

The purpose of the relocation program was to develop a migratory population and it appears to be successful. No one knows where this bird nests in summer, but it is presumed “somewhere in Canada”.



This juvenile Trumpeter shows a mixture of gray and white feathers – a good identification clue at this time of year.

Continuing through the thousands, we picked out two collared Tundras, P849 and K409. P849 had been seen here a week ago, and was banded as an adult female on 20 July 2009 near King Salmon, on the Alaska Peninsula. K409 was banded as an adult male on 23 July 2009 near Bethel, on the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, Alaska.

We then moved on to Killarney Marsh where we found our only dead swan of the day amongst 640 birds, but did not find any collars.

Next was Lane Marsh, where we commented on the unusually low water level, which seemed to be keeping down the number of swans there. Lane Marsh typically hosts more birds than Canyon at peak migration, but on this day we counted 640 swans in a limited patch of marsh, while we had just estimated 3000 swans at Canyon. This is good, because Lane Marsh is heavily contaminated with lead-bearing mine tailings, as is Killarney Marsh, and the fewer swans that stop in either of those two marshes, the better.

As we stood along the overlook at the north end of Lane Marsh, we were alerted by a cacophony of goose calls, and watched in appreciative amazement as thousands of Canada/Cackling Geese flew down river in ragged lines, accompanied by smaller numbers of swans and ducks. By now, the sun periodically streamed through gaps in the clouds, illuminating the parade of waterfowl against the backdrop of the Coeur d'Alene Mountains.

At Lane we found two collars, U780 (see photo) and U439. U780 was banded as an adult female on 27 July 2009 on the Kobuk River Delta in northwest Alaska. U439 was banded as an adult female on 29 July 2009 on the Noatak River Delta in northwest Alaska.

The Schlepp Ranch is just downstream from Lane Marsh, but the outlook for the swans here is much rosier than for the Lane Marsh birds. The Schlepp Ranch conservation easements had relatively low levels of contamination to start with, and are being managed primarily to attract migrating swans from the dangerously contaminated marshes like Lane. We counted 770 swans at Schlepp, two of which bore collars: P798 and U498. P798 was seen the previous week at Canyon Marsh, and was banded as a second year (hatched the year before) male on 16 July 2007 near King Salmon, on the Alaska Peninsula. U498 was banded as an adult female on 27 July 2008 near the Buckland River in northwest Alaska.

A total of 1446 Tundra Swans have been collared in the Alaska program to date. Birds of the K, P and U series show up regularly here; these birds breed in western Alaska. The majority of collars (587) are U series from northwestern Alaska. Another series, T3##, are birds that breed on the North Slope, and because this population winters along the east coast, we are unlikely to see them here.

The Noatak River is a long way from north Idaho. The swans have another 2000 miles or so to go to reach the shallow ponds where they nest. A look at the maps on the Alaska Science Center swan page suggests that the western Alaska breeders largely winter in the interior valleys of northern California. Part of this population returns north in the spring along the Pacific coast, while the birds we see are among a portion that swings sharply inland to northern Idaho and as far east as northern Utah.

Continued on page 4

SWANS

Continued from page

From here, the swans continue northeastward into central Alberta, before veering northwest to their summering grounds in Alaska. Collar numbers are reported to Craig Ely, biologist for the USGS Alaska Science Center, and he notes that our north Idaho "...observations are especially valuable, as we have been collecting blood samples for lead analysis for the past couple of years and it helps to know which populations migrate through your area."

By late afternoon, our tallying was mostly complete. We turned up no or only a handful of swans each at Blue Lake, Swan Lake, Hidden Lake, Black Rock and Mission Slough.

Swans were not the only waterfowl on view, and thanks to Kris for making sure we did not neglect the other species. The peak numbers of Northern Pintail were no longer present, but we found the front-runners of the Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, and Green-winged Teal influxes. We found one Eurasian Wigeon and two Killdeer. Singing Song Sparrows, American Robins and Red-winged Blackbirds gave a spring-like feel to this late-winter day. We flushed up a Red-tailed Hawk, watched a Northern Harrier hunting over the marsh, and spied upon a Bald Eagle atop a nest.

A pullout into a driveway along Highway 3 in order to scope out distant Hidden Lake yielded our best tweety-birds of the day. The home turned out to have a stocked feeder that attracted a steady business from House Finches, American Goldfinches, Dark-eyed Juncos, both Mountain and Black-capped Chickadees, plus a Red-breasted and a White-breasted Nuthatch.

Check back next month for more on the swan migration and the collared swans. The complete species list for our trip can be viewed on the website.

Trip participants:

Kris Buchler, Janet Callen, Roland "Candyman" Craft, Ray and Terry Davis, E.J. Ferguson, Bill Gundlach, Clara John, Adela Sussman, Phil & Judy Waring.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE

FEBRUARY 13, 2010

Bill Gundlach

Five of us met at K-Mart on a very nice morning, and were able to fit into my car in relative comfort for our drive to Post Falls. Our first stop was the church parking lot near the corner of Chase and Prairie. Here we were treated to close-up views of two Eurasian Collared-Dove on a light pole and wire, and I believe this was a first for our three ladies. From this spot we also observed Northern Flicker, European Starling, Black-billed Magpie, American Robin, and House Sparrow.

We then drove numerous streets in this area and added Rock Pigeon and Common Raven, then proceeded further east to the area mostly east of Highway 41. At the railroad near Huetter and Lancaster we saw a flock of twenty white Rock Pigeon feeding near the tracks, which I understand are domestic birds from a local breeder who releases them during the day and they come home in the evening. Along Huetter Road we got some good views of Red-tailed Hawk, including an adult, a juvenile, and a Harlan's adult, and Rough-legged Hawk.

It was a pleasant morning birding, but shy on species. It would have been nice to see some of the other species of note on the prairie such as Horned Lark, Gray Partridge, Ring-necked Pheasant, and American Kestrel, but such was not our luck. Our group consisted of Roland Craft, Jan Severtson, Adela Sussman, Valerie Zagar, and Bill Gundlach.



COUNTY BIG YEAR

Keep track of how we are doing on the County Big Years. Go to:

<http://www.idahobirds.net/reports/idaho/counties/2010countycumulative.html>
and <http://cdaaudubon.org/KootenaiCo2010.htm>

See if you be the first report (last years date) Osprey (March 28), Sora (April 25), Calliope Hummingbird (April 4), Savannah Sparrow (April 5), Brewer's Blackbird (April 24) On our Website you can find a table showing the last 9 years if spring arrival dates. Go To:

<http://cdaaudubon.org/Springarrivals1.htm>

COMING CHAPTER EVENTS

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

May 22, Saturday
leaders Judy and Phil Waring 765-5378
See the May newsletter for details

AUDUBON FUNDRAISING YARD SALE

Date: June 19th, Saturday
Set up June 18, Friday
Time: To be announced
Location: Derek Antonelli's home and garden, Hayden. Save your good throw-a-ways re-usable "junk": furniture, tools, pots, pans, dishes, books, music, and lots of starter plants from our gardens, as we did in the past.
Organizing Committee: Lynn Sheridan - 765-2603, Jan Severtson 667-6209 and Valerie Zagar 819-5115

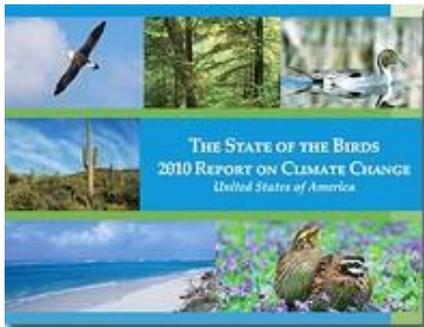
SPRING ON THE BITTERROOT BIRDING TRAIL

Montana Field Trip See more information under "Field Trips"

Plans are being made now!!!

Please let Janet Callen know if you are interested in going on this trip at either jgoldfinch@roadrunner.com or call 664-1085 for details on travel, meals and meeting place.

SECRETARY SALAZAR RELEASES NEW "STATE OF THE BIRDS" REPORT SHOWING CLIMATE CHANGE THREATENS HUNDREDS OF SPECIES



News Release

AUSTIN, TX - Climate change threatens to further imperil hundreds of species of migratory birds, already under stress from

habitat loss, invasive species and other environmental threats, a new report released today by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar concludes. *The State of the Birds: 2010 Report on Climate Change*, follows a comprehensive report issue released a year ago showing that that nearly a third of the nation's 800 bird species are endangered, threatened or in significant decline. "For well over a

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

century, migratory birds have faced stresses such as commercial hunting, loss of forests, the use of DDT and other pesticides, a loss of wetlands and other key habitat, the introduction of invasive species, and other impacts of human development," Salazar said. "Now they are facing a new threat - climate change - that could dramatically alter their habitat and food supply and push many species towards extinction."

The report, a collaboration of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and experts from the nation's leading conservation organizations, shows that climate changes will have an increasingly disruptive effect on bird species in all habitats, with oceanic and Hawaiian birds in greatest peril. In releasing the report, Salazar cited the unprecedented efforts by the Obama Administration and the Department of the Interior to address climate change.

Last week in Anchorage, Alaska, for example, the Interior Department opened the first of eight new climate regional Climate Science Centers that will engage scientists from all of Interior's Bureaus and our partners to research climate change impacts, work with land, natural, and cultural resource managers to design adaptation strategies, and engage the public through education initiatives. The Climate Science Centers will help support a network of new "[Landscape Conservation Cooperatives](#)" that will engage federal agencies, tribal, state, and local governmental and non-governmental partners, and the public in crafting practical, landscape-level strategies for managing climate change impacts on land, natural, and cultural resources within the eight regions.

"Just as they did in 1962 when Rachel Carson published 'Silent Spring,' our migratory birds are sending us a message about the health of our planet," Salazar said. "That is why -for the first time ever- the Department of the Interior has deployed a coordinated strategy to plan for and respond to the impacts of climate change on the resources we manage."

Key findings from the "State of the Birds" climate change report include: Oceanic birds are among the most vulnerable species because they don't raise many young each year; they face challenges from a rapidly changing marine ecosystem; and they nest on islands that may be flooded as sea levels rise. All 67 oceanic bird species, such as petrels and albatrosses, are among the most vulnerable birds on Earth to climate change

Continued on page 6

"STATE OF THE BIRDS"

Continued from page 5

- Hawaiian birds such as endangered species Puaiohi and 'Akiapōlā'au already face multiple threats and are increasingly challenged by mosquito-borne diseases and invasive species as climate change alters their native habitats.
- Birds in coastal, arctic/alpine, and grassland habitats, as well as those on Caribbean and other Pacific Islands show intermediate levels of vulnerability; most birds in aridlands, wetlands, and forests show relatively low vulnerability to climate change.
- For bird species that are already of conservation concern such as the golden-cheeked warbler, whooping crane, and spectacled eider, the added vulnerability to climate change may hasten declines or prevent recovery.
- The report identified common bird species such as the American oystercatcher, common nighthawk, and northern pintail, that are likely to become species of conservation concern as a result of climate change.

"Birds are excellent indicators of the health of our environment, and right now they are telling us an important story about climate change," said Dr. Kenneth Rosenberg, director of Conservation Science at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "Many species of conservation concern will face heightened threats, giving us an increased sense of urgency to protect and conserve vital bird habitat."

"All of the effective bird conservation efforts already taking place to protect rare species, conserve habitats, and remove threats need to be continued," said David Mehlman of The Nature Conservancy. "Additionally, they need to be greatly expanded to meet the threat climate change poses to bird populations."

"The dangers to these birds reflect risks to everything we value: our health, our finances, our quality of life and the stability of our natural world," said Audubon's Glenn Olson. "But if we can help the birds weather a changing climate, we can help ourselves."

"While there is much to be concerned about in this report, we can reduce the impact of climate change by taking immediate action to reduce carbon emissions and find creative conservation solutions to help birds adapt to the changes that are already in process." said David Pashley, vice president American Bird Conservancy.

The report offers solutions that illustrate how, by working together, organizations and individuals can have a demonstrable positive impact on birds in the U. S. Specifically, the report indicates that the way lands are managed can mitigate climate change and help birds adapt to changing conditions. For example, conserving carbon-rich forests and wetlands, and creating incentives to avoid deforestation can reduce emissions and provide invaluable wildlife habitat.

The report is the product of collaborative effort as part of the U.S. North American Bird Conservation Initiative, between federal and state wildlife agencies, and scientific and conservation organizations including partners from American Bird Conservancy, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Klamath Bird Observatory, National Audubon Society, The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, U.S.D.A. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

For more information visit www.stateofthebirds.org.

2010 FIELD TRIPS

BIRDING BASICS FIELD TRIP

DATE: April 10, Saturday

TIME: 9:00 a.m. -See page 1 for details

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATE: April 13, Tuesday (held 2nd Tuesday of each month - times vary depending on month)

TIME: 8:00 a.m.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

LEADER: Shirley Sturts 664-5318

ACTIVITY: We spend about 3 hours once a month counting birds at Mica Bay. Everybody is welcome, including beginning birders. We will help you with identification skills.

Continued on page 7

2010 FIELD TRIPS

Continued from page 6

TUBBS HILL WALK

DATE: April 22, Thursday
TIME: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
MEET: east entrance to Tubbs Hill, 10th St.
LEADER: Lynn Sheridan, 765-2603
ACTIVITY: Birds we have seen in past: Osprey, Red-necked Grebe, Chickadees, Red Crossbill, Winter Wren, Pygmy Owl. Flowers we hope to find: yellow fawn lily, grasswidow, spring beauty, Heartleaf arnica, arrowleaf balsam and serviceberry.

FISHTRAP/HOG LAKE

DATE: April 24, Saturday
TIME: 7:30 a.m.
MEET: K-Mart parking lot, south side.
LEADERS: Roland Craft 457-8894 and Janet Callen 664-1085 and
ACTIVITY: This area is 30 miles south of Spokane We will start with an easy 2-mile hike to Hog Lake. Not only is this an excellent spring birding area, wildflower watching is also very good. Time permitting we will explore other trails in the area. Later in the day we will travel to Turnbull Wildlife Refuge to look for Solo, the Tundra Swan and his family. This can be a full-day or a part-day trip depending on the participant.

ELK RIVER POND AND ELK CREEK FALLS

DATE: May 1, Saturday
TIME: 7:30 a.m.
MEET: Fernan Ranger Station
LEADERS: Janet Callen 664-1085 and Roland Craft 457-8894
ACTIVITY: This area is described at N37 of the Idaho Birding Trail book. We will first stop at the Elk Creek Recreation area for a hike (about 3 miles) to view the three waterfalls that make up Elk Creek Falls. The tallest falls is the highest in northern Idaho with a total drop of 300 feet. Then we move on to Elk River Pond and Reservoir for waterfowl. On our way home we will stop at the Elk River General Store for soft huckleberry ice cream. This will be a full day trip. Bring a lunch and water. Please let us know in advance if you will join us.

SPRING ON THE BITTERROOT

BIRDING TRAIL

MONTANA FIELD TRIP

PLEASE LET JANET KNOW ASAP IF YOU ARE INTERESTED

DATES : May 14, 15, 16 (3 days, 2 nights)
LEADERS : Janet Callen & Kris Buchler
ACTIVITY: We will visit: Lee Metcalf Wildlife Refuge: www.fws.gov/leemetcalf/
 Teller Wildlife Refuge: www.tellerwildlife.org
 Many other stops along the Bitterroot Birding Trail: www.montanabirdingtrail.org/maps/. We'll visit as many sites as time allows.

Lodging and Meals:

There is lodging in Hamilton and Missoula.
Please let Janet Callen know if you are interested in going on this trip at either
jgoldfinch@roadrunner.com
or call 664-1085 for details on travel, meals and meeting place.

CENTURY COUNT

June 5: Bonner County Century Count
 Details will be in the May Newsletter and on our Website. Sign up with Kris Buchler 664-4769

SUMMER BIRDING

Leader Lynn Sheridan- 765 -2603
 These are designed for beginning bird-watchers, but anyone is welcome - Each trip will last approximately two hours, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Tentative dates are:

- **June 17:** Honeysuckle Beach in Hayden
- **July 15:** Cougar Bay and the Nature Conservancy Preserve
- **August 19:** NIC and the Spokane River
- For details/meeting locations call Lynn at 765-2603

RIO GRANDE VALLEY OF TEXAS

Trip in the planning stage - Call Ed Buchler if you are interested, 664-4739

Tentative date: November 6-14 (Saturday through the following Sunday)
 Leader: John Shipley, Kingfisher Bird Tours
<http://www.kingfisherbirdtours.com/>

More information on our Webstie

