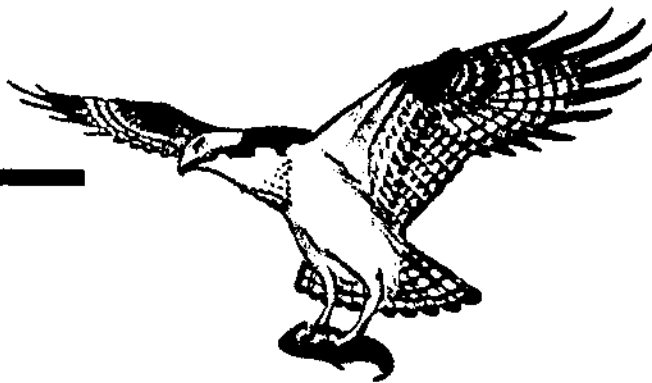


THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the Audubon Society

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December 1991

Volume 1, No. 11

CALENDAR CHECK! --

- DEC. 14, 1991** **COEUR d'ALENE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT!!** Details below!
- DEC. 17, 1991**
6 PM **CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING** -- location: basement of the Security Pacific Bank in Hayden Lake. More members are needed to help with wetlands, forests and recycling issues.
- DEC. 17, 1991**
7 PM **DECEMBER MEETING** -- location: basement of the Security Pacific Bank in Hayden Lake. Ric Bailey from Hell's Canyon Preservation Council will show the video "The Hell's Canyon Country: America's Next National Park or a Lost Legacy."
- DEC. 26, 1991** **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE** for submitting articles, etc.
Note: I have moved the newsletter deadline up a few days so that we can have sufficient time to get it printed and mailed.
- DEC. 28, 1991** **INDIAN MT. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT** - Harrison, Idaho area is Saturday, December 28, 1991. If interested, call Shirley Sturts, Cd'A, 664-5318 or Don Heikkila, Harrison, 689-3349.
- JAN. 11, 1991** **FIELD TRIP** - This Saturday field trip will be the Mid-winter Bald Eagle survey sponsored by The National Wildlife Federation. This is done nation wide. The area we will be doing is Coeur d'Alene to Wolf Lodge and Beauty Bay on Coeur d'Alene Lake. Meet at parking lot of Rustler's Roost, 819 Sherman Avenue -- breakfast is optional at 7:30 am, we will leave to bird at 8:30 am. Leader: Shirley Sturts - call 664-5318 to register.
- JAN. 21, 1991**
7 PM **JANUARY MEETING** -location: basement of the Security Pacific Bank in Hayden Lake. Mike Doherty, biologist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will present a program for the January meeting. Topic will be set out in next month's newsletter.

1991 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT --

The first annual Coeur d'Alene Christmas Bird Count will take place on Saturday, 14 December 1991. The count circle is fifteen miles in diameter -- approximately one-hundred-and-seventy-seven square miles and encompasses the cities of Coeur d'Alene, Hayden Lake, Post Falls and Rathdrum. The count circle has been divided into four areas, with a team leader assigned to each. Pam Gortz will lead the team to count area number one, Shirley Sturts will lead the count for area number two, Susan Weller for area number three; and Gertie Hanson for area number four.

Audubon members who wish to participate in the count but were not at the November meeting may call Bee Finne at 667-0425, or Shirley Sturts at 664-5318. Also, by calling either of these numbers, you may arrange to have the birds at your feeder counted. Residents along both shores of Hayden Lake are being sought to provide counting stations for teams one and two. Since much of Hayden Lake is privately owned, access is limited and could hinder an accurate count.

[-continued on page 2]

While the bird count occurs over one calendar day -- from midnight to midnight -- participants may count for as long as they are willing, or able. Active count participants are charged a five-dollar fee which goes toward processing the paperwork for the special Christmas Count edition of American Birds. The Christmas Count is one way for an amateur ornithologist to get their name in a scientific journal.

Following the count, there will be a potluck at the home of Pam Gontz. Pam asks that everyone bring a hot dish, salad, or dessert, but she can furnish eating utensils. The potluck will begin at 6:00 pm and after dinner the totals from the four count areas will be tallied.

[-Susan Weller]

RARE BIRD HOT-LINE --

Jeff Wisman of the Washington Ornithological Society last week announced that a "Rare Bird Hot-Line" has been established in Washington state. You may either obtain or contribute information about rare and unusual bird sightings in the Northwest by calling: (509)926-9533. For those interested in joining, write WA Ornithological Society, P.O. Box 85786, Seattle, WA 98145, cost is \$10.00 yearly.

WONDERS OF THE NATURAL WORLD --

On Sunday mornings, my malamute and I usually take a leisurely walk down to retrieve the newspaper. I am not always the first to arise on Sunday mornings, but this morning I got up about seven a.m. (early for me on a Sunday) and started the coffee brewing. Since we only subscribe to the newspaper on week-ends, the morning walk down to the road to get it is quite a ritual at our house. After pouring a steaming mug of hot coffee to ward off the chilliness of the foggy morning, my dog and I set out down the driveway.

After securing the newspaper tightly under my free arm, I stood for a moment appreciating my warm and aromatic coffee, along with the clamoring of geese down at the slough. Suddenly, I heard the flutey-rattling of a vocalizing bald eagle. I looked up to catch a pair of bald eagles as they flew towards me from the slough. They flew up over the forest rimming the slough and then out over the marshy meadow, all the while they were dipping and weaving with one another and vocalizing rather raucously. When they were nearly above me, I saw them do something I've never seen bald eagles do in the fall: the male reached down and touched the female's back with his talons until she flipped over, then they locked talons and rolled twice, coming out of the aerial somersault as they reached the trees on my side of the meadow.

I have only seen bald eagles perform this act as part of their nuptial flight in the spring. I have also seen ravens engage in rolling and tumbling, but never in the fall. In any case, I have never been so close to a pair of bald eagles as they displayed this behavior, but I always find it fascinating. They seemed (to anthropomorphize) to be perfectly absorbed in their joyous romp and game of rough and tumble. This pair were certainly unaware of me standing thirty or forty feet below them looking up in awe and admiration.

I can't hazard a guess as to why the birds were engaging in behavior meant to stimulate egg production -- hey, maybe they were just enjoying the morning, or each other's company. I do know that the entire episode lasted only a few seconds before the eagles flew over me and were gone over the trees. It was long enough to reward my Sunday morning ritual with special emphasis, and long enough to make me pause to appreciate the good things in life, things like the Sunday paper, a good cup of coffee, and the wonders of the natural world.

[-Susan Weller]

BIRD NOTES --

- Northern Shrike - (3) seen on 11/09/91, two on Rimrock Road and one on Hwy 53 near Rathdrum, by Pam Gontz
- Tundra Swans - 2 adults and 2 cygnets, north end of Hayden Lake, 11/09/91, Pam Gontz
- Rough-legged Hawk - seen on Huetter Road on 11/13/91 by Pam Gontz
- Eurasian Wigeon - seen at Cd'A Wildlife Management Area on 11/17/91 by Dan Svingen--mixed in with American Wigeons
- Bald Eagle - 1 mature eagle at Wolf Lodge Bay, 11/17/91, Pam Gontz
- Red-necked Grebe - 2 in winter plumage, seen at Beauty Bay on 11/17/91 by Pam Gontz
- Pygmy Owl - bathing in Gertie Hanson's bird bath
- Snow Buntings - seen in Farragut State Park by Phil & Judy Waring
- Pygmy Owl - seen in Farragut State Park by Phil & Judy Waring
- Pygmy Owl - bathing in Roger Young's birth bath

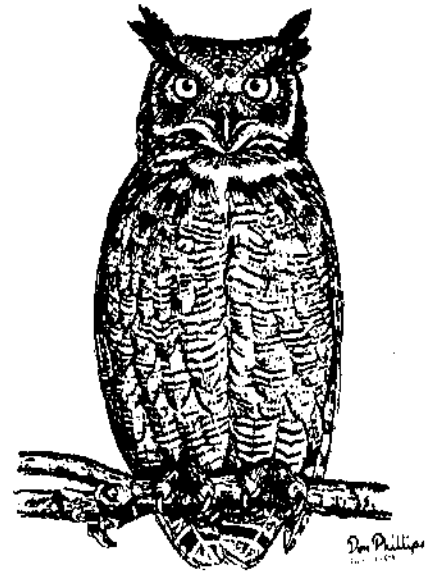


FEATHERED FACTS --**GREAT HORNED OWL** [Bubo virginianus]

The Great Horned Owl is so named because of the resemblance of the feather tufts to horns. *Bubo* is Latin for "the great horned owl". *Virginianus* means "of Virginia", the location where the first specimen known to science was collected.

DIAGNOSTIC FEATURES:

- largest North American Owl with feather ear tufts - 20 to 25", weighing 3 to 4 lbs.
- body brown, spotted with darker brown, white throat feathers contrast with dark cross-banded underparts
- eyes yellow, bill black
- facial disk variable in color - usually dark rust to brown
- plumage is variable from the very pale Arctic subspecies to the dark one of the Pacific Northwest
- call usually a deep, soft six-noted hoot --
whooh! whooh-whooh-whooh! whooh! whooh!



SIMILAR SPECIES: The only species that may be confused with the Great Horned Owl is the Long-eared Owl. This owl is smaller (13-16") and slimmer with ear tufts set closer to the middle of the head compared with the Great Horned Owl's which appear more to the side of the head. The Long-eared Owl's throat is also dark in contrast to the white throat of the Great Horned Owl.



BREEDING HABITAT AND NESTING: The Great Horned Owl is found widely over the United States and is generally a resident all year long. Their breeding habitat extends to coniferous or deciduous forests, woodlands, swamps, orchards, parks, riparian forests, to semidesert. The nests of the Great Horned Owl are generally old nests of red-tailed hawks, bald eagles, herons, or crows, and occasionally an old leaf nest of a squirrel. Nests can also be found in rocky caves of cliffs, in hollows of trees, and rarely on the ground. The nest is commonly found 15-70 ft. off the ground. A study of 29 nests showed 13 in Red-tailed Hawk nests, 8 in Common Crow nests, 3 in hollow trees, 2 in unidentified nests, 2 in rocky crevices, and 1 in a Fox Squirrel nest. Little if any material is added to these nests except feathers and down from the breast. The male performs a noisy aerial display and ritually feeds the female. Pairs hoot much during winter or spring courtship. Most individuals do not

breed until 2 years old. Eggs are laid as early as January and February and are dull white. Incubation is mostly done by the female and lasts 30-35 days. They have only 1 brood. The young fledge at approximately 45-55 days. The Great Horned Owl roosts during the day in thick tops of evergreen trees, close to the trunk, ear tufts erect, or in the top of trees to which leaves cling through winter. These roosting owls are sometimes easy to locate because of the noisy flocks of crows and other birds. These birds will harass the owl until it takes decides to move on and is then pursued by a string of birds that "mob" it in flight. Seeing or hearing this mobbing behavior is one way to locate an owl.

DIET: Generally nocturnal but may hunt both by day and night in some areas. The Great Horned Owl swoops and catches prey in its powerful feet and talons. It will take animals from the smallest shrews weighing a fraction of an ounce to large hares and rabbits, squirrels, skunks, domestic cats, and are even known to attack porcupines. Rabbits, hares, and skunks, however, are their prominent food source. The Great Horned Owl uses regular feeding roosts near the nest site where it brings prey to be torn up and eaten. This is where bones, hair, and feathers of victims in the form of a regurgitated pellets are generally found. [Sources: The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds, by John K. Terres; The Birder's Handbook, by Ehrlich, Dobkin & Wheye; Field Guide to the Birds of North America, National Geographic Society; Peterson Field Guide to Western Birds' Nests, by Hal H. Harrison]

COEUR d'ALENE AUDUBON SOCIETY HAS A NEW TREASURER — Ronn Rich will be taking over Linda Daley's duties as treasurer. Many thanks to Linda for putting in her personal time and effort as the treasurer. And Thank You, Ronn, for taking over the position.

QUESTION: How many trees does an average North American use per year in paper, wood and other products made from trees?

ANSWER: Seven! That's over one and a half million trees a year! [-from Earth Care Paper, Inc. catalog]

DID YOU KNOW . . . that the Forest Service is proposing more than 150 timber sales in roadless areas in the next four years. This country is logging 2,000 acres of forest per week or three square miles.

TIS THE SEASON . . .

The season of merriment and goodwill seems, sadly, to bring out the worst of our ultra-consumerism and waste of resources. The tradition of exchanging gifts is also a source of stress for many of us. This Holiday Season, rather than giving another person a gift which they may neither need or want, why not consider giving to a conservation organization in their name, either buying them a membership or making a donation? In doing so you will be giving badly needed funds for protecting the Earth. The gift may bring environmental concerns to the attentions of the receiver. You will save yourself the anxiety of trying to figure out what to buy for someone you really don't know well, someone who seems to have everything or someone who is just tough to buy gifts for. Instead of shopping among frenzied crowds, you could instead spend the time with your loved ones doing something special and take the time to write letters to those who live elsewhere. The resources used in packaging and shipping would be spared along with those that went into the manufacture of the gift itself. Ideally, the idea of exchanging gifts for the Earth could be shared among family members as a sort of fund raiser for conservation work. Of course, Audubon heads the list of prospective organizations but, as you probably are already aware, there are many others, both local and national, whose important work needs support. (To name a few: Kootenai Environmental Alliance, Inland Empire Public Lands Council, Idaho Conservation League, Alliance for the Wild Rockies, Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society, Greenpeace.)



In an effort to reduce your use of resources you could send greeting cards made from recycled paper or recycle ones you've received in previous years. [These also make nice gift tags.] Gifts can be wrapped in scrap fabric which could be used afterward for towel or scarf, in a canvas shopping bag or lunch sack, in colored paper from the newspaper or in old calendar pictures. It can be fun to make your own wrapping paper with fingerpainting or potato prints on plain paper collected from packages that have been shipped or simply save last years paper and ribbons.

With the Earth's resources at heart, have a Happy Holiday Season.

[-Ellen Scriven]

REMEMBER TO MAKE "TRACKS" TO RECYCLE!



Those newspapers and aluminium cans can be turned into --

Panhandle Recycling Products
4855 Industrial Way
(off Atlas Road in the Industrial Park)
Mon. thru Fri. 8:30am to 5 pm
Sat. 9am to 4pm

Ask that they be applied to the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society account.

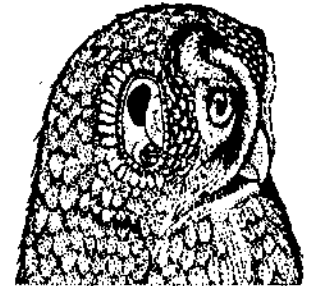
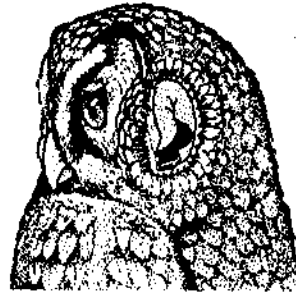
PRESERVE OUR HABITAT -- DON'T THROW IT AWAY!



AVIAN ANATOMY --

How do Owls Hunt in the Dark? Because of the owl's specialized ears, they are able to locate even faint sounds with remarkable accuracy. Owl's ears, not ear tufts, are asymmetrical (not identical on both sides). These asymmetrical external ears vary with each owl species. As you can see in the illustration, the ears are at different levels. To determine whether a sound is coming from the right, left, or straight ahead will depend on the difference in time that it takes the sound to reach each ear. To localize a sound vertically, the owl will rely on the variation of sound received by each ear. An example of pinpointing a sound - if a sound was coming from above, it would seem slightly louder in the ear with the higher opening; if a sound was equally loud in both ears, then the source must be at eye level. Also an owl's hearing is enhanced by its facial ruff, a concave surface of stiff feathers. This ruff channels sounds into the ears, acting as a reflector. This sensitive hearing helps replace their poor eyesight, but owls also rely on their intimate knowledge of the habitat in which they hunt. Some studies show that familiarity with their environment such as heights of favorite perches above the ground, seem to be essential to the owl's ability to pounce on prey.

[-Pam Gontz; Source: The Birder's Handbook, by Ehrlich, Dobkin & Wheye]



Both sides of owl's head with feathers pulled back to expose asymmetry of the ears.

WETLAND EXTENSION --



The comment period for the proposed changes to the 1989 Wetlands Delineation Manual has been extended to December 14th. If you have not already done so (even if you have), please write our Congressmen and William Reilly telling them that you oppose the revisions. They would eliminate many of our state's wetlands from qualifying for protection. Idaho's Congressman, Richard Stallings, is still a cosponsor of H.R. 1330, the "anti-wetlands" bill.

WRITE: William Reilly
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
401 M St. SW
Washington DC 20460

[-Ellen Scriven]

EPA WETLANDS PROTECTION HOTLINE -- 1-800-832-7828 !!

TEST YOUR "BAT" I.Q. --



1. There are ____ species of bats. A. 25 B. 150 C. Nearly 1,000
2. The mouse-eared bat can consume 600 mosquitoes in A. One hour B. One night C. One week
3. Humans use bat droppings (guano) as A. Cement B. Insecticide C. Fertilizer
4. In China, bats are considered symbols of A. Longevity B. Good luck C. Death
5. Bats are responsible for pollination and seed dispersal on behalf of ____ plant species in the Old World tropics. A. 100 B. 200 C. 300
6. ____ species of bats that live in the United States are on the federal list of endangered species. A. Zero B. Three C. Seven



[-Zoo Life, Fall 1991]



NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

YES, I'd like to join. Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send the Audubon magazine and my membership card to the address below. My check for \$20 payable to the National Audubon Society is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send this application and your check to
National Audubon Society
Chapter Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 51001
Boulder, CO 80322-1001

Local Chapter
Coeur d'Alene 006

Local Chapter Code
7XCH8

COEUR D'ALENE AUDUBON SOCIETY

OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Secretary:	Bee Finne	667-0425
Treasurer:	Ronn Rich	772-4512
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Membership Secretary:	Cathy Hurrell	664-0689
Hospitality Chair:	Joan Sestak	772-7452
Newsletter Editor:	Pam Gontz	765-1115
Fieldtrip Chair:	Shirley Sturts	664-5318

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