

THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society
www.cdaaudubon.org
April 2022 / Volume 31 Number 8

April Events:

Upcoming Program: "Birds are for Everyone"

George Saylor will present the Chapter's April program, to be held via Zoom at 7 p.m. on April 12. His PowerPoint presentation will focus on various aspects of birding, including bird anatomy, bird identification tips, information about the CDA Audubon society, the importance of birds and bird conservation, and other topics. Saylor will include several photos as in this

program, a "rehearsal" for his presentation to be held April 21 at the Coeur d'Alene Public Library.

To join the Zoom Meeting and see "Birds are for Everyone," log on to:



<https://us02.web.zoom.us/j/84391997180?pwd=cFNFRkdhRmcyWFRkNDQqZnJsUnZsdz09>
Meeting ID: 843 9199 7180
Passcode: 691353

Board Meeting

This month's Chapter Board meeting will be held at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 5. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom. Anyone who is interested in joining the board, please call Ralph at 208-660-3220.

Tubbs Hill Bird Field Trip

As part of Earth Day Celebrations, the Coeur d'Alene Public Library is sponsoring a Bird Field Trip up Tubbs Hill on April 23. All interested birders, meet at 9 a.m. at East Trail entrance.

Highway 95 Cleanup

The Chapter's Highway 95 Cleanup will begin at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, April 9, at the Mica Grange. All members are encouraged to come and help beautify our designated 2-mile section of the highway. Please meet at the Grange, 7465 W Kidd Island Dr, to pick up assignments, vests, bags, and some treats. If 16 members show up, this work will take only a couple of hours to complete! Please call or text Ellie at 970-744-0104 to sign up.

Newsletter Editor

Shirley Sturts Retires

Shirley Sturts, one of the first editors of the "The Fish Hawk Herald," has retired from her position after serving for nearly 3 decades.

This issue of the newsletter is a collaborative effort between Shirley and Alice Koskela, a recent Chapter member who was appointed by the Board on March 25.

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President's Message

April, 2022

Spring is officially here. As we North Idahoans know, it doesn't mean we won't see more snow but the weather forecasters are indicating gradually warming temperatures in the days to come. We will be hearing more and more songbirds singing in the early morning. What a great season of anticipation.

Last week we (my wife and I) took a two day out of town birding trip to view and photograph migrating Sandhill Cranes. The Sandhill Cranes entertained us with their courtship dances and unique vocalizations. I am always amazed that a bird of that size feeds on such small morsels they get by probing that long bill into the ground.

An unexpected bonus fell into our lap in the form of a flock of Snow Geese arriving and landing in an uncultivated corn field. It did look like snow on the field. I estimated 2,000 Snow Geese but I am not experienced at estimating numbers of birds in a flock so that number is truly a guess. The next morning the Snow Geese were resting on a small pond presenting great opportunities to photograph several mass takeoffs. What a sight! If you ever have a chance to witness one of those takeoffs, don't pass it up. It is a fantastic experience.

The March program didn't turn out to be as stated in the March newsletter. I was contacted the day before the meeting and informed that the person expected to present the program had to cancel due to a family emergency. We certainly respect the family priority. A couple of years ago I purchased a video by Dan Hartman about his efforts to find owls, and hopefully some nests, in the late winter/early spring in an area near Yellowstone. I played that video as the

substitute for the planned program. You may ask "who is Dan Hartman?" Dan is an individual who seeks out these owls and nests strictly on his own. He occasionally publishes what he finds in the "Yellowstone Report," a daily electronic report from the wolf watchers in Yellowstone National Park. You can subscribe to the report at Yellowstonereports.com.

You will see a notice in this newsletter that Shirley Sturts has retired from the editor position of the Fish Hawk Herald. We certainly thank Shirley for her dedication and years of service as editor.

I call your attention to two upcoming events I and encourage your participation. April 9 is our chapter's highway cleanup day. You will find details and contact information in this newsletter.

The other event is our Chapter's participation in an Earth Day event at the Coeur d'Alene Library on April 23, 2022. I confess to not having all the details at this time but please contact me. We will get details to you as they become available.

Enjoy some birding activities during any travel and/or vacation plans you have for the summer. I hope you see a new bird for your life list. As always, I encourage you to share your birding experiences with the members at a future Chapter Meeting.

Good Birding!
--Ralph Kerr

Mica Bay March Survey Report

Although the March Survey Team was a small group—Del Cameron, Christine Quinn, and George Sayler—we tallied 17 species plus an additional one that was very likely a Says Phoebe. We had enough clues to make a very educated guess, but couldn't be 100% certain. That's just the way it is with birding sometimes and part of what keeps us coming back for more - next time we might be able to nail it!

The day was clear, warm enough, with a slight wind and generally good viewing conditions. Highlights included a pair of Bald Eagles soaring high above, a decent-sized flock of Northern Pintails, some Redheads, American Widgeons, Ring-necked Ducks, lots of Coots, and a pair of Cormorants. The biggest highlight though, was the nice view of 16 Tundra Swans we observed from the Gertie Hanson viewing platform.

There was also a smattering of our usual feathered friends: Canada Geese, Mallards, a few Robins and we got a nice look at a Red-tailed Hawk. It was still too early for the Swallows and Bluebirds, but that should not be the case for long, and that may be all the motivation you need to get out there in April to take a look!
—George Sayler

Call for Bird Haiku Submissions

The Haiku, a classic Japanese poetic form, follows three rules:

It contains three lines, with five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third. The only additional rule in this call for Chapter Member submissions is the poem should be about birds or birdwatching. Titles are optional—they're not part of the syllable count.

The Haiku is a perfect form to describe the grace and beauty of our feathered fellow creatures. Haikus may be serious or humorous, and their form lends itself to a "surprise twist" at the end.

All Coeur d'Alene Chapter members of the poetic persuasion are cordially invited to submit their original Bird Haiku poems in an email to koskelaalice@yahoo.com. All poems will be printed in future issues of *The Fish Hawk Herald*. Below is an example:

Returning
They're right overhead
Honking a v-line for home
Announcing the spring

Test Your Avian Awareness: A Birder's Quiz

1. A hummingbird weighs about the same as a
A. Penny B. Nickle C. Dime D. Quarter
2. How much meat would a man have to eat to metabolize the daily diet of a hummingbird?
A. 50 lbs. B. 100 lbs. C. 150 lbs. D. 285 lbs.
3. Group of geese: "gaggle." Group of owls:
A. Flock B. Murder C. Parliament D. Covey
4. The land animal with the biggest eyes is the
A. Ostrich B. Vulture C. Eagle D. Owl
5. Which bird is almost totally blind?
A. Penguin B. Kiwi C. Albatross D. Quail
6. How does a vulture respond to a threat?
A. Vomiting B. Flapping its wings C. Screeching
7. The Bassian Thrush is said to find worms by:
A. Smelling B. Hearing C. Passing Gas
8. The largest number of yolks found in one egg:
A. 4 B. 7 C. 9 D. 13
9. A bird that covers itself with ants to "bathe":
A. Raven B. Vulture C. Wren D. Cardinal
10. The Platypus "Duck" is actually a
A. Mammal B. Bird C. Reptile
(Answers on P. 6)

Kootenai County

Big Year Additions 2022

<http://cdaaudubon.org/Projects/kootenaico2021.html>

Eurasian Wigeon - 2 - one in Hauser Lake and one in Lower Twin Lake - Scott Ruger

Wood Duck - 3 - March 18 - Fernan Lake - Lewis Young

Ruddy Duck - 2 - March 14 - Cougar Bay Preserve - Scott Ruger

Dusky Grouse - 1 - March 6 - Latour Peak - Jacob Elonen

Golden Eagle - 1 - March 6 - Latour Peak - Jacob Elonen

Northern Harrier - 1 - March 12 - Ramsey Road - Scott Ruger

Northern Goshawk - 1 - March 16 - Yellowstone Trail - Lewis Young

Sharp-shinned Hawk - 1 - March 4 Hauser Lake - Angela Marie Slotten

Turkey Vulture - 2 - March 15 - Atlas Road - Scott Ruger

Virginia Rail - 1 - March 16 - Fernan Lake - Lewis Young

Say's Phoebe - 1 - March 12 - Mica Bay - George Sayler

Tree Swallow - 3 - March 18 - Fernan Lake - Ryan Bart

Violet-green Swallow - March 13 - on the Spokane River in front of our house - Teri and Bob Farr

American Dipper - 1 - March 13 - Post Falls Community Forest - Ryan Bart

Western Bluebird - 2 - March 6 - Latour Peak - Jacob Elonen

Other Sightings

Northern Saw-whet Owl - March 16 - 1 heard across Fernan Lake - Keith Sturts

Say's Phoebe - 1 - March 17 - Prairie West Transfer Station - Lewis Young

Western Bluebird - Several - March 17 - Farragut State Park - Midge and Jim Brennan

Varied Thrush - 2 - February 24 - in our yard - Valerie Zagar

Song Sparrow - March 6 - sign of spring when resident Song Sparrow is singing like crazy in our yard - Valerie Zagar

Canyon Wren - 1 - March 20 - Q'Emlin Park, Post Falls - Ryan Bart

Ring-necked Pheasant - March 18, our backyard - Rudy Verschoor

California Quail - 24 - March 16 - our backyard - Alice Koskela



Sandhill Crane Courtship Dance
Photo by Ralph Kerr

Bird Watching for Beginners

Birding is a great activity for everyone, young and older. Anyone can start right where they are, right now. Here's a few ideas on how to begin:

Look to your own back yard—or a nearby park

Walk around your yard, taking note of your trees, grasses, flowers and shrubs—all part of an avian habitat. Look and listen for birds. You might be surprised at how many you will hear!

Simple box feeders are a good way to attract regular "diners." Hummingbird feeders are quite inexpensive and easy hang, and you can make your own nectar—but no red food coloring! Bird baths for the warmer months are also a good way to bring in visitors.

If you don't have a backyard, head for a nearby park—if it has a pond, all the better! Spring and fall months are good for catching sight of migratory birds. City parks attract birds for the same reasons humans like them—they're good places to congregate, grab a bite to eat, and relax.

Learn to identify species

It's a good idea to get a Bird Guide and keep track of how many different species you see. Bird Flash Cards can help you quickly identify some of the most common birds. And of course now there are several "Apps for That" if you want to use your cell phone to identify birds.

Watching birds from afar

Binoculars give an "up close and personal" view that even 20-20 vision can't match. Small models are easier to carry but not as powerful as heavier ones. The two-number specification for binoculars, i.e. "10 x 50," means their magnification is ten times actual size and the lens farthest from your eye is 50 millimeters. Spotting scopes are a lot bulkier than binoculars but provide much greater magnification. Scopes are best suited to birders who want to stay in one spot for extended periods.

Be patient

Patience is more than just a virtue for birdwatchers—it's absolutely necessary. Modern technology has made us impatient, but the natural world moves at its own pace, and it's up to us adapt to that. Slow down and really live.

Don't stand out in the crowd

Avoid clothing that shouts "Here I am!" to wary birds. Clothes in earth tones blend into the background and give you a better chance of success. You don't need to wear camouflage, but leave the lime green windbreaker behind.

Keep still

It may be a challenge for some of us to stay quiet for long, but extended silence is golden for birders. There's hardly anything, short of "Yikes, a skunk!" that should be shouted when you're out birding.

Practice, practice, practice

Like any worthy endeavor, birding is a skill that improves with repetition. Your practice will pay off, not just in bird sightings, but in a better understanding of the natural world and a keener awareness of its diversity and beauty.



Snow Geese
Photo by Ralph Kerr

CDA Audubon Chapter Officers

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Vice President: open
Recording Secretary: Pamela Gomes
Treasurer: Janet Callen
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Board Members: All officers and Ted Smith, Patty Beyer
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Local Membership Dues

- Individual \$10.00*
- Family \$15.00*
- Individual \$25.00 - with hard copy of the newsletter*
- Family \$30.00 - with hard copy of the newsletter*
- Additional donation _____*

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Mail this form and your check payable to: *Coeur d'Alene Audubon Chapter c/o Membership*
P.O. Box 361
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816

National Audubon New Member Application

Join Online at:
<http://www.audubon.org>

or
Join by Phone:
1-844-428-3826

Reference our Chapter Code G06

