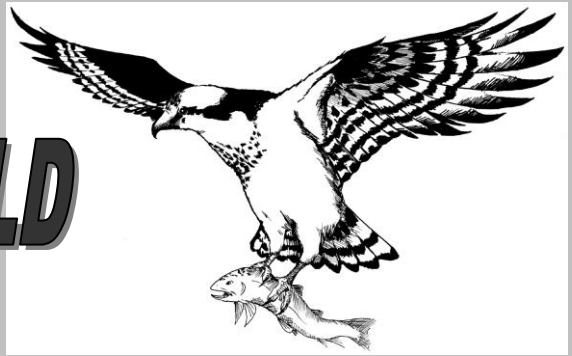


# THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society



MAY 2000

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 8

## BOARD MEETING

DATE: June 5, Monday

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Home of Jan Severtson

## MAY PROGRAM

DATE: May 15, Monday

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

Place: First Presbyterian Church

521 Lakeside

PROGRAM: "A Feast For Your Eyes And Music To Your Ears – Summer Birds of North Idaho". Presented by Susan Weller and Kris Buchler.

## PICNIC & VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION NIGHT

DATE: June 19, Monday

TIME: 6:00 p.m. for dinner and awards

PLACE: Mica Bay, BLM boater's campground. You can boat across or walk on a short trail from Loffs Bay Road

ACTIVITY: Come earlier to bird/canoe/swim. Bring something to cook over the fire and a dish to share. Also bring our own dishes and drink. After dinner we will have a volunteer appreciation ceremony.

Next newsletter -- September

# GARAGE SALE

Cd'A Audubon Society's First Annual  
GARAGE SALE

Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>  
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**VOLUNTEERS AND DONATIONS NEEDED**

For more information, call Theresa, 765-0229 or Jan Severtson, 667-6209

# FUTURE EVENT

10<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Banquet of the Coeur d'Alene Chapter

Mark your calendar – October 14<sup>th</sup>

Call any board member for information and to donate raffle items – Watch for more information in September Newsletter

# SHARP-TAILED GROUSE

Steve Lindsay

Saturday morning, April 15th, nine sleepy but enthusiastic souls left Coeur d'Alene at 3 a.m. on a field trip seeking a sighting of a single species, the Sharp-tailed Grouse. Now, seldom would even I consider getting up at 2:15 a.m. and driving 100 miles after a single bird, but this was a "lifer" for everyone in the group. And not only was it a lifer, but we were seeking a bird that might not even be available to be seen in a few years. When I began birding over 30 years ago in Oregon, the Sharp-tailed Grouse was on that state's checklist. Today it has been extirpated from the state - eliminated without a single remaining population.

The Sharp-tailed Grouse could be facing a similar fate in Washington State. In the distant past, indiscriminate hunting hurt populations throughout the Northwest. But the big threat to this desert-steppe species has always been habitat degradation. In years past, even the worst of the Eastern Washington scablands have been tilled in often-futile attempts to grow wheat. Just as loss of the original prairies of the Midwest has placed races of the Prairie Chicken in danger, so has loss of the steppe areas in Oregon and Washington affected the similar Sharp-tailed Grouse.

Our goal for this day was to visit the Swanson Lakes WMA east of Davenport, Washington. After bumping down dirt and gravel roads in the predawn darkness, we met the WMA manager, Juli Anderson, who also hates getting up so early, for a guided hike the 1/3 mile across sagebrush and rocky outcrops to a hay-bale blind overlooking the Sharp-tailed Grouse lek, a breeding ground where males and females congregate at dawn to consider their breeding possibilities.

The severe rainstorms of the previous day had passed, so all was clean and crisp in the early morning air. American Robin, Western Meadowlark, Song Sparrow, Killdeer, and Horned Lark (and even several coyote) could be heard calling all around and Common Snipe were winnowing overhead. As we approached, several especially nervous grouse took off, giving us all our first look at the species. This morning, we did not get to see a whole lot more. The grouse were skittish and our low vantage point left most of the activity hidden in the dead grass. We did

see at least 11 different birds, including two males briefly doing their ritualistic strut.

At the blind we were treated to fly-overs by a Northern Harrier and an American Kestrel and on the hike out, as Juli discussed grouse history and biology, we also observed White-crowned Sparrow, Tree Swallow, a Mountain Bluebird, and both Savannah and Vesper Sparrow.

Most of the group had to return to Coeur d'Alene, but Ken Eppler and I spent the rest of the morning birding the WMA, Davenport Cemetery, and Readon Ponds. Highlights of the 55 total species seen included a very vocal Sage Thrasher, Swainson's Hawk, Greater White-fronted Goose, Greater Yellowleg and Black-necked Stilt, and two Virginia Rail (heard but not seen).

## THE NOT SO COMMON LOON

Jenny Taylor

Common loons are pretty rare in North Idaho. Most loons are spotted during their spring migration. Spring and summer are when you might hear the loon's unmistakable tremolo. Tremolos are often in films or on tapes to symbolize serene, remote areas. In reality, the tremolo is an alarm call. If you are in a canoe and hear a loon's beautiful tremolo, you are too close and should give the loon more room.

Loons used to nest on several Idaho Panhandle lakes. Upper Priest Lake and Lake Pend Oreille are the only two local lakes where loons have nested recently. Why? Shoreline development and boat traffic are key factors. Loons which try to nest on lakes with high levels of boat use generally don't succeed. In Alaska, 87% of loon chicks fledged on lakes with low levels of disturbance vs. only 13% on high-disturbance lakes.

To understand our local loon population better, we'd like to encourage people to report when and where they see a loon. We are working with Panhandle Loon and Wetlands Project to develop signs with a local number to call to report loons. The Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game nongame program is helping to fund the signs. The Forest Service is creating a loon trunk, a collection of loon and wetland education materials. If you can help post the signs at public boat ramps in May or

early June, or you have suggestions for books, games or other activities to include in the trunk, call Jenny Taylor at 765-7206.

## **MAY FIELD TRIPS**

### **BROWN BAG BIRDING TRIP**

DATE: May 9, Tuesday

TIME: 12:00 Noon to 1:00 p.m.

MEET : Fernan Lake Boat Dock –West End

LEADER: Bill Gundlach

ACTIVITY: We will count the nests at the Great Blue Heron rookery and bird along the shoreline in that area.

### **MICA BAY SURVEY**

DATES: May 5 Friday and May 22 Monday

June 5, Monday and June 21, Friday

TIME: 8:00 A.M. (earlier starting June 21<sup>st</sup>)

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

LEADERS: May - Kris Buchler, 664-4739

June - Shirley Sturts, 664-5318

ACTIVITY: We spend about 3 hours twice a month counting birds in the Mica Bay area. Beginner birders are welcome to join us.

### **GREEN BAY HIKE**

DATE: May 13, Saturday

TIME: 7:30 a.m.

MEET: East Side of Rosauer's Parking Lot

LEADER: Bill Gundlach 667-3339

ACTIVITY: Come Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day! We will travel north to Lake Pend Oreille's Green Bay and hike a 4 mile round-trip trail that provides breathtaking views of the lake. We will enjoy a variety of birds including many spring migrants that have returned to us for the summer season. Bring a backpack to carry water and sack lunch .

## **CENTURY COUNT**

DATE: May 27, Saturday

LEADER: Shirley Sturts 664-5318

ACTIVITY: We will bird from dawn to dusk. Our goal is to count a 100+ species of birds in Kootenai County. Birders of all abilities are welcome. The only requirement is the stamina to withstand nonstop birding. Those interested in the planning the route meet Shirley for breakfast at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 24 at the CDA Café on Sherman.

## **SUMMER BIRDING**

### **MICA BAY SURVEY**

Set tentatively for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of June, July, August – except for Monday June 5. Dates and times could change . Call Shirley, 664-5318 or Kris, 664-4739 to confirm. We will also go earlier in the morning starting in June 21<sup>st</sup> at Fairmont Loop Rd. Call Shirley or Kris for time.

### **BLUE BIRD TRAILS**

We will check box activity about every 10 days – Gertie Hanson Trail in Hoo Doo Valley, Mica Flats and Mica Bay and Cougar Bay. Call Shirley, 664-5318 or Theresa, 765-0229 for dates and times, as they will vary.

## **LOON COUNT DAY**

Mark July 15 on your calendar! That's the official day loons are counted across the U.S. and Canada. We need people to search from roads and by boat. If you're interested or want to know more, please call Jenny Taylor at 765-7206.

# EARTH DAY APRIL 22

Lynn Sheridan

Susan Weller gave a presentation on Ponderosa Pine habitat followed by a walk under the Ponderosa trees on North Idaho Collage Campus. The discussion centered around the importance of maintaining these trees as habitat for Pygmy Nuthatch.

Susan helped set up our table outside the NIC library. Janet Callen, Roger Young and Lynn Sheridan celebrated and exchanged knowledge of our earth and its productivity with lots of visitors. Roger's talent with helping the children build their own birdhouses was marvelous to see, they all had fun. We were able to earn over \$100 in the sale of books, bird and bat houses, cards and wreaths.

# EARTH WEEK FIELD TRIP

Kris Buchler

As part of the Earth Week celebration at North Idaho College, our chapter agreed to lead a field trip to Mica Bay to view and appreciate wetlands while conducting one of our bird counts. Education Chairman, George Sayler and I were to meet participants at NIC. Unfortunately, no one came, but we were delighted to host several members of Three C's who joined us for birdwatching and a hike and picnic lunch at the BLM picnic ground around the bay.

We had a good turnout of Audubon members including Theresa Potts, Jan Severtson, Bill and Joan Gundlach, Janet Allen, Ken Eppler, Jenny Taylor, George Sayler and Kris Buchler. Three C's members who joined us were Barbara Zimmer, Kay Baer, Barb Wolfert, Vicki Markizon, Bernie Clark and Chey Sornson. Juli Delsaso canoed with Joan Gundlach.

Highlights of birds on Friday, April 21, were Common Loon, Osprey, Western Bluebird, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-necked Grebe, Belted Kingfisher, and a family of Killdeer with 4 hatchlings.

# EDUCATION REPORT

Kris Buchler

The Alzheimer's Association invited Coeur d'Alene Audubon to speak at their Spring Fund-raiser held April 15 at Fairwinds in Coeur d'Alene. The theme was "birds and bird houses" and included a birdhouse building contest, sale and raffle. Kris Buchler presented a slide program on feeder and yard birds as well as a demonstration on building a safe and useful birdhouse. Over 100 people attended the luncheon program and many had questions and an interest in bird watching. Several residents of Fairwinds expressed an interest in improving habitat and attracting more birds to the grounds.

# APRIL BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Lynn Sheridan

- ◆ A decision was made to sponsor grocery bag bird-drawings by local school children for use in grocery stores on International Migratory Bird Day May 13.
- ◆ A decision was made to postpone the dedication of the Gertie Hanson Memorial Birding Platform until October, 2000. A committee has been formed to decide what work needs to be done on the trail, platform, sign and to make a plan of action.
- ◆ A committee was formed to plan for our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet in October. Watch for the September Newsletter for details.
- ◆ George Sayler announced that the CDA Audubon ranked highest of all Idaho Chapters in the number of classrooms participating in Audubon Adventures. Scott Reed, through the Margaret W. Reed Foundation generously funds this program..
- ◆ Fund raising projects will include a Rummage Sale in June and a booth at the Farmers' Market in August.



### OBSERVERS:

Janet Allen (JALL), Kris Buchler (KBUC), Corinne Cameron (CCAM), Ken Eppler (KEPP), Alice Hardison (AHAR), Lisa Hardy (LHAR), Cynthia Langlitz (CLAN), Jerry and Julie Parker (JPAP), Jan Severtson (JSEV), Stephen Lindsay (SLIN), Kristin Philbrook (KPHI), Roberta Rich (RRIC), Shirley Sturts (SSTU), Susan Weller (SWEL), Roger Young (RYOU)

RBA Rare Bird Alert for Northern Idaho-Eastern Washington-Northeastern Oregon

Phone (208) 882-6195 or Internet-Web Site:

<http://pimacc.pima.edu/~cwilliamson/index.html>

**Common Loon** on Fernan Lake 1 April 9 and 2 April 12-13 (SSTU), 2 April 16 (RYOU) 2 April 18 (KBUC)

**American White Pelican** 8 Cougar Bay, CDA Lake April 19 and 3 April 29 (RYOU); 8 flying over Kingston Area April 22 (LHAR)

**Double-crested Cormorant** 1 Cataldo Slough North of Canyon Road April 19 (SWEL); 2 Cataldo Mission Boat Docks April 22 (LHAR)

**Great Blue Heron** 22 at Rookery on Fernan Lake April 16 (RYOU)

**Cinnamon Teal** 1<sup>st</sup> Hoo Doo Valley April 6 (SSTU, TPOT, JSEV, KEPP, KBUC)

**Long-tailed Duck** (Old Squaw) 1 Page Treatment Pond March 25 – April 18 (LHAR)

**Ruddy Duck** 1 pr. Flooded fields by Killarney Lake April 23 (LHAR)

**Turkey Vulture** 1<sup>st</sup> Rathdrum Pr. April 16 (JALL)

**Prairie Falcon** 1 Rathdrum Prairie April 27 (SLIN)

**Wild Turkey** 1+ Gov't Way/Hiway 95 April 1 (JPAP); 1 Mica Bay April 16 (JALL)

**California Quail** 60+ home n. of State Line (AHAR)

**Killdeer** 1 CDA Industrial Park April 2 (KPHI)

**Common Snipe** 4 Hauser Lake April 4 (JALL)

**Mourning Dove** 2 home n. of State Line (AHAR)

**Calliope Hummingbird** 1<sup>st</sup> April 19 (RYOU, JSEV)

**Rufous Hummingbird** 1<sup>st</sup> April 22 (RYOU), April 23 (JSEV, CLAN)

**Red-naped Sapsucker** 1<sup>st</sup> Armstrong Hill April 27 (KBUC)

**Horned Lark** 1+ Rathdrum Prairie April 27 (SLIN)

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow** 1<sup>st</sup> arrival Cougar Bay, CDA Lake April 17 (SLIN), Kingston area April 22 (LHAR)

**Cliff Swallow** 1<sup>st</sup> arrival date Cougar Bay, CDA Lake April 17 (SLIN)

**Winter Wren** 3 Hauser Lake April 8 (JALL)

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet** 1<sup>st</sup> Mica Bay, Coeur d'Alene Lake (Mica Bay Survey), 1 Fernan Lake April 9 (SSTU), 1 near CDA airport April 23 (CLAN)

**Western Bluebird** 1 pr. Interested in his birdhouse on Fernan Hill April 10 –present (RYOU);

Investigating bird boxes Old Hwy 95 near Silverwood at his home (KEPP)

**Mountain Bluebird** 1+ at his home on Old Hwy95 near Silverwood (KEPP)

**Townsend's Solitaire** 1 Lookout Dr. April 15 (RRIC)

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** 1<sup>st</sup> Cataldo Slough April 15 (SWEL); Cave Lake April 23 (LHAR); 1 Fernan Lake April 29 (SSTU), 4 Armstrong Hill April 27 (KBUC)

**Townsend's Warbler** 1<sup>st</sup> Canyon Road (Cataldo area) April 28 (SWEL)

**Orange-Cr. Warbler** 1<sup>st</sup> Armstrong Hill April 28 (KBUC)

**Spotted Towhee** 1 Blackwell Island April 12 (LSHE); 2 Armstrong Hill April 17 (KBUC)

**Vesper Sparrow** 1<sup>st</sup> CDA airport April 23 (CLAN)

**Savannah Sparrow** 1<sup>st</sup> Tamarak Ridge South of Cataldo Mission April 8 (SWEL); 1+ Rathdrum Prairie April 27 (SLIN)

**White-throated Sparrow** (rare) 1 Rathdrum Prairie April 16 (SLIN)

**White-crowned Sparrow** 1<sup>st</sup> Shoshone County April 15<sup>th</sup> (LHARD); 2 Indian Meadows, CDA April 17 (CCAM); 1+ north 16<sup>th</sup> CDA April 22 (LSHE) 1+ feeder Old Hwy95 near Silverwood (KEPP); 1 Fairmont Loop April 27 (JSEV)

**Yellow-h Blackbird** 1<sup>st</sup> Kingston April 22 (LHAR)

**Brewer's Blackbird** 1<sup>st</sup> Kingston April 22 (LHAR); 5 (1 with white head) Rathdrum Pr. April 28 (SLIN)

**Brown-headed Cowbird** 1<sup>st</sup> CDA Airport area April 23 (CLAN)

**White-winged Crossbill** 1+ Dalton Gardens April 16 (JALL)

### **Mica Bay Survey Highlights**

**April 2:** 2 Killdeer, 1 Common Snipe, 2 pr. Western Bluebird, 1 Pied-billed Grebe, 1 Spotted Towhee, 1 Winter Wren, 1 Common Loon, Osprey

3, Belted Kingfisher 1, Canada Goose pair nesting in all boxes, 5 Red Crossbill.

**April 21** 3 adults and 4 young Killdeer, 1 Common Snipe, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 1 Northern Harrier, 4 Belted Kingfisher, 2 Common Loon, 2 Western Grebe, 2 pr. Western Bluebird, 4 Osprey, 4 Cinnamon Teal