

THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of Audubon

MARCH 2007

VOLUME 16 ISSUE 7

BOARD MEETING

DATE: March 19, Monday
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Mt. West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

MARCH PROGRAM

DATE: March 19, Monday
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: First Presbyterian Church,
521 E. Lakeside, Coeur d'Alene
SPEAKERS: Terry Prichard and
Nancy Mertz
PROGRAM: "Sea Kayaking and
Adventuring in the Galapagos
Islands".
Terry Prichard and Nancy Mertz
own a Coeur d'Alene-based tour
company, Sea Kayak Adventures,
Inc. They are offering a slide show
and talk on a sea kayaking,
snorkeling and hiking adventure
they took in Jan 2007 to Galapagos
Islands with a group of Coeur d'
Alene residents.

Visit our website:
www.cdaaudubon.org

2006 YARDLIST CHALLENGE

Lisa Hardy



Eight yard listers reported 120 species, including two species new to the seven year history of the challenge, bringing our cumulative total to 171 species. We have had 111 to 136 species reported in a given year, with the same 91 species reported every year from at least one yard. This year,

11 species were seen by all eight yards, and 33 were seen by only a single yard lister. See the website for the complete tabulation.

www.cdaaudubon.org/yardlist06.htm

Robert and Marcella Hanson reported that a Western Flycatcher nested on the wall of their house, and the first fledgling was observed on July 5. They also had Hairy Woodpecker, American Robin and Gray Catbird nest in their yard. The woodpecker chicks were heard on May 14. The Hansons note that the Steller's Jays love their bearded American hazelnuts, and to a lesser extent, the walnuts, but so far have left the filberts alone. They enjoyed watching Western Grebes courting on the Cave Lake, and seeing Townsend's Solitaires which they had missed in 2005. They also saw a Golden Eagle on October 25, a new species for the "Yardlist List".

In town, Lynn Sheridan managed to successfully rescue an immature American Robin from the clutches of a cat. She was also successful in "rehabilitating" a stunned House Finch; after a night inside in a ventilated box, it was able to fly away in the morning.

The Buchlers saw the only Common Loon and Northern Pygmy Owl for 2006. Doug Ward saw the only Lincoln's Sparrow of the year, and added one new species to the all-time "Yardlist List", a Caspian Tern flyover. The Severtsons had Black-capped Chickadees and Violet-green Swallows nest in their yard, while a House Wren nest was built and abandoned. Male House Wrens typically build multiple nests and then the female selects the nest it will use from among them.

I had a nest of Red-naped Sapsuckers in a mountain ash snag. The young were quite vocal until they left the nest in mid-June. I was surprised to have Savannah Sparrows this spring; three of them were in the tops of the budding maples, catching flying insects. This was such a departure from the habitat in which I usually see them that I studied them from below for quite some time before I satisfied myself that there was no other possible identification.

Thank you, yardlisters, for sending in your observations!

IDAHO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE



The purpose of the Idaho Bird Records Committee (IBRC) is to evaluate reports of observations of birds in Idaho so that records of the avifauna of the state can be reliably utilized as an officially valid and accurate data source of the status of bird distribution and patterns of avian vagrancy. For information about IBRC go to <http://www.idahobirds.net/ibrc/ibrc.html>

On this website you can:

- Print out a copy of the *Official Idaho Birds Checklist*.
- Find a list of *Review Birds*, birds for which a *Rare Bird Report* is requested by the IBRC.
- By clicking on a *Review Bird*, bring up all the reported records for that species.
- Find out how to document rarities.
- Use the online *Rare Bird Report Form* to document sightings of species on the Idaho rare bird *Review List*.
- Read about the IBRC actions for 2006. (47 species were voted on, 5 new species were added to the Official Idaho Bird Checklist, 43 were accepted and 5 not accepted).

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

The Coeur d'Alene Audubon Conservation Committee met on February 13, 2007. A short discussion was held on activities we either are involved in or perhaps should be. This includes looking at the National Forest planning process, Blackwell Island dredging, Coeur d'Alene River basin cleanup, Kootenai County and Post Falls Comprehensive Plan updates, development, and water draw on the Rathdrum Prairie. We welcome any comments or suggestions from the public. Contact Roland Craft 457-8894 for information.

BOARD MEETING DOINGS

Lisa Hardy

February 20, 2007

- Education chair reported that 137 classrooms in our area received the Audubon Adventures kits this year.
- We will replace missing signs that describe the dangers to wildlife of discarded fishing line.



LIMERICKS BY LYNN

Members are invited to join the fun. Send in a limerick, poem or quotation for our next newsletter.

Lynn Sheridan

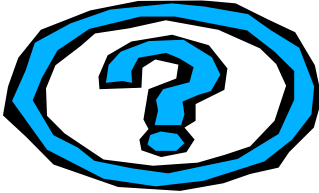
There once was a cat from Saint Maries
Who wanted to catch some Canaries
but her owner said "No!"
Kept a latch on the door
So he never, never got hold of their primaries!

There was a young maiden from Kingston
Who thought she saw spots on a Robin
A Robin with spots?
Into her notes she jots -
"Oh yes" , she was told, it's a young'un

GREEN TIP: PLASTICS RECYCLING

Green tip is a monthly feature in our newsletter. It is designed to give you ideas for taking personal conservation action to improve the environmental health and habitat quality of our yards and neighborhoods. (Members are encouraged to send tips to the editor for inclusion in future.

Lisa Hardy



Recently, our chapter was asked to help promote sales of a toothbrush made from recycled plastics. I went to the internet to find out about plastics recycling in the United States.

What I found was that in 2005, the United States discarded about 28.9 million tons of plastics, about 40% of which is containers and packaging. Plastic containers have a stamped number code that designates the material they are made from. At present, only #1, or PET (Polyethylene terephthalate - e.g. soda bottles), and #2, HDPE (High-density polyethylene - e.g. milk jugs), are recycled in significant quantities. About 22% of PET containers are recycled, and 26% of HDPE containers. When these plastics are recycled, they are ground up and pressed into small pellets that are used to make other products. Here is how most of your recycled plastic ends up:

PET: Textiles, including clothing and carpet; film, food, and beverage containers; luggage.

HDPE: Nonfood containers, including laundry detergent, shampoo, conditioner, and motor oil bottles; plastic lumber, pipe, buckets, crates, flower pots, film, recycling bins, floor tiles.

My local recycler in Smeltonville accepts only #1 and uncolored #2 plastics. Other plastics go to the landfill. I started checking bottles in the house. I found #1 (PET, or PETE) plastic containing my vitamins, seltzer, and mayonnaise. All of my liquid laundry detergent bottles, tofu tubs, vegetable oil bottles, and some dishwashing liquid bottles are #2 (HDPE). But other items, such as dental floss and yogurt containers, and microwaveable soup bowls, are made from essentially non-recyclable #5 plastic.

On average, each of us puts some 100 pounds of plastic waste into our household garbage each year. Using a few recycled toothbrushes each year is more a symbolic than substantive effort to promote recycling. I remember there was a suggestion some years ago that 2-liter soda bottles could be "recycled" by turning them into bird feeders. This would work fine if each of us consumed only one or two bottles of pop each year.

Your efforts will have more impact if you direct them at reducing the amount of plastic you consume in the first place, or at selecting products that come in containers that you are able to introduce into the recycle stream. You can also purchase recycled products in place of virgin products; if you choose to use recycled plastic lumber to build a deck on your house, you will be sponsoring more recycling of plastic than you could accomplish in a lifetime of using recycled plastic toothbrushes. Still, it can be satisfying to make the symbolic gesture. The recycled toothbrushes are sold at Target under the name "Preserve Toothbrush".

BEGINNING BIRDERS FIELD TRIP

Roland Craft

The February 3 field trip was an interesting trip for the middle of winter. We first went to Higgins Point but were disappointed in the number of waterfowl due ice on the lake. We did see a Bald Eagle and Golden-crown Kinglets. We moved to the NIC beach area and were amply rewarded with numerous species: Canada Goose, Common Merganser, Bufflehead, Mallard, Double-crested Cormorant, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull (1), Great Blue Heron (4), Bald Eagle (4), and at least 100 American Coot. Participants were Jonathan Brennecke, Jake Phillips, Dick Cripe, Roland Craft, Kris Buchler and Lynn Sheridan.



BROWN BAG BIRDING -

The February Brown Bag outing planned for Blackwell Island was cancelled due to rain. It is rescheduled for Tuesday March 20th. See Field Trips for details

Lynn Sheridan leads our one hour Brown Bag Birding Trips. They are scheduled every 3rd Tuesday of every month September through May. They are designed for anyone who wants to share their interest in nature with others. Bird watchers of all ages and levels of experience are welcome. Come join the fun, families are welcome.

A NIGHT OF OWLING

Roland Craft

A group of 9 birders had a great field trip to look for owls north of Spokane on Saturday, February 17th. Ron Dexter, who lives on the Forker Road north of Spokane, agreed to guide our group to various sites where owls might be found. He is an expert on owls and most likely on all birds. His "wish list" included Barn Owl and Short-eared Owl during daylight, and Barred Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl and Western Screech Owl during darkness.

While still light we went to the Peone wetlands looking for Short-eared Owls but did not see any. However, this tremendous wetlands produced thousands of Canada Geese, Mallards, one Snow Goose and many other species of waterfowl. This would make a great field trip all by itself.

We then stood outside of a barn while Ron walked into the interior. All of a sudden, two Barn Owls swooped out of the rafters at about 5 feet above our heads. Great view.

After dark, we traveled to Mt. Spokane State Park and tried calling in Pygmy and Saw-whet owls but had no luck. Ron then took us to an area where he had boxes for Western Screech Owls. Shining a flashlight, he spotted one nestled on a branch and everybody got a good look. Jonathan took some very nice pictures with his digital camera. During daylight we also spotted two Red-tailed Hawks, one very dark Harlan. Participants were Dick Cripe, Russ Hersrud, Roland Craft, Shirley and Keith Sturts, Jan Severtson, Bill Gundlach, Gary and son Jonathan Brennecke.

From the Journal of...

From the Journal of Robert Hanson of Medimont (In his Backyard Bird Checklist)...

Robert noted that "the Steller's Jay has added the Bald Eagle to his repertoire of imitations."

From the Journal of Lisa Hardy...

"On Saturday when I was with Earl Chapin and his family on the bike trail near Enaville, I heard a long series of whistles, cackles, trills, etc. coming from high up in a conifer. I finally decided it was a European Starling. Then I heard a Steller's Jay rendition of the Red-tailed Hawk. So maybe it was a jay up there - they do many imitations, some quite song-like. Or was it a Red-tail? No, a Red-tail was too bulky to be concealed in that tree. I finally concluded I was hearing a starling imitating the jay's imitation of a hawk. Phew! This birding-by-ear is getting way too complicated! A short while later, I did indeed see a starling in the immediate vicinity."



Steller's Jay - Photographed by Bill Linn

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT RESULTS

Lisa Hardy



**Mallard
Photographed
by Shirley Sturts**

The 2007 Great Backyard Bird Count was a great success with over 74,000 checklists submitted, a record number. As of February 24, Idaho had reported 154 species, Montana 111, and Washington 208. Though the count is over, checklists can be submitted until the end of the month. Idaho had 28 species that were reported only once on a single checklist, including Eurasian Wigeon, Sandhill Crane and Blue Jay. Whether you submitted a checklist or not, it is fun to cruise through the results. Go to <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/> and click on "Explore the Results".

I went to the State Tallies, and selected Idaho. I had seen and reported Northern Pintail in large numbers during the count weekend, and I was curious to see how pintail sightings were distributed around the state. On the Idaho state list, I saw that a total of 788 Northern Pintail had been reported from 15 checklists, and I clicked on the species name to see the breakdown by location. I then sorted the list by "Number of Birds":

TOWN	NUMBER OF NORTHERN PINTAIL	CHECKLISTS REPORTING NORTHERN PINTAIL
Coeur d'Alene, Kootenai County	400	2
Medimont, Kootenai County	211	1
Harrison, Kootenai County	76	1
Murtaigh, Twin Falls County	30	1
Island Park, Fremont County	24	1
Shelley, Bingham County	22	1
Challis, Custer, County	8	3
Parma, Canyon County	7	1
Priest River, Bonner County	4	1
Deer Flat NWR, Owyhee County	3	1
Lewiston, Nez Perce County	2	1
Bruneau, Owyhee County	1	1
TOTAL	788	15

I reported 300 pintail on a Coeur d'Alene checklist, and 211 from the Schlepp ranch near Medimont, and had been surprised at the large numbers. The other Coeur d'Alene checklist was from Doug Ward; he counted birds on Cougar Bay, and I had counted possibly different birds (an astonishing 300) on a marsh at the start of Cougar Gulch Road. I believe that when the numbers are "crunched", they will use just the largest reported number from a zip code (i.e., the 300 pintails from 83814), rather than their sum (400).

But all these big numbers (say, greater than 50) were from North Idaho locations. Interesting. The largest species counts statewide were for Mallard (11,434), American Wigeon (3,351) and Common Goldeneye (2,032). Southern Idaho had the largest numbers of these, so the disparately northern distribution of pintails in the state is probably real, and not just an artifact of coverage. These birds may be moving in from the coast, rather than up from the south. I remember we had only a single Northern Pintail for "count week" for the Coeur d'Alene CBC, and if I wanted to find out where the pintails were over Christmas, I would go to the CBC database.

The reverse distribution was seen for Lesser Scaup. A total of 1,201 individuals were reported, with the majority from southern Idaho.

These relative distributions are exactly the type of information the GBBC is attempting to capture. Coming as it does between the CBCs and the Breeding Bird Surveys, the GBBC yields a valuable snapshot of migration. Here in Idaho, that is the very leading edge of migration. If you did not participate in the GBBC this year, you may want to put it on your calendar for 2008.

MARCH-APRIL FIELD TRIPS

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

1. **PLEASE REGISTER:** Dates and trips could change - check future newsletters or our website - or call the trip leader ahead of time
2. **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.
3. **RADIOS:** We will ask participants to contribute \$1.00 toward batteries as needed.
4. **UNSCHEDULED TRIPS :** Sign up to be on the group email list for unscheduled trips with Shirley Sturts: s.sturts@verizon.net. Those without email may get on a call list by calling Shirley at 664-5318.

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATES: March 13, Tuesday

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

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

ACTIVITY: We spend about 2-3 hours once a month counting birds in the Mica Bay area.

BROWN BAG BIRDING TRIP

DATE: March 20, Tuesday

TIME: 12:00 - 1:00 P.M.

MEET: Junction of Highway 95 and Fairmont Loop Road - We will bird on Blackwell Island.

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.

WATERFOWL TRIP

DATE: March 11, Sunday

TIME: 7:30 AM

MEET: Fernan Ranger Station

LEADER: Lisa Hardy 682-4808 email basalt@earthlink.net

ACTIVITY: We will visit the Chain of Lakes region, looking for waterfowl, gulls, and songbirds. An all day trip - bring lunch, water and dress for the weather.

COULEE CORRIDOR BIRDING TRAIL

DATE: April 14-16, Saturday, Sunday and Monday

MEET-TIME: Details to be announced for time and car-pooling.

LEADER: Janet Callen 664-1085, Doug Schonewald from the Coulee area.

ACTIVITY: Washington has developed birding maps for much of the state, and we will be birding along this trail from Othello to Grand Coulee. This region encompasses a tremendous variety of habitats and we should spot many species from waterfowl to songbirds, hopefully including Sandhill Cranes. Doug knows this area intimately and will be a great guide. This is a "must do" trip.