

# THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society  
[www.cdaudubon.org](http://www.cdaudubon.org)

December 2016

Volume 27 Number 4

## December Program

**Date:** December 13<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday

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

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Speakers:** Kris Buchler and Carrie Hugo

**Program:** "Bird ID Quiz Show" Join the fun and games of a bird ID quiz. Learn to distinguish similar species you might encounter on our Christmas Bird Counts. Become familiar with basic field marks, behaviors and tips for getting your birds!

**PRIZES FOR ALL!**

## "Christmas Cookie Exchange."



In the December meeting, we will be holding the annual **"Christmas Cookie Exchange."** Bring some cookies to share and take some home for later. Be sure to bring some for eating that evening as well.

## Books For Tots

### 10th Annual Children's Book Drive



Please help our chapter in its effort to collect new books for less fortunate children, at our December meeting and at the CBC Annual Christmas Potluck. Since these books are coming from Audubon, books that include birds or wild animals might be considered.

What is Books For Tots? It is a children's book drive designed to collect new books for underprivileged kids in Kootenai County. The books collected by Books For Tots are given to the local chapter of Toys For Tots and are distributed to needy children in the community.

What is our vision? To broaden the minds of children by ensuring that needy kids receive brand new books for the holidays. The trickle-down effect of reading is powerful and everlasting, and we want children to be exposed to as many new books as possible.

Goal: To collect 10,000 kid's books (infant -12 years). There are approximately 3,000 underprivileged kids in the county, and we hope to give each child 2 or 3 age-appropriate books.

Our Contact: Linda Rohlinger (208) 819-9988 or [linda@rohlinger.net](mailto:linda@rohlinger.net)

*"There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all.*

— Jacqueline Kennedy

## Christmas Bird Counts

Every year, the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society has participated in three annual Christmas bird counts. Bird counts are the way that data is collected throughout the country, so that scientists and others can see the trends and changes taking place in North America. They are the Coeur d'Alene area (December 15), Spirit Lake -Hoodoo Valley (January 2), and Indian Mountain (January 5) counts.

Experienced and not-so-experienced birders are needed for these events. Sign up at the December meeting or call Shirley or Eula for more details. Let's do our part to provide data this year! Thanks for helping! Eula Hickam 208-661-3228.

### Learn How To Identify Sparrows

From the *Great Back Yard eNewsletter*

Song Sparrows are the best place to start with identifying sparrows because they embody all the general traits of sparrows but in a more birder-friendly package. They're brownish and muddled, like most of our sparrows, but they've also got some straightforward identification marks to work with. They're sort of skulky, like many sparrows, which have a habit of staying out of sight in tall grass or bushes, but Songs also frequently sit right out in the open for all to see. Plus, Song Sparrows can be found in every U.S. state at some point during the year (except Hawaii), so most all birders will have a chance to find one. Seriously, their [eBird chart](#) is so big and purple it looks like Barney the Dinosaur.

Since we know they're probably around, let's figure out first where to find Song Sparrows. There isn't really one specific place to look. Song Sparrows live in a variety of different habitats, but they are most commonly found near the ground in bushes or shrubs, and often near fresh water. But, in general, they're all over the place,  
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from the city park downtown to a national park wilderness, so just keep an eye out.



Song Sparrow. Photo: [Rick Leche -Photography](#)

The impression of a Song Sparrow is "generally brown colored," though they're actually pretty richly patterned in gray, russet, and deep chocolate. The face has lovely stripes radiating from the bill: a strong brown line through the eye, a brown crown, and thick, parallel brown stripes framing a white stripe down along the throat. It's a pretty presentation overall, but what you want to look at first is the chest. Song Sparrows have thick messy brown stripes running down the top and sides of their whitish breast, with a big fat brown spot in the middle. That spot and those big fat stripes are always your best field marks.

That said, you will probably hear Song Sparrows before you see them, so learning to identify them by ear is important. Their song, as their name implies, is one of the loveliest and most memorable of all our common birds. It might take some practice—here, listen to some songs on the [Audubon Field Guide page](#)—but you'll get it. It's tricky, I think, because it's variable. There are four songs listed on the Audubon page, but it seems like each individual bird has its own twist.

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## Learn How To Identify Sparrows

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The key is to listen for the two or three short introductory notes followed by the jumble of faster notes, trills, and whistles. Listen for that pattern of short and fast and you'll soon be able to recognize the song—and probably start hearing it everywhere.



Song Sparrow. Photo: [Robin Horn](#)

Once you've got the song down, you'll be able to use it as a reference point to separate Songs from other sparrows no matter where you go.

Along with the song, the markings on the Song Sparrow are also useful as a reference for other species of sparrow. That little brown bird that looks like a Song Sparrow but the breast spot is smaller and the streaks are finer and stop abruptly? Well, that might be a Lincoln's Sparrow. Are the streaks finer and there's some yellow over the eye? Check out the Savannah Sparrow. Small breast spot but no streaks? Might be a Swamp Sparrow. Red all over and stuck in the sidewalk? I think you're looking at a fire hydrant.

Plato might say that Song Sparrows are the ideal sparrow, the sparrow by which the sparrowness of all other sparrows is determined. And who am I to argue with that? They're cute, they're nearby, and they open the door into the wonderful world of tiny, brown birds that don't ever let you get a good look at them. At least they're more interesting than fire hydrants.



## eBird Global Tools for Birders, Critical Data for Science

From the eBird Website:

<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/>

- Record the birds you see
- Keep track of your bird lists
- Explore dynamic maps and graphs
- Share your sightings and join the eBird community
- Contribute to science and conservation

### Overview

A real-time, online checklist program, eBird has revolutionized the way that the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, eBird provides rich data sources for basic information on bird abundance and distribution at a variety of spatial and temporal scales.

eBird's goal is to maximize the utility and accessibility of the vast numbers of bird observations made each year by recreational and professional bird watchers. It is amassing one of the largest and fastest growing biodiversity data resources in existence. For example, in May 2015, participants reported more than 9.5 million bird observations across the world! The observations of each participant join those of others in an international network of eBird users. eBird then shares these observations with a global community of educators, land managers, ornithologists, and conservation biologists. In time these data will become the foundation for a better understanding of bird distribution across the western hemisphere and beyond.

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## **eBird** Continued from page 3

### **How Does it Work?**

eBird documents the presence or absence of species, as well as bird abundance through checklist data. A simple and intuitive web-interface engages tens of thousands of participants to submit their observations or view results via interactive queries into the eBird database. eBird encourages users to participate by providing Internet tools that maintain their personal bird records and enable them to visualize data with interactive maps, graphs, and bar charts. All these features are available in English, Spanish, and French.

A birder simply enters when, where, and how they went birding, then fills out a checklist of all the birds seen and heard during the outing. eBird provides various options for data gathering including point counts, transects, and area searches. Automated data quality filters developed by regional bird experts review all submissions before they enter the database. Local experts review unusual records that are flagged by the filters.

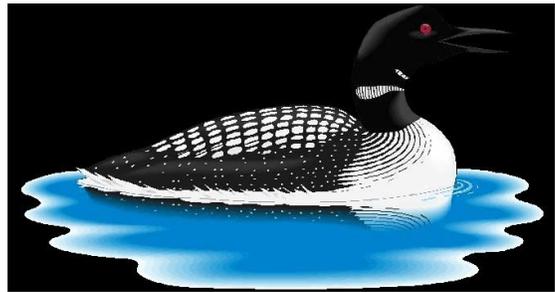
### **Data Integration**

eBird collects observations from birders through portals managed and maintained by local partner conservation organizations. In this way eBird targets specific audiences with the highest level of local expertise, promotion, and project ownership. Portals may have a regional focus (aVerAves, eBird Puerto Rico) or they may have more specific goals and/or specific methodologies (Louisiana Winter Bird Atlas, Bird Conservation Network eBird). Each eBird portal is fully integrated within the eBird database and application infrastructure so that data can be analyzed across political and geographic boundaries. For example, observers entering observations of Cape May Warbler from Puerto Rico can view those data separately, or with the entire Cape May Warbler data set gathered by eBird across the western hemisphere.

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### **Data Accessibility**

eBird data are stored in a secure facility and archived daily, and are accessible to anyone via the eBird web site and other applications developed by the global biodiversity information community. For example, eBird data are part of the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN), which integrates observational data on bird populations across the western hemisphere. In turn, the AKN feeds eBird data to international biodiversity data systems, such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). In this way any contribution made to eBird increases our understanding of the distribution, richness, and uniqueness of the biodiversity of our planet

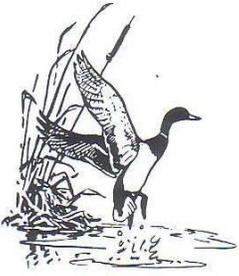


### **Fernan Lake, Wolf Lodge Bay, Mineral Ridge Nov. 12, 2016**

Janet Callen

The day started with a little rain, but not enough to stop our field trip. Bill Gundlach, Jan Davidson, Valerie Zagar and Judy Waring joined me for the journey.

We spotted a total of 22 species during this half-day trip. One Common Loon, a target bird, was seen. Bufflehead ruled in numbers. We also saw Common and Hooded Mergansers, a few Ring-necked Ducks, and many Horned Grebes, a Western and a Red-Necked Grebe. There were Double-crested Cormorants, three 3 Bald Eagles and 30 pre-Thanksgiving Turkeys. We hiked the Mineral Ridge Trail where we heard Dark-eyed Junco and Red-breasted Nuthatch.



## Field Trips 2016-2017

**Please Register:** Watch the website or newsletter for updates to our field trip schedule. Additional field trips will be added if we have volunteers to lead them

Please contact our field trip coordinators Janet Callen 664-1085 or George Saylor 667-2787 to suggest or volunteer to lead a trip. Participants should contact the trip leader at least 24 hours in advance of the field trip to find out if the meeting place/time or destination has been changed. Participants will share in a mileage reimbursement for the driver

### Mica Bay Survey

**Date:** December 13th, Tuesday (held 2nd Tuesday of each month - times vary depending on month)

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Meet:** Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

**Leader:** Janet Callen 664-1085

**Activity:** We spend about 3 hours once a month counting birds at Mica Bay. Beginner birders are welcome to come and learn bird identification skills.

### Rathdrum Prairie Hawk Survey

Will take place once a month from November through March. Doug Ward is the leader. This two-hour fast-paced, one-vehicle journey across the prairie is a learning experience that is a lot of fun. We travel in one car for safety. To reserve a spot call Doug 762-7107 or 699-9327

### Coeur d'Alene CBC

**Date:** December 15, Thursday

**Meet:** 6:30 a.m. for breakfast at Michael D's Eatery, 203 E, Coeur d'Alene Lake Drive.

7:30 a.m. for those not having breakfast.

**Organizer/Compiler:** Shirley Sturts - 664-5318  
[shirley.sturts@gmail.com](mailto:shirley.sturts@gmail.com)

We go in 6 or 7 teams and cover different areas of the count circle. You can sign up at the Dec. meetings or call/email Shirley. You can also sign up to count at your feeder in the comfort of your own home and spend as much time at it as you want.

### Christmas Bird Count Potluck

**When:** December 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 Theresa Potts 4103 Arrowhead Road, CDA (turn west off of Atlas) RSVP 765-0229 or email [pottstheresa2@gmail.com](mailto:pottstheresa2@gmail.com)

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

### Spirit Lake CBC

**Date:** January 2, Monday

**Organizer/Compiler"** Eula Hickum  
661-3228

**Meet** for breakfast Country Boy Café in Athol at 7:00 a.m., 7:45 a.m. to join your team. **Compiling and Pizza Party** about 4:30 p.m. **Where:** Janet Callen's home **RSVP:** Janet, 664-1085 or email, [jgoldfinch@roadrunner.com](mailto: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, Thursday

**Organizer/Compilers:** Don Heikkila and Lisa Hardy 208-783 1262 - [basalt@frontier.com](mailto:basalt@frontier.com)  
Call Lisa or Shirley Sturts 664-5318 for meeting time and place

**New Member Application**

**Join Online**

Become a member of the National Audubon Society, Join online at:  
[https://secure.audubon.org/site/Donation2?df\\_id=8080&8080.donation=form1](https://secure.audubon.org/site/Donation2?df_id=8080&8080.donation=form1)

**Pick Chapter Code G06**

**From the dropdown list**

**Join by Phone**

You may also call National Audubon at **1-844-428-3826**  
And remember to reference our **Chapter Code G06**

**CDA Audubon Chapter Officers**

**President:**  
Midge Marcy-Brennan 661-0206  
**Vice President:**  
Dick Cripe 665-0010  
**Recording Secretary:**  
Valerie Zagar 819-5115  
**Treasurer:**  
Janet Callen 664-1085  
**Board Members: all officers +**  
Peggy Albertson, Barbara Christofferson, Darlene Carlton, Cathy Cousins, Carrie Hugo, Jim Lynn, Lynn Sheridan

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**Publicity:** open  
**Field Trips:** Janet Callen 664-1085  
George Saylor 664--2787  
**Education:** Barbara Christofferson 667-3931  
**Conservation:** Midge Marcy-Brennan  
**Membership:** Peggy Albertson 664-1616  
**Hospitality:** Elli Emm  
**Newsletter:** Shirley Sturts 664-5318  
**Programs:** Eula Hickam 661-3228  
**Mailing:** Peggy Albertson 664-1616  
**Webmaster:** Shirley Sturts 664-5318  
**Historian:** Open

**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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