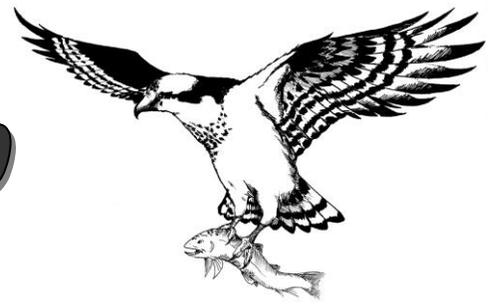


THE FISH HAWK HERALD



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

January 2008

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 5

BOARD MEETING

DATE: January 21, Monday
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Mt. West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

JANUARY PROGRAM

DATE: January 21, Monday
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: First Presbyterian Church, 521 E. Lakeside, Coeur d'Alene
SPEAKER: Jane Cantwell, raptor biologist, falconer and President of "Birds of Prey Northwest"
PROGRAM: "Living with Birds of Prey" Live raptors will be presented

BIRDS OF PREY NORTHWEST

Established in 1993, "Birds of Prey Northwest" promotes stewardship and conservation of raptors through educational programs with live birds of prey. They provide medical treatment and rehabilitation to injured birds of prey with the ultimate goal of returning them to the wild. For more information visit their website:

www.birdsofpreynorthwest.org

YARD LISTS

Turn your yard list into Lisa Hardy during the month of January

Visit our Website:

www.cdaudubon.org



**American Kestrel
Photograph by
Wayne Tree**

IDAHO COUNTY BIG YEAR A message from Lew Ulrey, Compiler

Hello fellow birders,

The 2007 Big Year List is almost in its final form now. I would like to point out some interesting highlights from the report. On a statewide basis 325 species were reported from the 34 participating counties. There are 44

counties in Idaho, and so there are still some counties that would be good to have included in the list. The 325 compares with 323 in 2006 and 331 in 2005.

Only American Kestrel was found in all 34 counties. Other species reported by 90% or more of the 34 counties were as follows: Canada Goose 91, Red-tailed Hawk 97, Killdeer 91, Mourning Dove 91, Northern Flicker 94, Black-billed Magpie 97, Common Raven 91, American Robin 94, European Starling 97, Song Sparrow 91, Dark-eyed Junco 97, Red-winged Blackbird 94, Western Meadowlark 91.

I think it is interesting that American Crow, all finches and House Sparrow did not make the = or > 90% list.

Anyone who is not familiar with the Big Year List Project and would like to participate, should go to www.idahobirds.net, click on Reports, and then Big Year Reports, then read the

description of the project that appears there. The Big Year Lists are also viewable there. If you have found a bird that does not show as reported for the county you birded in, look at the list of county compilers' names and email addresses. Send an email to the appropriate compiler, informing him or her of the name of the species and the date and place you found it. The compiler will make arrangements to have your observation posted on the list.

Editors Note: Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah and Shoshone Country totals are also found on our website with the name of the observer and the location.

COMMON BIRDS IN DECLINE

What's happening to birds we know and love?

Reprinted from the Audubon Website

Audubon's unprecedented analysis of forty years of [citizen-science](#) bird population data from our own [Christmas Bird Count](#) plus the Breeding Bird Survey reveals the alarming decline of many of our most common and beloved birds.

Since 1967, the average population of the common birds in steepest decline has fallen by 68 percent; some individual species nose-dived as much as 80 percent. All 20 birds on the national Common Birds in Decline list lost at least half their populations in just four decades.

The findings point to serious problems with both local habitats and national environmental trends. Only citizen action can make a difference for the birds and the state of our future.

Which Species? Why?

The wide variety of birds affected is reason for concern. Populations of meadowlarks and other farmland birds are diving because of suburban sprawl, industrial development, and the intensification of farming over the past 50 years.

Greater Scaup and other tundra-breeding birds are succumbing to dramatic changes to their breeding habitat as the permafrost melts earlier and more temperate predators move north in a likely response to global warming.

Boreal forest birds like the Boreal Chickadee face deforestation from increased insect outbreaks and fire, as well as excessive logging, drilling, and mining.

The one distinction these common species share is the potential to become uncommon unless we all take action to protect them and their habitat. [Browse the species](#) and learn [what you can do to help](#).

List of Top 20 Common Birds in Decline

The following are the 20 common North American birds with the greatest population declines since 1967. On the website, click on the name to view each individual profile to learn how you can help.



#1 [Northern Bobwhite](#): a chubby, robin-sized bird that runs along the ground in groups and is found in grasslands mixed with shrubs or widely spaced trees throughout much of the Eastern United States.

82%



#2 [Evening Grosbeak](#): a rotund, robin-sized bird found in the mountains of the western United States and Canada; the boreal forest of Canada and the northern edge of the United States east to Nova Scotia.

78%



#3 [Northern Pintail](#): a Mallard-sized "puddle duck" with a slim body found in grassy uplands and untilled crop fields near shallow seasonal and semi-permanent wetlands in much of the Northern Hemisphere.

77%



#4 [Greater Scaup](#): a black, gray, and white duck, smaller than a Mallard, found along lakes and large ponds in large open tundra complexes in Alaska and eastern Canada.

75%



#5 [Boreal Chickadee](#): a small, active, grayish bird with a black chin, brown cap, and brownish sides found in spruce and fir forests in most of Alaska and Canada and the U.S. states adjacent to Canada.

73%



#6 [Eastern Meadowlark](#): a robin-sized bird with a light brown back and brilliant yellow breast with a big, black "V", found in grasslands and open savannas in eastern Canada south through the eastern United States.

72%



#7 [Common Tern](#): a slender, medium-sized, black-capped, gray-and-white bird with thin, pointed bill, and a long, deeply forked tail, found near shore in oceans, lakes, and rivers in the Northern Hemisphere, wintering in the Southern Hemisphere.

71%

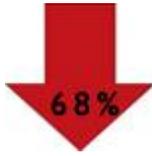


#8 [Loggerhead Shrike](#): a robin-sized gray bird with black wings, white wing-patches, a black mask, and black tail, found in short grass with isolated trees or shrubs, especially pastureland in most of Mexico and the southern half of the United States.

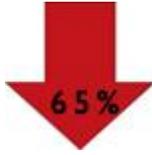
71%



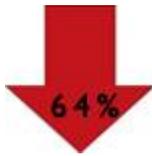
#9 **Field Sparrow**: a small brown songbird with a light rusty cap and a bright pink bill found in abandoned fields with scattered shrubs and trees in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains and Canada.



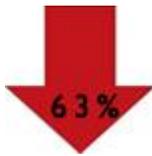
#10 **Grasshopper Sparrow**: a fairly nondescript, small brown bird with a short tail and a flat head often found hiding in larger patches of grassland, usually with few shrubs or trees, in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains and adjacent portions of southern Canada.



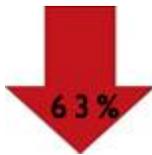
#11 **Snow Bunting**: a small, pale-brown-and-white bird usually found in winter by the ocean, lakes, and rivers shores, grassy fields or roadsides in North America, Alaska and northern Canada. Its breeding plumage is brilliant white and black.



#12 **Black-throated Sparrow**: a very distinctive small, brown bird with a black throat and mask found in open areas with scattered shrubs and trees, including deserts and semi-desert grasslands in the intermountain region in the western United States, northern Mexico, and Baja California.



#13 **Lark Sparrow**: a brown bird with distinctive markings on the head and tail, found in grassy habitats with scattered trees or shrubs, including sagebrush, park-like settings, and open deciduous savannas in interior southwestern Canada south to northern Mexico and from Illinois west to California.



#14 **Common Grackle**: a dark bird longer than most blackbirds, slimmer than most crows, and very iridescent with long center-creased tail, found in a variety of open habitats with trees, including urban areas, parks, riparian areas, and a variety of woody wetlands in the United States and Canada.

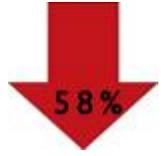


#15 **American Bittern**: a two-foot tall brown and tan striped wading bird found in freshwater wetlands with tall, emergent vegetation in most of the Canadian provinces and the northern half of the



contiguous United States.

#16 **Rufous Hummingbird**: a very small, almost all cinnamon-colored bird with a red throat, found wherever flowers are near, from dense forests to sunny gardens in southern Alaska to northern California and Mexico.



#17 **Whip-poor-will**: a bird only active at night with mottled brown plumage, found in dry, open woodlands with little underbrush in most of the eastern United States, and parts of southeastern and south-central Canada, southwestern United States, Mexico, and into northern Central America.



#18 **Horned Lark**: a small grayish brown bird with dramatic black, yellow, and white facial and breast pattern, and small, feathered "horns" on its head, found in open, barren habitats in Canada, the United States (including Alaska), and northern Mexico outside of heavily forested areas.



#19 **Little Blue Heron**: a dark blue bird with a light blue bill that has a black tip in adults, found in a wide variety of shallow waters and wetlands, including fresh and saltwater in the southeastern United States, Bahamas, Cuba, and most of the coast of Mexico.



#20 **Ruffed Grouse**: a round-bodied, mottled-brown, crow-sized bird found in aspen forests, but in parts of the United States, found in young, open, mixed deciduous-coniferous forests, also in Alaska, through most of Canada, and the northern United States.



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS



Coeur d'Alene CBC - December 14
Shirley Sturts, Compiler

We had 21 field participants divided into 8 teams, plus 7 feeder watchers. 74 species were counted plus another 3 during count week, and 10,119 individual birds were totaled. After our traditional CBC breakfast, we started off in a snow/sleet storm but by afternoon, the sun peeked out from beneath the cloud cover. We had the feeling that bird numbers were going to be low because a lot of areas we drove through seemed devoid of birds. So I was surprised when I added up the totals to find we had beaten the record for both the number of species and individuals. The past species record was 73 in 2003. The past individual tally was 9,544 in 1994.

New to the count, and a real surprise, was a Canyon Wren reported by Kris Buchler and Roland Craft. This wren has been wintering in and around a barn in Cougar Bay. It seems to have the season mixed up, as it was singing. The Canyon Wren, true to its name, hangs out in canyons. It is rare but appears to be regular in the Post Falls Dam area; the only location it has previously been seen.

Another new bird for our count was a Barred Owl seen during count week in the Rimrock area by Tom Davenport. I would suggest a visit to Tom's website to see a photograph of the Barred Owl and other superb wildlife photographs Tom has for sale. Go to www.prairiephoto.biz and visit Tom's "Nature and Wildlife" section where there is a link to galleries with a slideshow.

The following species had the highest number seen in the past 17 years: Canada Goose 2,906 (1930 in '03), Canvasback 16 (2 in '94 '00' '05), Ring-necked Duck 319 (165 in '02), Northern Flicker 61 (54 in '03), European Starling 1805 (1628 in '04).

Good finds included two Red-breasted Merganser and a Thayer's Gull (Doug Ward), a Cooper's Hawk (feeder watchers Del and Corinne Cameron), a Varied Thrush (Eula Hickam and Mary Ann and Dave Scoggins), a White-breasted Nuthatch (Laura Bayless and Roy Bell), and Horned Lark (Lynn Sheridan, Nancy Mertz).

In the past 16 years of this CBC, Pine Siskin numbers have varied from as low as 2 in '05 to as high as 346 in '99, but this is the first year they have been absent altogether. Another bird that has been present in every count for the past 16 years, ranging from 2 in '97 and '06 to 16 in '93, was the Hairy Woodpecker. This year it was not seen on count day, but was reported during count week.



Species seen by all teams: Canada Goose, Northern Flicker, Black-billed Magpie, Common

Black-billed Magpie
From the Fuertes's Bird Collection

Raven, Song Sparrow and House Finch.

Continued on page 5

Coeur d'Alene CBC
Continued from page 4

Species seen by one team only: Gadwall, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead,

Lesser Scaup, Barrow's Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Gray Partridge, Ruffed Grouse, Western Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Killdeer, California Gull, Herring and Thayer's Gull, Great Horned Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Shrike, Horned Lark, White-breasted Nuthatch, Canyon Wren, Varied Thrush, Cassin's Finch, and Red Crossbill.

Total party hours (8 teams added together) of birding: 15.5 hours on foot, 46.5 hours by car and 11 feeder hours. Total party miles: 8 miles on foot and 495.5 miles by car. We birded from 7:15 a.m. to the last team quitting at 4:45 p.m..

Field Participants were: Laura Bayless, Roy Bell, Jonathan Brenneke, Kris and Ed Buchler, Roland Craft, Dick Cripe, Gary Frensdorf, Bill Gundlach, Lisa Hardy, Eula Hickam, Wayne Logan, Nancy Mertz, Theresa Potts, Don and Mary Ann Scoggin, Ellen Scriven, Lynn Sheridan, Shirley Sturts, Jenny Taylor, Doug Ward. Feeder Watchers were: Jack and Zella Bloxom, Ed Buchler, Marian Bruno, Del and Corinne Cameron, Ken and Kathryn Green, Cindy Langlitz, Steve Lindsay, Mary Vanderbilt

Spirit Lake CBC - January 3
Shirley Sturts, Compiler



Pine Siskin
Photograph by Wayne Tree

Our number
of
participants
was small

but our enthusiasm was great as we set off for a day
THE FISH HAWK HERALD

of counting birds. Four teams of 2 each covered the same size CBC circle as the Coeur d'Alene CBC where we had 8 teams and 21 participants. Less varied habitat and fewer pairs of eyes give us fewer numbers but we always enjoy this smaller count.

Almost every year we add a new bird or two to the list. This year we added the Cassin's Finch. Theresa Potts and I found 5 of them in with a large flock of Pine Siskin and American Goldfinch visiting a feeder in the Hoo Doo Valley.

We were excited that two teams found a total of 62 Pine Siskin, a species missing for the first time on the Coeur d'Alene CBC. Three teams found a Hairy Woodpecker, another almost missed regular on the Coeur d'Alene CBC; only 1 was seen and that was during count week. We tallied 48 species; 57 in '02 is the record high. Our individual number count was 1,408; 1,686 in '98 is our record high. Noteworthy were 5 Gray Jay (Janet and Jan), 8 Clark's Nutcracker (Theresa and Shirley), White-breasted Nuthatch (Kris and Roland), and Ruffed Grouse (Lisa and Bill). Wild Turkey are increasing each year, This year we tallied 244 compared with last year's high count of 159. Other record high counts were 49 American Coot (40 '07) and 40 American Goldfinch (31 '98). The 10 Pygmy Nuthatch tied the count in '01. The Pygmy Nuthatch has only been found 6 of the 11 counts - none were found in '06 or '07.

Participants: Kris Buchler, Janet Callen, Roland Craft, Bill Gundlach, Lisa Hardy, Theresa Potts, Jan Severtson, Shirley Sturts. Feeder Watchers were Ken Eppler, Robert Costigan and Sue Williams

You can see the complete CBC list on our website www.cdaudubon.org

BIRD QUOTES

Few forms of life are so engaging as birds.

-- Ellen Glasgow - Letters of Ellen Glasgow --

Bird! birds! ye are beautiful things,
With your earth-treading feet and
your cloud cleaving wings!

--Eliza Cook "*Birds*" --

TOO MANY CATS

Judy Waring



Humans are not the only species on the globe experiencing a population explosion. Our canine and feline friends are reproducing at an alarming rate, resulting in abandonment and suffering. The number of feral cats in the U.S is estimated to be over forty million and that figure is growing exponentially. A single pair of breeding

cats and their offspring can produce over 400,000 cats in a seven year period and the number of song birds that they kill is staggering. To me, the saddest part of this whole situation is the fate of these animals. Approximately 1.5 million cats and dogs are euthanized in this country annually.

My husband and I have had to deal with the problem on a first hand basis in our yard. Stray cats and their kittens show up on a regular basis looking for food. In trying to find homes for them, we have investigated the city and county facilities that are presently in place and have found them wanting, mainly due to lack of funding. The Kootenai Humane Society has adopted a no-kill policy with resultant limited capacity for accepting animals. Under this policy, KHS will accept pets from kill shelters or from owners who must relinquish them. They do not accept strays. "We are an adoption agency, not a dog pound", said shelter director Phil Morgan. I was told that that one must get on a waiting list for a vacancy to open up, with a two to three month expected wait. I found no other agency that takes in unwanted animals.

Controlling reproduction is the first critical step in getting a handle on the problem. KHS has a program called SPOT (stop pet overpopulation today) that provides neuter and spay services geared for low income families. A sliding scale is applied based on income, with a small co-pay asked.

Concerned People for Animals, a non-profit group of local citizens, will help direct callers to reduced-cost spaying and neutering services in the area. A contact number where a message can be left is 687-5054. We found a non-profit clinic in Spokane funded by private donations that offers reduced neutering

service, Pet Savers, on East Trent Avenue. The current charge to spay a feral cat is \$10, and \$45 for a pet cat. (The standard rate for spaying a female cat at your veterinarian's office is in the neighborhood of \$100, and to neuter a male runs around \$60). We trapped the feral mother of the current crop of kittens, had her spayed at Pet Savers, then released her back to the streets, a system used to combat the endless reproductive cycle.

The City of Coeur d'Alene is aware of the problem and hopefully will pull together the varied agencies and groups into a cohesive program to provide these badly needed services at reasonable costs.

In the meantime, we offer the loan of our live-trap to anyone who needs to use it and we will direct you to people who might be able to help. Call us at 765-5378.



SUMMARY OF BOARD MEETING:

DECEMBER 10, 2007

Lynn Sheridan

- Check of \$162 to Shirley Sturts to repay her for annual website payment.
- \$20.00 to Roland, to pay our annual dues for the Fernan Lake Conservation & Recreation Association
- We did not obtain any of this year's Collaborative Funding from NAS. The only other chapter to apply, got the whole amount. NAS returned the \$200.00 from last year, that we did not use, for us to apply to BOPNW flight cages.
- The December program, by Kris Buchler was very challenging and interesting ". Thank you, Kris"
- The silent auction of 6 items from our library collection brought in \$42.00, and the usual raffle: \$20.00. I'll select 6 more items for our January meeting.

JANUARY-FEBRUARY FIELD TRIPS

PLEASE REGISTER: Watch the website for updates to our field trip schedule. 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 have been changed.

COST: Participants will share in a mileage reimbursement for the driver at a rate of \$0.25/mile, with the trip leader responsible for collection and distribution of the compensation.

RADIOS: We will ask participants to contribute \$1.00 toward batteries as needed.

MICA BAY SURVEY

(2nd Tuesday of each month - 8:00 a.m. September - November and April; 9:00 a.m. December- March: 7:00 a.m. May-August)

DATE: January 15, Tuesday (note this is the 3rd Tuesday - January only)

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

LEADERS: Shirley Sturts, 664-5318 - Kris Buchler, 664-4739

ACTIVITY: We spend about 3 hours once a month counting birds at Mica Bay.

NOON TIME BIRDING TRIP

(3rd Tuesday of each month - 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.)

DATE: January 22, Tuesday (note this is the 4th Tuesday - January only)

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

MEET: Fernan Lake - west boat launch

LEADER: Lynn Sheridan, 765-2603

ACTIVITY: Take an hour out of your busy day to enjoy the out-of-doors. See how many different species of birds one can find in an hour and get to know people who share your interest in nature.

Beginner bird watchers are welcome.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE

DATE: January 26, Saturday

TIME: 8:00 a.m.

MEET: : K-mart parking lot, south end

LEADER: Roland Craft, 457-8894

ACTIVITY: This will be 3/4 length day. We will be looking for hawks, owls, Gray Partridge, Horned Lark, and winter visitors such as Snow Bunting, Northern Shrike, and American Tree Sparrow. Bring a lunch and water.

SANDPOINT

DATE: February 16, Saturday

TIME: 8:00 a.m.

MEET: K-mart parking lot, south end

LEADER: Lisa Hardy, 783-1262

ACTIVITY: We plan to look over the congregations of waterfowl on Pend Oreille Lake for rarities. This will be a full day trip, so bring lunch and water. We will stop for coffee on demand in Sandpoint.