

THE FISH HAWK HERALD



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

December 2012

Volume 22 Number 4

December Program



Warblers - banding station at the Idaho Bird Observatory - photograph by Lisa Hardy

DATE: December 11, Tuesday

PLACE: Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 N. Ramsey, CDA

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

SPEAKER: Jay Carlile, Research Director for the Idaho Bird Observatory

Jay's current research interests are focused on the stopover ecology, habitat needs, and conservation of migratory landbirds in the west and in Latin America. In particular, elucidating the relative importance of riparian and montane habitats throughout the arid west during spring and fall migration is a major goal. He is also the Coordinator for the Idaho Bird Conservation Partnership. He will be presenting information from his Flammulated Owl research in southern Idaho as well as a summary of his year long work banding songbirds and raptors on Lucky

Peak near Boise. He will also introduce our group to the mission and goals of the Idaho Bird Conservation Partnership. We are privileged to have him as a speaker, so please make sure to join us.

Also --- Cookie Exchange

If you would like to participate, bring two dozen cookies (home-made please) to the meeting and exchange them for two dozen other cookies, not all necessarily the same. You could end up with 24 different kinds of cookies if enough people participate!



And --- Christmas Bird Count:

Look for sign-up sheets on the table.

Board Meeting

Date: December 4, Tuesday

Place: Lutheran Church of the Master

Time: 4:30 p.m.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POTLUCK

WHEN: December 15th, following the Coeur d'Alene Christmas Bird Count, when it's too dark to bird anymore, and the hunger pangs are too strong to ignore!! **All are welcome, not just the bird counters!**

WHERE: Home of Laura Bayless -612 S. 11th Street, CDA. **RSVP:** Laura at 964-0115.

Please bring a dish to share: appetizer, entree, salad, or dessert, plus the beverage of your choice.

How the Christmas Bird Count Helps Birds



Christmas Bird Count circles in the western hemisphere

How Christmas Bird Count Helps Protect Species and Their Habitat *(from the National Audubon Website)*

The data collected by observers over the past century allow researchers, conservation biologists, and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys such as the Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years.

The long term perspective made possible by the Christmas Bird Count is vital for conservationists. It informs strategies to protect birds and their habitat, and helps identify environmental issues with implications for people as well. For example, local trends in bird populations can indicate habitat fragmentation or signal an immediate environmental threat, such as groundwater contamination or poisoning from improper use of pesticides.

In the 1980's, CBC data documented the decline of wintering populations of the American Black Duck, after which conservation measures were put into effect to reduce hunting pressure on this species.

More recently, in 2009, the data were instrumental in [Audubon's Birds & Climate Change](#) analysis, which documented range shifts of bird species over time. Also in 2009, CBC data were instrumental in the collaborative report by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - [State of the Birds 2009](#)

In 2007, the data were instrumental in the development of two Audubon State of the Birds Reports - [Common Birds in Decline](#), which revealed that some of America's most beloved and familiar birds have taken a nosedive over the past forty years, and [WatchList 2007](#), which identified 178 rarer species in the continental U.S. and 39 in Hawaii that are imperiled. These three reports helped scientists and policy-makers to both identify threats to birds and habitat, and promote broad awareness of the need to address them.

Below are some things we are learning about through Christmas Bird Count Data. **(Underlined items are links to website articles - go to our website and click on them to read the article.)**

[The Hooded Preliminary Look at Growth in Numbers in the United States as Demonstrated in the Christmas Bird Count Database by Steve Davis and Peter Capobianco, American Birds, Summary of the 106th CBC](#)

[Population Dynamics and Trends of Waterbirds by Gregory S. Butcher, Daniel K. Niven, John R. Sauer, American Birds, Summary of the 105th CBC](#)

Continued on page 3

Christmas Bird Count Helps Birds

Continued from page 2

[Sympatry of Grassquits on New Providence Island, Bahamas, Based on Analysis of CBC Data by Anthony White, John Bjerke, Paul Dean, Kathleen Sealey, American Birds, Summary of the 105th CBC](#)

[Christmas Bird Count Provides Insights Into Population Change in Land Birds That Breed in the Boreal Forest by Daniel K. Niven, John R. Sauer, Gregory S. Butcher, and William A. Link, American Birds, Summary of the 104th CBC](#)

[Statistical Analyses Make the Christmas Bird Count Relevant for Conservation by John R. Sauer, Daniel K. Niven, and William A. Link, American Birds, Summary of the 104th CBC](#)

[Christmas Bird Count Data Suggest West Nile Virus May Not Be A Conservation Issue in Northeastern United States by Carolee Caffrey and Charles C. Peterson, American Birds, Summary of the 103rd CBC](#)

[Combined Data of Project FeederWatch and the Christmas Bird Count Indicate Declines of Chickadees and Corvids: Possible Impacts of West Nile Virus by David N. Bonter and Wesley M. Hochachka, American Birds, Summary of the 103rd CBC](#)

[Ten Things We Learned from Audubon's Christmas Bird Count](#)

[Demise of the Eastern Bewick's Wren](#)

[Population Trends in Evening Grosbeak](#)

[Dove Expansions in North America](#)

[Pine Siskins across North America](#)

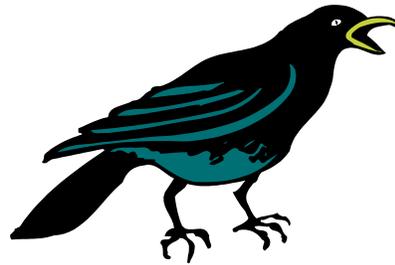
[Tufted Titmouse Range Expansion](#)

[Grackle Expansion](#)

[American Kestrel](#)

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Book Review- Reviewed by George Saylor



ROW PLANET: ESSENTIAL WISDOM FROM THE URBAN WILDERNESS

BY LYANDA LYNN HAUPT

On our recent trip driving across the U.S. and back, the most common bird we observed was the American Crow. It didn't seem to matter where we were; crows were there also. According to Lyanda Lynn Haupt, author of *Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness*, there are more than 30 million crows in the United States. Some experts she cited think there might be many more, as many as one crow per human family. Such an abundance of crows Haupt wrote, is a sign of ecological imbalance. As humans move into an area, the habitat is often disrupted and many species cannot survive there, but others, such as crows, do well. She noted that where humans are, crows generally are there also because we provide good food sources for them.

Haupt has written an engaging and informative book about our avian neighbors. The author is well accredited, having served as a director of educational programs for Seattle Audubon, worked as a raptor rehabilitator, a seabird researcher for the Fish and Wildlife Service, and authored a number of articles in conservation-oriented publications. She has also written other books, including *Rare Encounters with Ordinary Birds*, winner of the 2002 Washington State Book Award.

Continued on page 4

Book Review – continued from page 3

If you enjoy observing crows and their interesting behaviors, this is a book you will enjoy as well. Haupt delves into the biology, behaviors, antics, and other aspects of crow behavior and lifestyle. She tells her story in part through Charlotte, an injured young crow that she cared for who became a daily visitor to her yard. She presents scientific facts about crows, a variety of personal observations about them, and tells a number of anecdotes about crows doing extraordinary things. However, if you only focus on the information about crows, you will miss an important part of the book.

Haupt is also making a strong plea for us to be more connected to the natural world around us, so that we may be more aware of our impact on it, and the changes needed in our lifestyles if we are to be good stewards. She argues that because crows are so ubiquitous, if we pay attention to them, they can connect us to the natural world around us, even in urban settings. Hers is the voice of a concerned naturalist –she even has a chapter on the importance of becoming an amateur naturalist – but she is hopeful that we can connect to our natural surroundings in a way that will cause us to take better care of it.

Haupt argues that we are connected to the natural world by how we choose and consume water, food, shelter, and air, just like all other animals, and that: “it is here, in the activity of our daily lives, that we most surely affect this earth, for good or for ill.” The vehicle she uses for conveying her message is the life and behavior of crows, properly observed, and the way they connect us to our natural environment.

I enjoyed the book, and will likely read it again. I enjoyed it because of the story of crows and their unusual behaviors (they can recognize our individual faces, one crow followed a postman

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

on his daily routine for two years, crows seem to hold funerals, etc.). At one point she wrote: “Not bound by instinct, crows can and will do just about anything.” I also enjoyed it because it was well-written and carried a positive message about our role in the world and the possibilities we have for taking better care of it. I hope you would like it too.



Western Bluebird along the Hoo Doo Bluebird Trail – Photographed by Peggy Albertson

Bluebird Trail Report

Shirley Sturts

Continued from our November newsletter

Hoo Doo Tree Swallow:

36 nest attempts, 177 eggs, 118 nestlings, 89 fledged - a 58 % nesting success rate - 1st egg May 7th

Mountain Chickadee: 1 nest attempt, 8 eggs, 6 nestlings, 6 fledged – a 100% nesting success rate – 1st egg May 7th

Western Bluebird: 7 nest attempts, 36 eggs, 30 nestlings, 23 fledged – an 85% nesting success - 1st egg May 6th

Mountain Bluebird: 2 nest attempts, 12 eggs, 4 nestlings, 4 fledged – 50% nesting success rate – 1st egg May 16th

All the nest data that we collected has been recorded on www.nestwatch.org, part of the Citizen Scientist Network of Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

SPRAGUE LAKE FIELD TRIP

Saturday, October 27

Judy Waring



Tundra Swan -- Photograph by Bill Linn

Another rainy day was predicted for the Sprague Lake field trip, following a week of wet days. Nevertheless, seven stalwart Auduboners gathered at K-Mart to head west and check out several lakes for fall migrants.

The first stop was in the town of Sprague, WA. It is a most interesting place, worthy of a visit by itself. The town was established in the 1800's and it hasn't changed much since then. An abandoned building advertised "Barber and Baths" in fading red paint and the stores on the main street were largely empty.

But on to our hunt for migrants passing through. Sprague Lake is an elongated body of water offering resting and feeding opportunities to waterfowl on their way south. We had five Tundra Swan pass overhead before we even reached the lake, alerting us with their distinctive call. The usual mix of ducks were found in a bay at the eastern end of the lake, including Bufflehead, American Coot, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, and Ruddy Duck. A Ring-necked Pheasant did a fly-by for us as we were

readying to move on, always a treat. We pulled into boat launches as we drove west along the lake and added Ring-necked Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Common Loon, Double-crested Cormorant, and Bald Eagle.

We then drove to Cow Lake, a name we have read in NW Birders reports but had not been to before. Not much there but on the way we spotted several Northern Harriers hunting over the fields. Our last stop was back in Sprague at the sewage lagoons where we picked up Western Grebe, American Kestrel, Bonaparte's Gull, and Redhead. Unfortunately, the weather prediction was accurate and the rain began in earnest so we didn't go to Sheep Lake or Crooked Knee Lake. Next time. We tallied thirty three species in all, and had a good day. Participating: Roland Craft, Mary Deasy, Matt Thurley, Lisa Hardy, Phil Waring, Judy Waring, and Karen Williams.

Fernan Lake, Mineral Ridge, Wolf Lodge Bay and Beauty Bay November 10, 2012

Janet Callen

The temperature was "nippy", but the day was beautiful. With a blue sky and trees covered with snow, seven hardy birders braved the cold and explored from Fernan Lake to Beauty Bay. The hike on Mineral Ridge was a welcome way to get warm.

Some highlights were Common Loons at Fernan and Beauty Bay, numerous Hooded Mergansers, Bufflehead, Western Grebes and a Belted Kingfisher on Wolf Lodge Bay. A lone Ruddy Duck was seen on Fernan.

On the hike to Mineral Ridge we watched a Pacific Wren (Winter) and later saw and heard a Pileated Woodpecker. We heard a Steller's Jay, Red-breasted and Pygmy Nuthatches.

Continued on Page 6



Fernan Lake, Mineral Ridge, Wolf Lodge Bay and Beauty Bay

Continued from page 5
American Tree Sparrow
Photograph by Wayne
Tree

The prize of the day was an American Tree Sparrow seen by Darlene Carlton and Valerie Zagar at Wolf Lodge Bay. It was the 200th bird of the year for Kootenai County.

Roland Craft, Jan Severtson, Phil and Judy Waring and Andy, rounded out the group. We identified 24 species.

Sandpoint Fieldtrip November 17, 2012

Lisa Hardy



Black Duck - Photograph by Lisa Hardy

The weather cooperated for our mid-November sampling of waterfowl on Lake Pend Oreille. The lake was ice-free and the water level was low creating large stretches of mud and shallow water for "tip-up" dabbling ducks, including the

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

trip highlight, a rare American Black Duck.

After the obligatory stop at Starbuck's in Sandpoint, we hiked the newly constructed bike path along the bypass. A first for most of us, the trail was receiving enthusiastic use by joggers and dog-walkers despite the cool temperature and a few drops of rain. The trail borders Sand Creek and provided good viewing of the numerous dabblers taking advantage of the low water levels, including some lingering warm-blooded types, namely Northern Shoveler and Green-winged Teal. Also present were dozens of Hooded Mergansers.

We had good looks at a male Cassin's Finch and found two vociferous Killdeer hanging out on the mud. Considerable work was put into landscaping and controlling erosion along the banks of the creek. The vertical sides of the bypass were clothed in panels of grass and self-seeded weeds like tansy and mullein. Along the banks, saplings had been planted with collars of hardware cloth, but the collars had not prevented major inroads by beaver; about half the saplings were gone, leaving small stumps with gnaw marks indicating that the beavers felled the trees to fall away from the creek so that they could be dragged to the water. Trampled paths through the rushes showed where the saplings had been dragged.

Next, we ducked under the bridge and scoped out the lake from City Beach. The wind from the northeast was kicking up a few whitecaps, and made for harsh viewing conditions. Although we could not find any loons, we found three female Red-breasted Mergansers, and three grebe species.

Continued on page 7

Sandpoint Fieldtrip

Continued from page 6

From City Beach, we headed to Sunnyside Rd. where we could see swans lining the shore of Oden Bay, altogether over 200, with most too distant to identify as to species, but a handful of birds close to the road were Tundra Swan. At Shaw Bay, we found large numbers of ducks and coots. While scanning through a group of Mallard and Northern Pintail, we found a large, dark duck that merited further attention. When it turned, we could see the drab green-yellow bill, dark cap and contrasting neck/breast of an American Black Duck, one of the most common wintering ducks along the mid-Atlantic coast but a rarity in Idaho.

After the black duck excitement, we finally located several Common Loon along Sunnyside, and then spent 45 minutes scanning the Pack River delta area from Hawkins Point. Thousands of waterfowl were present, mostly American Widgeon and American Coot. We diligently scanned until we found two Eurasian Widgeon. We headed back to Highway 200 and home, with our final species of the day being Bonaparte's Gull, of which we obtained excellent looks at 4 individuals as we traveled upstream adjacent to the delta flats. We had a total of 47 species on the trip.

Back home, I looked up the black duck records for Idaho, and found that the only reports from North Idaho are from Mann Lake near Lewiston. Study of the photos I took showed a slight curl in the tail feathers of our black duck, which suggests some Mallard genes, as is apparently not uncommon in black ducks reported from the west.

Trip participants: Kris Buchler, Janet Callen, Roland Craft, Lisa Hardy, Sally Jones, Marilyn Robertson

Study Shows Growing Coffee and Cacao in Shade Helps Birds

From: American Bird Conservancy (ABC)



Shade-grown Coffee in Colombia
by Brian Smith

(August 16, 2012) While natural forests provide the best habitat for tropical birds, a new study from the University of Utah found that wooded “shade” plantations – called agroforests -- that produce coffee and chocolate with some native forest trees left standing, provide four times greater bird diversity than open farmland.

The findings also suggest that as open farmland replaces forests and agroforests, the reduced number of bird species and the shifts in the populations of various types of birds may reduce the benefits that birds provide to people, such as eating insect pests, spreading seeds, and pollinating crops.

“We found that agroforests are far better overall for bird biodiversity in the tropics than open farms,” says study author Dr. Çağan H. Şekercioğlu (pronounced Cha-awn Shay-care-gee-oh-loo), an ornithologist, who is also an assistant professor of biology at the University of Utah.

Continued on page 8

Shade Helps Birds Continued from page 7

The study looked at 6,093 tropical bird species, including migratory birds, whose top three habitat choices (out of 14 possible habitats) included forests, farms, or both, with the latter described as agroforest birds. It found that 4,574 bird species included forest but not farms in their top three habitats, only 303 species that included farms but not forests in their top three habitat choices, but 1,216 agroforest species that include both forests and farms among their top three habitats.

“For the last twelve years, American Bird Conservancy has been encouraging and supporting South American conservation partners to engage more farmers and ranchers in agroforestry or “silvipasture” practices. This study demonstrates scientifically the benefits of this type of farming to birds, and provides an incentive for environmentally-conscious consumers to choose certified bird-friendly, shade-grown coffee or chocolate,” said Dr. George Fenwick, President of American Bird Conservancy, the only organization exclusively conserving birds throughout the Americas.

ABC and its International Partners have produced and planted more than 950,000 native trees and coffee bushes in agroforestry and silvipasture systems in Nicaragua, Colombia, and Peru to provide enhanced habitat for migratory and resident birds.

“This study joins a growing body of evidence affirming that ABC’s efforts to restore trees to agricultural landscapes in previously forested areas will benefit birds” said Dr. Daniel Lebbin, Conservation Biologist in ABC’s International Division.

The Smithsonian Institution, the Rainforest Alliance, and the Rainforest Action Network all

certify shade coffee. Other crops grown in shade include cardamom and yerba mate, a tree whose leaves are steeped in hot water to make a caffeinated beverage popular in South America.

The findings of this study suggest that conversion of forest to farmland may reduce “ecosystem services” that birds provide to people.

“As you go [from forests] to more and more open agriculture, you lose some bird groups that provide important ecosystem services like insect control, seed dispersal and pollination, while you get higher numbers of granivores [seed and grain eaters] that actually can be crop pests,” Şekercioğlu says. Specifically:

- Insect-eating birds do best in forests – especially those that live near the ground in the understory, the layer of plants below the tree canopy and above the ground cover. But small and medium insect-eating birds, especially migrant and canopy species, do well in agroforests. The number of insect-eating species declines on open farms, where they are most needed to help control pests.
- Fruit-eating birds, especially larger ones, “do best in forest because they have more habitat and more food, and the large ones often are hunted outside forests in agricultural settings. Overall, frugivores – especially smaller ones – do OK in agroforests, but the number of fruit-eating species declines significantly on open farms.” Frugivores help spread the seeds of the fruits they eat.

Continued on page 9

Shade Helps Birds Continued from page 8

- Nectar-eating birds help pollinate many plants. They “tend to increase in agroforests compared with forests. A lot of nectar-eating birds obviously like flowers, and many plants flower when there’s some light. When you have extensive forest its often pretty shady so not many things are in flower at any given time.” The nectar eaters are less common on open farms.
- Omnivorous birds “tend to do better in agroforests and especially on open farms” than in forests, because the mixed habitat tends to provide a more varied diet.
- Grain and seed-eating birds are “the only group that significantly increases in open agricultural areas. A lot of the seeds they eat are grass seeds, but also from crops. Some of these seed-eating bird species are major agricultural pests, and that’s another reason for encouraging agroforests.”

Events and Field Trips

Mica Bay Survey

Date: December 11, Tuesday

Time: 9:00 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. Beginner birders are welcome. We will help you with identification skills.

Area Christmas Bird Counts

We go out in teams. Sign up at the December 11th meeting or call Shirley 664-5318. We share the cost of the gas with the driver.

Coeur D'Alene CBC

Date: December 15, Saturday

Compiler: Shirley Sturts 664-5318

shirley.sturts@gmail.com

Meet for breakfast at 6:00 a.m or 7:00 a.m. to join your team. Meet for., Michael D's Eatery

Annual Christmas Potluck

When: December 15th, following the Coeur d'Alene Christmas Bird Count All are welcome, not just the bird counters!

Where: Home of Laura Bayless -612 S. 11th Street, CDA. **RSVP:** Laura at 964-0115.

Please bring a dish to share: appetizer, entree, salad, or dessert, and beverage of your choice.

Spirit Lake CBC

Date: January 2, Wednesday

Compiler: Shirley Sturts 664-5318

shirley.sturts@gmail.com

Meet for breakfast at 6:15 a.m., Rustler's Roost, Hayden Lake, Highway 95 and Hayden Avenue, or 7:00 a.m. to join your team.

Compiling and Pizza Party

following the Spirit Lake CBC, about 4:30 p.m.

Where: Janet Callen's home **RSVP:** Janet, 664-1085 or email, jgoldfinch@roadrunner.com. Please bring money to share the cost of the pizza and something to add to a green salad (greens will be provided). Hot tea will be provided. Bring whatever else you want to drink.

Indian Mountain CBC

Date: January 5, Saturday

Compiler: Don Heikkila 659-3389 -

idfinn@sm-email.com

Team organizers: Shirley Sturts 664-5318 -

shirley.sturts@gmail.com and Lisa Hardy 783-1262 basalt@earthlink.net

Meet and time - made by each participating team

Kootenai Environmental Alliance

December 1 Wes Hanson Watercolor Art Show @ Muzik's Log House, 1302 N 7th St.

December 6 Lunch & Learn @ The Iron Horse: “Camp Easton Forever” - For information: check their Website, call the office at 667-9093, or email KEA at [kealliance.org](http://www.kealliance.org).

<http://www.kealliance.org>

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