



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

October 2013

Volume 23 Number 2

## OCTOBER PROGRAM

**DATE:** October 8, Tuesday

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

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.

**PROGRAM:** **Part 1:** National Audubon Convention in Portland, Oregon **Part 2** - Power point presentation about Coeur d'Alene Audubon

**SPEAKERS:** George Saylor, Darlene Carlson, Valerie Zagar

**Part 1:** George, Darlene and Valerie will give a short presentation about their trip to the National Audubon Convention.

**Part 2:** 35 to 40 minute presentation about our Chapter, the economics of birding, threats to birds, ways to help birds, and a few basics on bird watching

## The Gathering of the Flock

George Saylor



It was an unusual migration, not the normal north south pattern we all know, but a multidirectional one. They came from across the United States and even overseas to a common destination: the

beautiful Columbia River Gorge fifty miles east of Portland. And it wasn't birds, but birders from around the nation that migrated to Stevenson, Washington for the first national convention of the Audubon Society in thirteen years. With an ambitious agenda, over 400 enthusiastic participants, and a forest green mountain backdrop, threaded by the mighty Columbia River, a perfect setting was created for serious learning, discussion, and enjoyment, all related to birds. Among the "flock" were Valarie Zagar, Darlene Carlton and myself, representing the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society.

Participants included David Yarnold, CEO and President of the National Audubon Society, other national officers and staff, regional and state directors, chapter presidents, and other interested and connected birders. While there, participants were able to observe birds up close, learn about the work of the NAS, participate in programs and workshops, go on field

trips, interact with Audubon members from around the United States and come away enriched, inspired and better equipped to work on behalf of birds.

Major topics of the convention and its many workshops included Conservation Initiatives (such as Saving Important Birding Areas, Creating Bird Friendly Communities and Shaping a Healthy Climate

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## The Gathering of the Flock

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and a Clean Energy Future), Communities of Practice (focusing on education, land management and conservation, citizen science and advocacy), and a session devoted to meetings of the four major flyways, which is the new focus of how NAS does its work. There were so many workshop offerings that it was challenging to decide which to attend. Throughout the convention there was a strong emphasis on the seriousness of global warming and the need to understand and mitigate its impact on birds.

Another major theme was on how NAS is changing the way it operates. Instead of organizing its work by region or state, NAS is organizing itself by flyways resembling the migratory pathways of birds, which makes more sense from a biological and conservation point of view. I had known of this new approach but the convention made it more real and gave me a feeling of being more connected to the national organization. One session was broken up by flyways so we met with others from the Central Flyway and learned of the work Audubon was doing in it and how we can be connected. I came away feeling that there is new life in the national organization, with a new sense of unified direction and a closer connection and mutual respect between the national staff, regional and state offices and local chapters.

David Yarnold talked several times about the new direction NAS is taking in several areas including more use of social media and the internet (their email list has increased from 30,000 a few years ago to 400,00 now), and a

change from basing membership on magazine subscriptions to an online process. Their goal is to create a new membership base with a major focus on increasing the diversity of its members. Yarnold asked: "Do we reflect the culture and can we relate to the diversity in our nation?" Then he answered his own question, saying: "We need to because it impacts the work we do." I was impressed with Mr. Yarnold and his vision for making NAS a stronger and even more effective force for conservation in general and birds in particular.

On another note, on the ride to my one field trip I sat next to an elderly woman from Bainbridge Island. We chatted and she asked if I kept a life list. I responded that I did but that it needed to be updated. She asked how big it was and I said about 500 species, to which she replied "You'd better get with it boy." When I asked how big her list was she proudly replied 9, 269! Such was the company we were in.

It was interesting to meet people from other chapters and see the many differences and learn of their way of doing things. Some chapters have their own wildlife refuges, some have paid staff, some run summer camps, and some like us are small volunteer organizations. The Portland Audubon Society must be the biggest of all with over 15,000 members! In all, there are 470 chapters with over a half-million members that make up the Audubon family. I'm glad to be a part of it.

As the flock of birders returned to their own habitat, I'm sure they went away, as I did, feeling a renewed sense of commitment to the work of the national organization, but also to the mission of our local chapter. At the October meeting you will hear a brief report from your three "birds".

# Kootenai Wildlife Refuge- September 21, 2013.

Janet Callen



As we journeyed north to the refuge, Mary spotted a male Mountain Bluebird. What a great way to start a birding trip. After our arrival we first hiked the Myrtle Creek Trail to the falls and on the return saw an American Dipper in the stream. Next was a visit to the tempting food and a stroll through the various artist displays.

There weren't a lot of waterfowl on the refuge, but we saw a small family of Hooded Mergansers, Savannah and Vesper Sparrows, a Northern Harrier, several Red-tail Hawks and Turkey Vultures. As we neared the end of the drive an American Kestrel was sitting on top of a sign. Shortly after that a flock of more than 100 Red-wing Blackbirds and Yellow-headed Blackbirds was swirling over the field of sunflowers. Diving right into the flock was the kestrel, sometimes above, sometimes below and sometimes being chased. A short stroll after that we spotted two yellowlegs and some Killdeer across a small stream. My guess is that they were Lesser Yellowlegs because of refuge records. In the fall Greater are uncommon while Lesser are certain to be seen in suitable habitat.

I spent a great day with Judy Waring, Darlene Carlton, Mary Deasy, Valerie Zagar, Karen

Williams and Jenny Taylor. We stopped at McCarthur Lake WMA, but the birds were too far away to be seen, even with a scope.

## Thinking Outside the Feeder:



### Best Bird Walks

*From Audubon  
Wingspan –  
March 21, 2012  
and Audubon  
Magazine online*

From owls to oystercatchers, from warblers to Whimbrels, chances are you're closer than you think to world-class birding. Audubon's Guide to Birding Trails profiles 40 hotspots around the country guaranteed to boost your life list. Chicagoans for instance, can spy Bobolinks, tanagers, hawks, warblers and rails—and still be home in time for lunch.

### Audubon's Field Guide to Birding Trail

By Kenn Kaufman- Published: July-August 2008

**WESTWARD HO!** When I trekked among the stark cactus gardens of the Arizona borderlands for the first time, I saw a dozen new birds for my life list in the first half-hour: quirky roadrunners, noisy Cactus Wrens, sleek Phainopeplas, and enough others to make my head spin. The same thing happened when I hit central California's rockbound coast, with its tattlers and Surfbirds clambering over the boulders, gulls and terns swarming offshore. In the flower-filled meadows of the Colorado Rockies the source of my vertigo was the dazzling hummingbirds, elusive grouse, and ethereal Mountain Bluebirds. I felt like it was 1848 and I was in the creek at Sutter's Mill, discovering gold.

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## Audubon's Field Guide to Birding Trail continued from page 3

The astonishing diversity of birdlife in the West mirrors the extreme variety of conditions. California's Death Valley may broil at 115 degrees while the peak of Mount Whitney, less than 100 miles away, is still covered with snow. Washington State can boast temperate rainforest to the west of the Cascades and desert to the east of those same mountains. No wonder I sometimes lost my way en route to a rare bird.

But those days are over. Today we avian explorers have maps to help us find our treasures. Built on a concept pioneered in Texas in the 1990s, birding trails link sites where the public is welcome and the birding is superb. These routes have become a bonanza for birders and for local communities that have profited from ecotourism. The trails featured here are among my favorite Westerns, but there are plenty of others to discover, and a lot more in the works. So grab your binoculars and one of these guides—X marks the spot where you might strike it rich. ([Click here to download the guide.](#))



**Great Washington State Birding Trail:** The great state of Washington is too diverse to be encompassed by one birding trail, which explains why Audubon Washington has

established a series of looping trails and mapped them independently. Seven proposed loops will cover the entire state. Four are already completed, and they furnish a spectacular cross-section of a remarkable set of landscapes. The outer coast of Washington hosts a wide array of migrating shorebirds, including huge flocks of western sandpipers and lesser numbers of Pacific Coast exclusives like Surfbirds and Black

Turnstones. Fog-shrouded forests that cover the coastal slope and the Olympic Peninsula echo with the ethereal whistles of varied thrushes, while richly colored birds like Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Townsend's Warblers, and Chestnut-backed Chickadees hide in the shadows. Ascending toward the high peaks of the Cascades, you'll find Black-backed Woodpeckers, Gray Jays, and many other birds of northern affinities lurking in the forest. East of the mountains, the landscape changes abruptly to drier settings, with different birds. Rock Wrens bounce and chatter along the edges of craggy arroyos, while I

Long-billed Curlews stalk over the open grasslands. Sage Thrashers and Brewer's Sparrows, plain but tuneful birds, sing surprising melodies from the sagebrush flats, and Golden Eagles wheel overhead. For more information, visit [Audubon Washington](#) and contact 866-WA-BIRDS to order maps.



**Oregon Cascades Birding Trail:**

The mighty Cascade Range stretches the length of Oregon, from north to south, separating the interior's arid country from the coast's rains and lush forests. These mountains are rightly famous as a place of awe-inspiring scenery, from the deep-blue Crater Lake to the towering snowcapped Mount Hood. Follow the Oregon Cascades Birding Trail and you will get to enjoy both the amazing scenery and a brilliant bevy of colorful birds. The trail, designed by a consortium of groups including the Audubon Society of Portland, features nearly 200 stops. Some are in the lowlands at the base of the mountains, such as along the edge of the Columbia River, where Bald Eagles and Ospreys are celebrities. But most of the real stars are at higher elevations.

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## Oregon Cascades Birding Trail

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Brushy thickets may hold bright golden Wilson's and MacGillivray's Warblers and the elusive but smartly patterned Mountain Quail.

The tall conifer forests are home to the Hermit Warbler, a striking bird with its center of distribution in the Oregon Cascades. Up at treeline, you may have to search carefully to find the Gray-crowned Rosy-finch, but the brash, noisy Clark's Nutcracker is more likely to find you. **For more information**, visit [The Oregon Cascades Birding Trail](#) or contact [The Audubon Society of Portland](#) (503-292-6855).



**Montana Birding and Nature Trail:** In Big Sky Country big plans are afoot to provide birding trails throughout six major regions of the state. Routes are already completed for the

northwestern and northeastern sections, and more are coming. In the northwest, where the Bitterroot and Missoula loops are finished, magnificent forests and meadows along clear streams are inhabited by everything from massive pileated woodpeckers to tiny Calliope hummingbirds. Brilliantly colored western tanagers flash through the pines, and violet-green swallows circle overhead. In open forest stands you might spot both Lewis's woodpeckers and Clark's nutcrackers, named for the intrepid explorers who passed this way two centuries ago. In northeastern Montana's high plains, the surroundings and the birds are completely different. Swainson's hawks in summer and rough-legged hawks in winter soar and hunt in the prairies. The wide-open sagebrush flats here are among the last strongholds of the greater sage-grouse, and if you visit in spring, you may get to watch the bizarre courtship dances of the males on their traditional lekking grounds. For more

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information, visit the [Montana Birding and Nature Trail](#) or contact the [Montana Natural History Center](#) (406-327-0405).



**Idaho Birding Trail:** Its license plates may still talk about famous potatoes, but Idaho is a place where birders should keep their eyes on the skies (and leave the fries for later). The plains and canyons along the Snake River are renowned for their concentrations of birds of prey, making Idaho a mecca for raptor biologists and birders from around the world who are drawn to the state's hawks, eagles, and falcons, and hundreds of other bird species. The Idaho Birding Trail features 173 sites in four sections of the state, from north to south. If you hike through the forests of northern Idaho, you're sure to notice many of the smaller songbirds, from hyperactive mountain chickadees to Townsend's warblers and Cassin's finches, all adding their sparks of color to the dark conifers. Get out into more open areas, though, and chances are you will be distracted by the big birds. Powerful golden eagles and ferruginous hawks, dashing peregrine falcons and prairie falcons, and more than a dozen other raptors are the star attractions here. Water birds abound as well. Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge hosts trumpeter swans and one of the largest nesting concentrations of sandhill cranes, as well as Franklin's gulls, ducks, and geese. For more information, visit the [Idaho Birding Trail](#) or contact the [Idaho Department of Fish and Game](#) (208-334-3700).

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*"Birds! Birds! Ye are beautiful things,  
With your earth-treading feet and  
your cloud-cleaving wings!"*

---Eliza Cook, "Birds" --

## Purchase a Migratory Bird Stamp

6 September 2013 reprint from eBird



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service produces the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, which sells for \$15 and raises about \$25 million each year to provide critical funds to conserve and protect wetland and grassland habitats in the National Wildlife Refuge system for the benefit of wildlife and the enjoyment of people. The 2013-2014 Stamp shows a lovely male Common Goldeneye painted by Robert Steiner, an artist from San Francisco, California. Since the 1930s, Stamps have contributed over \$850 million and have helped to protect 5.5 million acres of habitat for wildlife and future generations. Anyone who possesses a valid stamp is allowed free entry to any National Wildlife Refuge that may charge for entry.

Buying the stamp is perhaps the single simplest thing individuals can do to support a legacy of wetland and grassland conservation for birds. Almost all the stamp proceeds go to help secure valuable Refuge System habitats. Here are a few reasons to purchase the stamp.

1. \$850 million for conservation and counting. The first stamp was issued in 1934. It cost \$1 (about \$18 in today's dollars) and sold 635,001 copies. By law, the funds raised go directly to

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habitat acquisition in the lower 48 states. By now, stamp sales have surpassed \$850 million and helped to protect 5.5 million acres of wetland and grassland habitat.

2. A 79-year tradition of beautiful wildlife art. The Migratory Bird Stamp is a beautiful collectible and a great artistic tradition. Since 1949, the design of each year's duck stamp has been chosen in an open art contest. This year's stamp, showing a Common Goldeneye, is by Robert Steiner (see a gallery of all stamps back to 1934), who also won the 1998–1999 contest with a Barrow's Goldeneye—a stamp that sold 1,627,521 copies and raised more than \$24 million on its own.

3. A bargain at \$15. Ninety-eight cents of each dollar spent on a stamp goes directly to land acquisition (and immediate related expenses) for national wildlife refuges. This \$15 purchase is perhaps the single simplest thing you can do to support a legacy of wetland and grassland conservation for birds.

4. It's much more than ducks. Waterfowl hunters have long been the main supporters for the program—the stamps are a requirement for anyone over 16 who wants to hunt. But the funds benefit scores of other bird species, including shorebirds, herons, raptors, and songbirds, not to mention reptiles, amphibians, fish, butterflies, native plants, and more.

5. Save wetlands; save grasslands. Since 1958, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has used stamp revenues to protect “waterfowl production areas”—to the tune of 3 million acres—within the critical Prairie Pothole Region. The same program also protects declining prairie-nesting birds in the face of increasing loss of grasslands.

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## Migratory Bird Stamp

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As a result, refuges are among the best places to find grassland specialties such as Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, Clay-colored Sparrows, Sedge Wrens, and others.

6. The benefits are gorgeous. Some of the most diverse and wildlife-rich refuges across the Lower 48 have been acquired with stamp funds.

7. It's your free pass to refuges. A migratory bird stamp is a free pass for an entire year to all refuges that charge for admission—so your \$15 could even save you money.

8. As bird watchers, let's get in on the secret. Though it's long been a fixture in hunting circles, the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp is one of the best-kept secrets in all of bird conservation. It's time to buy and show your stamp!

You can buy the stamp at many U.S. Post Offices, National Wildlife Refuges, and sporting-goods stores. You can also order the stamp online at the [USPS](#) store and from the stamp's printer, [Amplex](#) (both stores add a charge for shipping)

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## Field Trips 2013-2014

PLEASE REGISTER: *Watch the website or newsletter 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 has been changed. Participants will share in a mileage reimbursement for the driver.*

### Adopt-a-Highway Fall Cleanup

**Date:** October 5, Saturday

**Time:** 8:00 a.m.

**Place:** Meet at Mica Grange Hall for donuts, coffee and road assignments. It may take 1-2 hours depending on number of volunteers. Long pants, sleeves and gloves are advisable. If you are planning to help with the clean-up, please sign the roster at the September monthly meeting as IDOT requires signatures prior to the event. For questions or more information call, Mike Zagar, 208 -819- 5115.

### Mica Bay Survey

**Date:** October 8, Tuesday (held 2nd Tuesday of each month - times vary depending on month)

**Time:** 8:00 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.

### Mill Canyon (Eastern Washington)

**Date:** October 12, Saturday

**Time:** 8:00 a.m.

**Meet:** K-Mart parking lot, south side

**Leader:** Judy Waring 765-5378

This will be a full day trip. Bring a lunch and water, dress for the weather. Target birds: woodpeckers, including Lewis's and White-headed.

### Heyburn State Park-Indian Cliffs Hike

**Date:** October 19, Saturday

**Time:** 8:00 a.m.

**Meet:** K-Mart parking lot, south side

**Leader:** Dick Cripe, 665-0010

This will be a half day trip with a one hour drive to Chatcolet. We'll walk the easy 3 mile loop through a ponderosa forest and visit Plummer Creek wetland and lakeshore, then check out the Indian Cliffs and whatever birds are around-woodpeckers, shore birds, waterfowl.

**NEW MEMBER APPLICATION**

Become a member of the National Audubon Society, Join online at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) or use this form.

**INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP**

- Regular \$20.00
- Two Years \$30.00
- Seniors and Students \$15.00

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Send this application and your check payable to:

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**C9ZG060Z**

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**Vice President:**  
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**Recording Secretary:**  
Valerie Zagar (208) 819-5115

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 Janet Callen (208) 664-1085  
**Education:** Valerie Zagar 819-5115  
**Conservation:** Volunteer needed  
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 Keith Sturts (208) 664-5318  
**Hospitality:** Carrie Hugo (208) 689 -9600  
**Newsletter:** Shirley Sturts (208) 664-5318  
**Mailing:** Peggy Albertson 664-1016  
**Webmaster:** Shirley Sturts 664-5318  
**Historian:** Carrie Hugo (209) 689-9600

**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
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