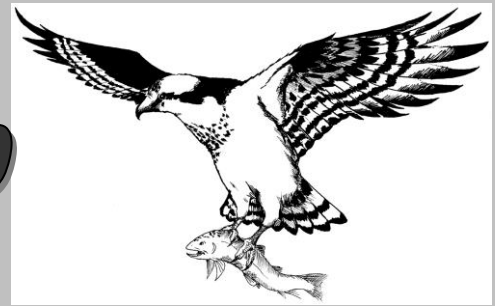


THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society

December 2003

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 4

COMING EVENTS

BOARD MEETING

DATE: December 2, Tuesday

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

PLACE: Mountain West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

DECEMBER PROGRAM

DATE: December 8, Monday

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: First Presbyterian Church, 521
Lakeside

PROGRAM: "Birding Basics I.D." Prepare for the Christmas Bird Counts with a whirlwind review of local winter birds. There will also be the first of our video bird quizzes to test and challenge your I.D. skills."

SPEAKER: Kris Buchler

AND

A COOKIE EXCHANGE: In keeping with the holiday tradition of overindulgence we are going to have a cookie exchange at the December meeting. This is how it works: everyone will bring two dozen of their favorite cookies and a container to bring home an assortment of all the goodies. Wear loose clothing.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS AND POTLUCKS

See page 2 for more information on the potlucks and page 3 for the counts

Visit our website: www.cdaudubon.org

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

An Audubon News Release



Belted Kingfisher
Fuentes' Eastern Bird Collection

Audubon calls upon volunteers to join with birders across the western hemisphere and participate in Audubon's longest-running wintertime tradition, the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Counts are open to birders of all skill levels, either by participating on a team out in the field or at their feeders. This year nearly 2,000 individual counts are scheduled to take place throughout the Americas from December

14, 2003 to January 5, 2004. (See page 2 and 3 for details about the three counts in our area. Volunteers are always welcome.)

During this year's count, we are highlighting the fact that many of the birds that will be counted are produced in the great North American boreal forest that extends from Alaska to Eastern Canada. At the close of the count, Audubon will analyze the population status and trends of the birds of the boreal forests to see how these species are faring. Boreal species that appear to be declining that are commonly seen on Christmas Bird Counts include Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, and especially Rusty Blackbird. (Editors note: White-throated Sparrow, Purple Finch and Rusty Blackbird would be accidental in our area and if reported would need good documentation to be accepted. There are a few winter records for the White-crowned

Sparrow in North Idaho but most of them winter south or west of us. Documentation would be needed for acceptance of any sightings of the White-crowned Sparrow in winter.)

CBC began over a century ago when 27 conservationists in 25 localities, led by scientist Frank Chapman, changed the course of ornithological history. On Christmas Day 1900, the small group of conservationists posed an alternative to the "side-hunt," a Christmas day activity in which teams competed to see who could shoot the most birds and small mammals. Instead, Chapman proposed to identify, count, and record all the birds they saw, founding what is now considered to be the most significant citizen-based conservation effort and a more than century-old institution.

Continued on Page 4

2003-YARD LIST CHALLENGE

BIRD TRACKS



Audubon Members make a difference

THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS - POTLUCK AND PIZZA PARTY

Beginning and experienced birders are all welcome and needed to participate in our three local Christmas Bird Counts. You can join a team in the field or count at your feeder if you live within the count circle. See "Field Trips" on page 3 for details.

Christmas Potluck After the December 14 bird count--Host Herb and Jan Severtson

You are all invited to come and share potluck whether you have "counted" birds or not. The sign-up sheet will be at the Dec 8th meeting or please call Jan at 667-6209. Bring your own beverage and dish with servers to share: appetizers, salads, desserts, and bread and butter. Jan is making lasagna, both vegetarian and traditional. Place settings will be provided. We start at 4 p.m. Hope to see you!!

Christmas Pizza Party After the January 4th bird count Host Ed and Kris Buchler

We will get started about 4:30 p.m.. Small salads, desserts, side dish or drinks are welcome. RSVP Kris 664-4739. Those attending will share cost of the pizzas.

Downy
Woodpecker
Fuertes'
Eastern Bird
collection



How is your yard-list coming along this year? You have one more month to whip it into shape. On January 1, tally up your species and submit to:

Lisa Hardy
2153B Old River Road
Kingston, Idaho 83839

You will need to submit a list of species and information about your location. Note whether you are in city limits, urban, suburban or rural, whether you have a water view, type of vegetation and cover available, feeders provided etc. Remember, your list should include all birds seen or heard *from* your yard, so you can include, for example, the geese that flew over at 3000', or the owl you heard one night in the neighbor's yard. What was your favorite bird? Share any interesting bird behavior you noted while observing birds in your yard.

BALD EAGLE SURVEY AND WATCH PROGRAM

For the past 6 years Corrine Cameron has been counting eagles at Wolf Lodge and Beauty Bays for the BLM. She counts once a week between November 15 and February 1.

Other members provide scopes and answer questions at Bald Eagle viewing areas in Wolf Lodge and Beauty Bay between December 26 and January 1.

For information or to help out with this program, contact Scott Robinson at the BLM office, 769-5048

EDUCATION REPORT

"Audubon Adventures" education kits are in the mail! The Margaret W. Reed Foundation helped sponsor 135 third and fifth grade classrooms this year. All elementary schools have been served in the Silver Valley, Harrison, Plummer/Worley, Post Falls, Lakeland and Coeur d'Alene school districts. Janet and Kris made all the contacts and completed the paperwork, while Scott and Mary Lou Reed provided over \$5,600 to pay for the kits and shipping. Costs for these educational materials have risen over the years but the Reeds continue to support our chapter's efforts.

Units of study this year include: Coniferous forests, Urban Lands, Wetlands and Grasslands. The first three are applicable to our area. Urban Lands include yards, parks and schoolyards, which is ideal for students. Each student receives four different newsletter/worksheets about each habitat. Education Committee members are available for presentations in the classroom.

Lori Frank, a biology teacher at Coeur d'Alene High School, is again teaching Advanced Biology/Forestry to six students this year. In November, Kris Buchler gave a presentation on forest birds to the students.

Education Committee:
Janet Callen and Kris Buchler



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

Henry David Thoreau

DECEMBER 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: December 10, Wednesday (just once this month)

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: December 16, Tuesday

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

MEET: Independence Point

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

ACTIVITY: This is the time of the year we start looking for unusual gulls. Common year round are Ring-billed and California Gull. The Herring Gull is commonly seen during the winter. We will be looking for the uncommon and rare gulls e.g. Mew, Thayer's, Glaucous, and Glaucous-winged. A variety of waterfowl are often seen. We will walk along the beach as far as time permits.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

DATE: There is a participation fee of \$5.00 for counters in the field. There is no fee for those under the age of 18 and feeder counters. The money goes to the National Audubon Society to help pay for expenses involved in organizing, compiling, analyzing and publishing the results. In addition we ask you to help the driver out with gasoline - \$5.00 full day, \$3.00 half day.

December 14, Sunday - Coeur d'Alene - Compiler: Shirley Sturts 664-5318

Breakfast: 6:00 a.m. Michael D's Eatery, Lake Coeur d'Alene Drive

Potluck: Home of Herb and Jan Severtson -1364 Fairmont Loop Road - RSVP Jan at 667-6209.

December 20, Saturday- Indian Mountain - Compiler: Don Heikkila 589-3349

Breakfast: Planned by each team.

Sign up: call Don or Shirley 664-5318

January 4, Saturday - Spirit Lake - Compiler: Shirley Sturts 664-5318

Breakfast: 6:00 a.m. Rustler's Roost, Hayden Lake

Pizza Party: Home of Ed and Kris Buchler - 3595 Sky Harbor Drive. Cost of the pizzas will be shared. Small salads, desserts, side dish or drinks are welcome. RSVP Kris 664-4739 so we know how many are attending.

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

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Northern
Flicker
Fuertes'
Eastern
Bird
collection



Today, over 55,000 volunteers from all 50 states, every Canadian province, parts of Central and South America, Bermuda, the West Indies, and Pacific islands count and record every individual bird and bird species seen in a specified area. During the 103rd count, about 73 million birds were counted. Thanks in part to Bird Studies Canada, a leading not-for-profit conservation organization that is the Canadian partner for the CBC, last year again saw a record high - this time, 1,981 individual counts. Each count group completes a census of the birds found during one 24-hour period between December 14 and January 5 in a designated circle 15 miles in diameter-about 177 square miles.

Apart from its attraction as a social and competitive event, CBC reveals valuable scientific data. Now in its 104th year, CBC is larger than ever, expanding its geographical range and accumulating information about the winter distribution of various birds, and it is vital in monitoring the status of resident and migratory birds across the Western Hemisphere. The data, 100% volunteer generated, have become a crucial part of the U.S. Government's natural history monitoring database. Articles published in the 103rd CBC issue of *American Birds* helped ornithologists better understand the magnitude of the effects of

West Nile virus on regional bird populations. In addition, count results from 1900 to the present are available through Audubon's website www.audubon.org/bird/cbc. "Backed with over a century of participation and collected data, the CBC is the longest-running, volunteer-based bird census, spanning three human generations," said Geoff LeBaron, director of the Christmas Bird Count. The CBC has evolved into a powerful and important tool, one probably inconceivable to any of the 27 participants on the first Christmas Bird Count. With continually growing environmental pressures, it seems likely that today's participants cannot possibly fathom the value of their efforts now and in the next century.

CBC compilers enter their count data via Audubon's website www.audubon.org/bird/cbc or Bird Studies, Canada's homepage www.bsc-eoc.org where the 104th Count results will be viewable in near real-time. Explore this information for the winter of 2003-2004 or visit a count from the past. See if and how the state of your local birds has changed during the last 25...50...or 100 years.

Audubon is dedicated to protecting birds and other wildlife and the habitat that supports them. Our national network of community-based Audubon nature centers and chapters, environmental education programs, and advocacy on behalf of areas sustaining important bird populations engage missions of people of all ages and backgrounds in positive conservation experiences.

BIRDING THE DRY TORTUGAS

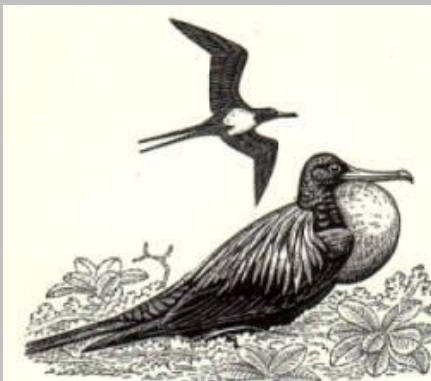
Kris Buchler

There is nothing in the name, "Dry Tortugas" that calls to you or conjures up an image of a tropical paradise.



This small group of keys about 70 miles from Key West does not have that reputation. However, the name is well known to birders and for good reason. The Tortugas are often the first stop for migratory birds crossing the Gulf of Mexico and heading north in the spring. Many barely arrive, having exhausted themselves over the hundreds of miles of open oceans, often in inclement weather. Many do not make it, slowly swallowed by the waves before making landfall. What can they gain from small islands with no source of fresh water? Rest, recuperation and now, fresh water is offered. Little food is available on these small patches of land and insects are scarce. There are water sources now available on Garden Key and Loggerhead Key due to the efforts of Florida Audubon societies. Cisterns collect rainwater and bubble the life giving water into two fountains with shallow pools. Humans Ed and I provide their own water. We traveled to the Tortugas on the 63-foot yacht, Tiburon and were two of fourteen birders with Florida Nature Tours. We slept three nights on the boat along with our two guides, Wes Biggs and Murray Gardler, and four crew. This tour offered cabins for singles and doubles while others

provide dormitory cabins. There were two heads with showers, which is actually the bathroom itself. Cabins had a small sink, two bunks and a fan. The Tortugas can be reached by a tour like ours where we slept on the boat, or, for day trips by traveling about 2-3 hours on huge catamarans or taking a seaplane. The campground was closed so there are no overnight accommodations on Garden Key. The Tortugas are a National Park and administered by the National Park Service.



Magnificent Frigate Bird
Old name - Man-Of-War

There is no way to adequately describe the vision of Garden Key with the historical Fort Jefferson thrusting over three tall stories into the skyline. It is surreal. The trip is worth just seeing this structure and learning about its Civil War history. After cruising the gulf for sightings of pelagic birds such as Bridled Tern, Brown Booby, Magnificent Frigate Bird, Northern Gannet and Roseate Tern, we alighted on Garden Key to discover its hidden "jewels" within and outside the crumbling brick walls of the fort. Our first rare discovery was the lone Black Noddy perched among over 400 Brown Noddy on the pilings of the old coal docks. We knew it was good when we saw the excitement of our guides.

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

They next led us through the small interior of the fort where we spent many quiet moments sitting and observing avians attracted to the fountain or strolling the grounds where we discovered the Caribbean Short-eared Owl among the ruins of old officers' quarters. Night-blooming Cereus abounds in these grounds providing beautiful white evening and early morning blossoms. Blue Grosbeak dotted the landscape along with the fiery Summer Tanager. Warblers hounded the fountain and surrounding trees giving us great looks at Hooded, Black and White, Palm and Prairie Warblers. They were joined by Indigo Bunting, Ovenbird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, White-eyed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-whiskered Vireo and Great Crested Flycatcher. Numerous Cattle Egrets spotted the lawns with an occasional exhausted egret sitting in the fountain itself, hoping to snag a warbler as a morsel. These birds are so weak they can be gently picked up and moved, as small birds won't come to the water when the predator is present.

Our other "big find" at Fort Jefferson was a bird that might be considered "ho hum" in North Idaho. When it was spotted, all the bird guides went running for their phones to alert the rare bird hotlines that a "*****" was spotted on Garden Key. The cryptic bird was there that one day but not seen again. However we did find a Chuck-will's-widow, another very cryptically colored bird.

Our trip over to nearby Loggerhead Key was eventful. It

is a long narrow key lending itself to a fairly thorough surveying technique of walking



Yellow-billed Cuckoo

the length of the island. This produced the coveted and elusive Mangrove Cuckoo, American Bittern, Gray Kingbird, Eurasian Collared Dove, more warblers and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo. The key has a lighthouse as well as housing for some park personnel and volunteers who stay for periods of several weeks. The ones we met were working on removing noxious weeds and conducting studies on sea turtles during egg laying, when the key is off-limits to visitors.

Our nights were spent in the harbor at Garden Key where we were constantly serenaded by hundreds of Sooty Tern, Brown Noddy and Magnificent Frigate Bird that have nesting colonies on nearby Bush and Long Keys. Hospital Key is home to nesting Masked Boobies, a stunning bird. One evening we took a night walk, exploring the moat surrounding two thirds of Fort Jefferson. What a place to be on Halloween!!! It is spooky. We were looking for creatures in the moat and found nurse shark and pipefish as well as numerous invertebrates like lobster, brittle stars, sea cucumbers and colorful nudibranchs.

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BIRDING THE DRY TORTUGAS

Continued from Page 5

Others took a candle light historical tour of the fort.

A trip to the Dry Tortugas is certainly an all-around experience as well as a unique birding opportunity. Trips are offered April through early May and each trip will encounter some different species because of the timing of the migration and weather patterns. Inclement weather may produce the most numbers in bird species but we were satisfied with our glorious sunny days and beautiful sunsets. A fictional account of Fort Jefferson's history is mystery author Nevada Barr's "Flashback", which captures much of the essence of Garden Key and Fort Jefferson. A fun read.



Photographed by Wayne Tree

The bird that caused such a stir on garden Key was a Long-eared Owl, way out of its range and a rarity there.

ORIGINS OF BIRD NAMES

Taken from: *Words for Birds: A Lexicon of North American Birds with Biographical Notes*

MacGillivray's Warbler *Oporornis tolmieri*

William MacGillivray was a Scots naturalist who was born in 1796 and died in 1852, after an abortive effort in medicine; he began his studies in zoology in 1817. He was a "natural"; a fine scholar and a great field observer and recorder as well as a gifted author.

The species name comes from William Fraser Tolmie, a Scots doctor and an officer in the Hudson's Bay Company. He was born in 1812 in Inverness and died in Victoria, British Columbia, in 1886. He was educated in Glasgow as a physician and shortly after graduation joined the Hudson's Bay Company (1832). In 1833 he was stationed in British Columbia to which post he arrived after a voyage around the Horn. Shortly afterward, he made the first recorded ascent to the peak of Mt. Rainier.

John K. Townsend met him at Fort Vancouver in 1836 and named the warbler in his honor. Tolmie became Chief Factor in 1856 and retired from the Company in 1860.

Townsend's Warbler *Dendroica townsendi*

John Kirk Townsend (1808-1851) was one of the notable ornithologists in Philadelphia in the first half of the nineteenth century. He was born into a prominent Quaker family and studied at Quaker schools, where his interest in natural history was encouraged.

At the age of 25, Townsend persuaded the reclusive Nuttall to join him on a trip to the Pacific Northwest. Together they joined the Wyeth expedition and, while Nuttall returned overland, Townsend came back by ship via Chile and around the Horn. The results of their collecting in the west caused Audubon great anxiety. He desperately wished

to finish the *Birds of America* but dared not to do so without inspecting the specimens brought back from the west. The skins had been deposited at the Academy in Philadelphia and there Audubon's enemies tried to prevent his drawing or examining them. A direct approach to Nuttall proved to be initially unsuccessful, but he finally relented. When Townsend returned without additional skins, it was only his impoverished condition that made it possible for Audubon to gain access to them by paying.

Townsend's account of his trip was published in 1839 and remains a classic of its kind. In 1840 he started a book on the *Ornithology of the United States of North America*. Only one small part appeared and its failure served to release the printer to undertake the quarto version of Audubon's *Birds of America*. It has been thought that Townsend stopped his effort when he realized that it would have to compete with Audubon's; a tough act to follow.

In 1842 he was in Washington in a rather junior position at the National Institute. By 1845 he was back in Philadelphia studying dentistry! He never practiced the profession, and, as his health failed, had to give up many projects.

He had little luck--even the fact fact his wife's sister married Baird's brother - did nothing to further his career.

QUOTATIONS

Birds....are sensitive indicators of the environment, a sort of "ecological litmus paper"....The observation of birds leads inevitably to environmental awareness.

Roger Tory Peterson

Over increasingly large areas of the United States spring now comes unheralded by the return of the birds and the early mornings are strangely silent where once they were filled with the beauty of bird song.

Rachel Carson
Silent Spring

OBSERVATION POST

Kootenai County Big Year Additions since the November 2003 Newsletter (see February-November Newsletters or go to our Website to see bird species seen so far this year in Kootenai County (Current total 188)

No new sightings this month

Other Sightings of Interest

Pacific Loon 1 Gotham Bay, CDA Lake Nov. 10 (EKEN)

Common Loon 1 Mica Bay Survey Nov. 12 (SSTU,KBUC)

Horned Grebe 1 Mica Bay Survey, CDA Lake Nov. 12 (KBUC,SSTU)

Double-crested Cormorant 7 on pilings off Rosenberry Drive (NIC Dike Road) Nov.2 (TPOT, SSTU) and Nov. 16 (PWAR)

Tundra Swan 2 Cougar Bay, CDA Lake Nov. 2 (RYOU)

Ring-necked Duck 40+ Mica Bay Survey, CDA Lake Nov. 12 (KBUC,SSTU)

Bufflehead 4 Fernan Lake (1st this fall on Fernan) Nov. 2 (SSTU)

Common Merganser 6-8 Fernan Lake (1st this fall on Fernan) Nov. 2 (SSTU)

Sharp-shinned Hawk 1 Arrowhead Rd. CDA Nov. 11 (TPOT)

Bald Eagle 5 Wolf Lodge Bay (1st winter Bald Eagle Survey for the BLM) November 18 (CCAM); 1 Mica Bay Nov 17 (DGRA); 1 immature on a walk along the North Fork of the CDA River near her home Nov. 22 (LHAR)

Northern Pygmy-Owl 1 Fernan lake Nov. 13 (JHOL) 1 was hit by a car on the Farragut State Park Rd. (EBUC)

Herring Gull 1 Mica Bay Survey Nov. 12 (KBUC,SSTU)

Belted Kingfisher 1 Mica Bay Survey, CDA Lake Nov. 12 (KBUC,SSTU)

Downy Woodpecker 1 Mica Bay Survey Nov. 12 (KBUC,SSTU); 1

showed up at her feeder Armstrong Park Nov. 18 (KBUC)

Hairy Woodpecker 1 Mica Bay Survey Nov. 12 (KBUC,SSTU); 1 at her feeder every day Armstrong Park (KBUC); and one showed up at my feeder Fernan Lake Nov. 22 (SSTU)

Blue Jay 1 hybrid Pine Ave. CDA at feeder Nov. 11 (NMER)

Steller's Jay 1 coming daily to feeder Fernan Lake (SSTU)

Chestnut-backed Chickadee 2 Mica Bay Survey (feeder of Jerry Hanson), CDA Lake Nov. 12 (KBUC,SSTU)

Great Horned Owl 2 Cougar Bay, CDA Lake Nov. 1 (SSTU,KSTU)

Pygmy Nuthatch several Fairmont Loop Rd. CDA at feeder Nov. 17 (JSEV); 1+ heard in Ponderosa Pine NIC Campus (TPOT,SSTU)

Brown Creeper 1 Arrowhead RD CDA Nov. 16 (TPOT)

Winter Wren 5 on a walk along the North Fork of the CDA River near her home Nov. 22 (LHAR)

American Dipper 1 on a walk along the North Fork of the CDA River near her home Nov. 22 (LHAR)

Varied Thrush 5 on a walk along the North Fork of the CDA River near her home Nov. 22 (LHAR); 1 came in with some robins in her yard, Armstrong Park mid Nov. (KBUC)

Bohemian Waxwing 150 on a walk along the North Fork of the CDA River near her home Nov. 22 (LHAR)

Northern Shrike 1 Cougar Bay, CDA Lake Nov. 12 (SSTU,KBUC)

Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored) 2 on a walk along the North Fork of the CDA River near her home Nov. 22 (LHAR) and I have one coming to my feeder on Fernan Lake (SSTU)

Note: Slate-colored which nest in Canada and the North Eastern U.S. winter throughout the continental U.S.

They are usually found with flocks of our resident Oregon Junco.

American Goldfinch 2 Mica Bay Survey Nov. 12 (at feeder of Jerry Hanson) Nov. 12 (KBUC,SSTU)

Gray-crowned Rosy Finch 3 on a walk along the North Fork of the CDA River near her home Nov. 22 (LHAR)

Observers: Ed and Kris Buchler (EBUC,KBUC), Corinne Cameron (CCAM), Roland Craft (RCRA), Diane Gray (DGRA) Nancy Mertz (NMER), Lisa Hardy (LHAR), Jannie Holmes (JHOL), Earl Kendle (EKEN) Theresa Potts (TPOT), Jan Severtson (JSEV), Keith and Shirley Sturts (KSTU, SSTU), Phil Waring (PWAR), Roger Young (RYOU)

10th ANNUAL BIRD FEEDER WATCH

Sign up to count the birds at your feeder 4 times during the winter (starts Dec.15). The purpose of the survey is to share information about the birds coming to our feeders. The results will be summarized in the March issue of the newsletter.

If you participate in the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology "Project Feeder Watch", you could use the same data for our local feeder survey.

You can pick up survey forms at our December meeting or call Shirley Sturts - 664-5318, and she will send you one.