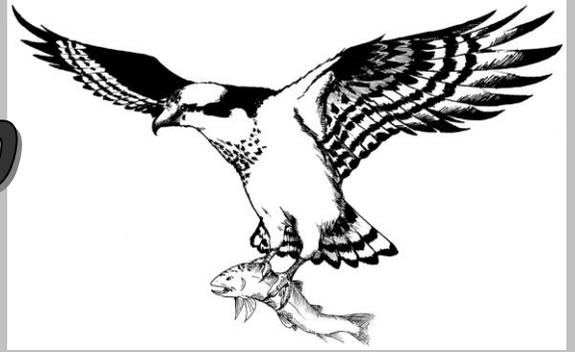


THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society



May 2001 VOLUME 10, ISSUE 9

Visit our website: www.cdaudubon.org

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

BOARD MEETING

DATE: May 7, Monday
TIME: 5:00 p.m.
PLACE: Mica Bay Platform-carpool Fairmont Loop

MAY PROGRAM

DATE: May 21, Monday
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: First Presbyterian Church, 521 Lakeside
PROGRAM: "The Adaptive Significance of Bird Sounds"
SPEAKER: Ed Buchler
Why do birds make the sounds they do? An exploration of the physics of sound and how it impacts the evolution of acoustic communication in birds. Environmental constraints, as well as behavioral function, dictate to a large degree the basic content of songs, calls and other sounds of communication made by birds. General "rules" regarding the forms of these sounds are illustrated again and again across species of birds, as well as acoustically active mammals, amphibians and insects.

AUDUBON CHAPTER PICNIC

DATE: June 18, Monday
TIME: 5 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Dinner at 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Mica Bay, BLM boaters' campground.
Boat across or walk trail from Loffs Bay Rd.
ACTIVITY: Come early to bird/canoe/swim. Bring something to cook over the fire and a dish to share. Also bring your own plates, silverware and drink. Dessert will be provided. Each NAS member attending the picnic will receive an Audubon pin. All NEW members will receive the Audubon Pocket Guide .

NEXT NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER

GARAGE SALE

CDA AUDUBON SOCIETY'S SECOND ANNUAL
GARAGE SALE

Saturday, June 2nd 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS AND DONATIONS NEEDED

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

NEWSLETTER QUESTIONNAIRE

Last month we reported that we were going to try to reduce costs. We are asking for your assistance and have included, as the last page of this newsletter, a questionnaire to indicate your preferred method of receiving *The Fish Hawk Herald* .

Fill out the questionnaire. Your telephone number is useful if we encounter problems with mail delivery and need to contact you. Our chapter does not sell, lend or let any other party use our mailing list. We will maintain the same policy with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.

The questionnaire can be folded like an accordion and stapled or taped. We apologize for having to ask you to use your own stamp. However, you may respond by telephone, e-mail or bring your questionnaire to the May meeting.

Thank you for your help,

The Board of Directors
Coeur d' Alene Audubon Society

MISTER STELLER COMES TO STAY

And grants me an honorary place within the jay clan

Continued from the April Newsletter

By Susan Weller



8 August

I believe when my back was turned this morning, that a Cooper's Hawk took a dive at Jay. Jay flew down frantically into the deeper recesses of the woodpile cheeping like a hen's chick. When I leaned over and he caught sight of me, he flew straight back

into his enclosure and got real quiet and solemn. He would venture no more from the safety of his wire walls.

Nessa, my golden retriever, is learning to herd grasshoppers toward my flyswatter. I did finally manage to find a butterfly net. I'll try it out tomorrow. Jay is an efficient killing machine now, able to swallow even the bigger hoppers in one gulp.

I replaced my tape recorder today and bought a broadcaster as well. I played a tape of four different Steller's Jays calls for him and his reaction was immediate. Crest erect, posture erect, tail and body bobbing and dipping, he hopped from perch to perch turning his head sideways. Then he began to imitate and respond to the tape. I recorded his responses and played them back as well. Jay stayed agitated for some while. The tapes will probably give him an eastern accent.

Today I decided to try a defensive strategy against the returning Cooper's Hawk: I played the call of a hunting Northern Goshawk. Since no goshawk habitat exists nearby I did not fear attracting the larger predatory bird—bet I scared all the songbirds, though.

Steller's are a major food source for Cooper's, and as a parent, I have to do all I can to protect my fledgling. The Cooper's flew swiftly, and immediately away, not even waiting for a second broadcast. I sure hope he does not figure out the ruse.

Later

I heard Jay squawking loudly today from his enclosure. He is free to come and go now as he pleases, but still hangs around close to his familiar surroundings. When I got back to his enclosure he wouldn't come out, and I could still hear a jay calling. Aha, Jay met his first jay and didn't know quite what to think.

Jay's story will be continued in the September newsletter.

■

HOLE-NESTING DUCKS²

Pat Cole, Habitat Biologist, Idaho Fish and Game

Northern Idaho is one of the few locations on the continent that supports breeding populations of seven species of hole-nesting ducks. However, it is also an area where little has been recorded regarding the breeding status of these species. Included are the Wood Duck, Common Goldeneye, Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Bufflehead and Harlequin Duck (which sometimes uses tree cavities for nest sites). All but the Wood Duck are considered "sea ducks". Sea ducks are garnering increasing interest due to their poorly understood population status and natural history. For example, the Idaho Conservation Data Center is tracking site specific information for Harlequin Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, and Hooded Merganser. Also, the Sea Duck Joint Venture was organized as part of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan to focus attention on these illusive species.

After nine years of observations, we're beginning to get a picture of the relative abundance of hole-nesting ducks in North Idaho. Tables 1 and 2 summarize information obtained from breeding pair counts, brood counts, and nest box inspections conducted at eight locations in Bonner and Boundary Counties from 1992 to 2000.

Table 1. Breeding Pair and Brood Counts for Hole-nesting Ducks in Bonner and Boundary Counties, Idaho, 1992-2000 *

	# of pairs	# of broods
Wood Duck	144	156
Common Goldeneye	24	24
Hooded Merganser	18	14
Bufflehead	8	1

*N=14; each year and location was considered a distinct count

Table 2. Number of Nests and Percent Frequency of Occurrence of Three Species of Hole-Nesting Ducks in Bonner and Boundary Counties, Idaho, 1992-2000 *

	# of Nests (%)	% Freq. of Occurrence
Wood Duck	276 (59)	98%
Goldeneye **	147 (31)	82%
Hooded Merganser	48 (10)	44%

*N=45; each year and location was considered a distinct nest box count.

**Eggs of Common Goldeneye could not be distinguished from those of Barrow's Goldeneye in nest boxes.

Continued on Page 4

MAY/JUNE FIELD TRIPS

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATES: May 7 and 21, Mondays

TIME: 8:00 a.m.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

LEADER: 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.

BROWN BAG BIRDING TRIP

DATE: May 8, Tuesday

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

MEET: Nature Conservancy parking lot, Cougar Bay

LEADER: Shirley Sturts, 664-5318

ACTIVITY: Walk and bird along the trails.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

DATE: May 12, Saturday

TIME: Begin at dawn

LEADER: Lisa Hardy, 682-4808 or

basalt@earthlink.net

ACTIVITY: Teams of birders will census North Idaho for this national event. Contact the leader if you would like to participate. We hope to field teams in Benewah, Bonner, Kootenai and Shoshone Counties this year.

MONTANA – BURNED FOREST / LEE METCALF NWR

DATE: May 26-27-28, Memorial Day weekend

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

ACTIVITY: We will drive to the Stevensville, MT area on Saturday morning and view regeneration in an area burned in last summer's fires. Sunday morning, we will get up early and bird the Lee Metcalf NWR. Sunday afternoon, we will return, OR, some of us may opt to travel north of Missoula, spend the night, and bird Ninepipe NWR and the Moiese Bison Range on Monday, before returning to Coeur d'Alene.

CONTACT THE TRIP LEADER BY MAY 18 IF YOU PLAN TO GO.

THIRD ANNUAL CENTURY COUNT

Join us in our challenge to count 100 bird species in Kootenai County in one day. We bird from dawn to dusk in this birding marathon! The date is not set. It will be sometime between June 3 and June 6, depending on weather and participants' preference. Call Shirley Sturts (664-5318) for information and to register for this event.

SUMMER BIRDING ACTIVITIES

Please register with the leader for all summer activities.

The leader can then contact you if dates or times are changed.

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATES: 1st and 3rd Mondays, June, July, August
TIME: 7:00 a.m.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

LEADER: Shirley Sturts, 664-5318

Kris Buchler 664-4739

REVETT LAKE

DATE: July 7, Saturday

TIME: 7 A.M. Carpool from Cove Bowl

MEET: 7:45 A.M. at leader's house on CDA River Road

LEADER: Lisa Hardy, 682-4808 or

basalt@earthlink.net

ACTIVITY: We will drive to Thompson Pass, stopping at Prichard for American Dipper. From Thompson Pass, we will hike a 2-mile trail to Revett Lake, looking for high-elevation birds such as Hermit Thrush and White-crowned Sparrow along the way. Bring lunch and water, and dress for hiking.

BLUE BIRD TRAILS

We check our two blue bird trails every 10 days April-July. The Gertie Hanson Blue Bird Trail has 50 boxes and is located in the Hoo Doo Valley north of Athol. The Mica Flats/Mica Bay Trail has 16 boxes. We participate in two programs: The Birdhouse Network (a nest monitoring program, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology), and a bird nest blowfly research project being done by Dr. Terry Whitworth, an entomologist from Washington.

If you are interested in helping check boxes call Shirley Sturts, 664-5318.

BIRD COUNTS

Help with bird counts for the Nature Conservancy at Cougar Bay and Ball Creek Ranch. Also, Bird Boundary Creek WMA for Idaho Fish and Game.

For information call Kris Buchler, 664-4739

HOLE-NESTING DUCKS

Continued from page 2

Wood ducks are the most common hole-nesting duck, followed in prevalence by Common Goldeneye and Hooded Merganser. Only one Bufflehead brood was observed. Common Merganser breeding pairs and broods were observed incidentally on the Kootenai River, Pend Oreille Lake, Priest Lake and in the Clark Fork Delta. The breeding status of Barrow's Goldeneye is uncertain. Selected additional sites will be surveyed during the breeding period this spring to help ascertain the breeding status of Barrow's Goldeneye in the Idaho Panhandle.

The wide assemblage of cavity-nesting ducks is yet another reason to manage for large, decadent trees near rivers, streams and wetlands in North Idaho. ■

BROWN BAG BIRDING

Janet Callen

April 17, 2001

The bad news is no other humans joined me for a walk through the neighborhood. The good news is the weather was balmy, though breezy, so I took the opportunity to amble through the planned route taking far more than the allotted one hour and marveling at all nature has to offer, even in a suburban housing area.

Pygmy Nuthatches were the entertainers of the day. One was busily and loudly excavating a nesting site in a light pole and another was obviously claiming a small birdhouse for its nest. Overhead, 30 to 40 swallows (all identified were Violet-green) circled and swooped above the treetops. Other species either seen or heard were: Red-winged Blackbird, Pine Siskin, House Finch, American Robin, Red Crossbill, gull species; chickadee species, Common Raven, Mourning Dove, European Starling, Red-breasted Nuthatch and House Sparrow.

A good time was had by **all**. However, extra eyes and ears would likely have spotted the birds this observer missed. ■

BIRDING THE PANHANDLE

Kris Buchler

Our chapter has the opportunity to collect important bird data from two restoration and study projects in the northern-most reaches of the Idaho Panhandle. On April 21, fifteen people visited The Nature Conservancy's Ball Creek Ranch, a new preserve, and Fish and Game's Boundary Creek Wildlife Management Area, both north of Kootenai Wildlife Refuge.

K.J. Hackworthy, head of the North Idaho Field Office, and Chandalin Bennett, a botanist and intern, gave us a tour of the riparian areas bordering the Kootenai River where bird data needs to be collected. This baseline assessment is important as the ranch will be an experimental station. The northern part will become reclaimed wetlands, while the southern acres will be utilized to explore better agricultural practices. The bird data collected in the future will hopefully reflect much habitat improvement. Already, Audubon member, Ken Eppler, is eager to improve nesting opportunities for bluebirds. While there, we observed a pair of American Kestrel who appeared to have selected a snag for nesting. The area hosts Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier and many other species which should soon arrive with the spring migration.

Members interested in participating in the counts should contact me for instructions and to get the protocols used for the counts. Members may stay overnight, for a small donation, to do an evening and morning count. Reservations are required and participants should have good bird identification skills or accompany someone who does. It is suggested that birders work in teams of two or three.

Our afternoon continued in the company of Pat Cole, a Habitat Biologist with Idaho Fish and Game. Pat is in charge of the Boundary Creek Wildlife Management Area and the restoration of thousands of acres of wetlands. Baseline bird data is again very important for this project which should provide improved habitat for waterfowl and other riparian species. Pat welcomes Audubon birders and would like any data that we collect from the site. Shirley Sturts keeps records for all of North Idaho and sightings from this area should be reported to her. Newly flooded fields hosted Northern Pintail, Mallard and American Wigeon. Ring-necked Duck and several Green-winged Teal and Wood Duck were on a pond and in a slough. Finding an active nest of a pair of Red-tail Hawk provided a thrill and we can make sure we do not disturb them again. For a complete list of species seen check our website www.cdaudubon.org.

Participation in bird counts at both of these locations gives members access to areas along the Kootenai River that were previously closed. It should be exciting to see the changes in bird populations occurring over the next five to ten years.

Chapter members enjoying this beautiful sunny day were Janet Callen, Roland Craft, Wendy Aeschliman, Ken Eppler, Virginia Hill, George Saylor, Jenny Taylor, Kris Buchler and the Bayless family, Laura, Pete, Luz, Jen and Diana. Joining us from the Sandpoint area were Suzanne Sawyer and Sue Canniff. ■

"A BIG YEAR" UPDATE

Stephen L. Lindsay



Several months ago I wrote an article about my Kootenai County Big Year effort. In a Big Year, a birder attempts to see as many bird species as possible within a particular geographic area such as a county, a state, the entire country, or all of North America. Since my time and money is more limited than I like, I chose to try for a county Big Year.

Half the fun of such an endeavor is in the planning. As I wrote previously, I identified 146 species that should be found with relative ease at appropriate times of the year within Kootenai County. I also counted 46 species that can probably be found in any given year with special effort, and 30 species that are remote possibilities in any given year. There are another 53 species that have been seen within the county, but were accidental visitors and cannot be counted on to be here again.

Of these 275 species, I set my year-end goal at 200 species. Actually, 190 was my calculated goal (100% of "expected" species, 75% of "look-for" species, 25% of "remotely possible" species, and one or more "vagrant" species), but 200 sounds better.

Of these county birds, there are certain species that are here all year. There are others that are strictly winter residents. And others that are only seen migrating through the county. And still others that are only found during breeding season. Thus, my effort requires that I look for certain species at particular times of the year.

In going after 200, certainly the first half should be the easiest. Figuring on those species found here all year, and the winter specialties, I planned for 100 species by the end of March, prior to the beginning of migration in, out, and through the county. On January first I raced through my first 30 species - all easy finds. By the end of the first week, I had 40 - still no surprises. And by the end of January, I had 67, including two "remotely possible", a Red-breasted Merganser I chased (seen first by someone else, then found by me following their directions) and a Thayer's

Gull; and four "look-for" species, a Pine Grosbeak, a Bewick's Wren, a Greater Scaup, and an American Tree Sparrow.

At the end of February, I had 78 species including two "look-for's", White-breasted Nuthatch and Common Redpoll. That left 22 to find in March to make 100. March started out as a good month with a "remote possibility", White-throated Sparrow and two "look-for's", Trumpeter Swan and Eurasian Wigeon.

But at the beginning of the last week I was stuck at 96, with no easy prospects left to find. I had scoured the county for the last of the winter-types and was out of options. And there were several seemingly easy year-rounds that I had seen in December but that were proving impossible this year (Northern Pygmy-Owl, Blue Jay, Brown Creeper). The number 100 was just an interim goal, a way to gage my progress, but it was becoming an obsession (actually, this whole thing has become a bit of an obsession!) and I spent every spare moment of that last week in March searching every corner of the county.

On Sunday I heard a Gray Jay in a torrential rainstorm at Farragut State Park for #97. On Tuesday I saw a pair of Osprey along the Spokane River (#98). The next day, while driving across Tamarack Ridge near Cataldo, I spotted a distant speck that represented a migrating raptor riding the thermals. As it got closer, I ruled out eagle, Red-tail Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Harrier, and Osprey. It was too big for a Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, or a falcon. With that I was getting pretty excited! I madly jotted down notes while trying to keep the still distant hawk in view. Then suddenly it was gone. Hitting the books I later called it a juvenile Swainson's Hawk, #99 and a "remotely possible".

Tired of searching, but so close, Thursday I drove my favorite winter spot, the Rathdrum Prairie. On Lancaster, where no sparrows had wintered, a sparrow flew across the road. I jumped out, again in the rain, and followed. After several tantalizing but brief glimpses, it held still just long enough for me to tick off a Vesper Sparrow, #100, with two days to spare. True, I did have to use several early arrivals to make it, but I had made my first goal. I'm not sure that the end-of-year race could be much more exciting.

April has started slowly, as expected. As I write this I am at 107, going for 115 this month. It's crazy I know (my family and employees are all about to disown me), but boy, is it fun! ■

OBSERVATION POST



OBSERVERS:

Wendy Aeschliman (WAES),
 Laura Bayless (LBAY), Kris Buchler
 (KBUC), Corinne Cameron (CCAM), Roland
 Craft (RCRA), Dick Cripe (DCRI), Caroline Eppler (CEPP),
 Ken Eppler (KEPP), Bill Gundlach (BGUN), Fran and Brad
 Haywood (FHAY), Jann and Earl Kendle (JEKE) Steve
 Lindsay (SLIN), Shirley Sturts (SSTU), Susan Weller
 (SWEL), Vera Weniger (VWEN) MICA Bay Survey observ.
 (SSTU, KBUC, DCRI, KEPP, CEPP, RCRA,,JHAN)

Common Loon 1st migrant, Hauser Lake, March 31 (FHAY)
 From April 4-present 1-4 have been observed at several
 locations (Fernan Lake, Coeur d' Alene Lake - Wolf Lodge
 Bay - Mica Bay - Bennett Bay, and Twin Lakes) by several
 observers: SLIN,SSTU,KBUC,BGUN, LBAY,JEKE,MICA.

Red-necked Grebe 2 pr. Displaying Fernan Lake - April
 11+, (SSTU,BGUN), and Twin Lakes, April 15 (SLIN)

Horned Grebe Several Farragut State Park and Hayden
 Lake, March 25 (SLIN); 35-40 Farragut State Park, April 12
 (CEPP,KEPP)

Turkey Vulture 1st arrival, 1flying over Armstrong Hill and
 Fernan lake, April 15 (KBUC); 1 Kidd Island, April 15
 (VWEN); 1 Mica Bay, CDA Lake, April 22 (SLIN)

Cinnamon Teal 1st Hoo Doo Valley (north west of Athol),
 April 10 (CEPP); 1 Cataldo area, April 14 (SLIN); 1 Fernan
 Lake (pond), April 17 (KBUC)

Northern Shoveler 1st Heyburn State Park, March 18
 (Chapter Field Trip); 8+ Hoo Doo Valley, April 16
 (SSTU,CEPP,KEPP); 6+ Mica Bay, CDA Lake, April 23
 (MICA); 1+ Shepherd Lake, April 16 (WAES)

Gadwall 2 pair Mica Bay, CDA Lake, April 23 (MICA)

Ruddy Duck 1 Dredge Road Ponds, April 22 (SLIN)

Northern Harrier 1 Mica Bay, CDA Lake, April 9 (MICA)

Rough-legged Hawk (a winter visitor) 1 still on Rathdrum
 Prairie as of April 14 (SLIN)

Swainson's Hawk (rare)1 (1st year bird) migrating over
 Tamarack Ridge near Cataldo, March 28 (SLIN)

Virginia Rail 1 heard Fernan Lake, April 22 (SLIN)

Common Snipe 1st Twin Lakes, April 14 (SLIN)
 3+ Mica Bay, CDA Lake, April 23 (MICA)

Calliope Hummingbird 1st Fernan Lake feeder, April 26
 (SSTU)

Red-naped Sapsucker 1st Thompson Lake, April 22 (SLIN)

Pileated Woodpecker 1 Armstrong Hill, CDA, April 14
 (KBUC)

Northern Shrike (winter visitor) last seen Silverwood Area,
 April 13 (KEPP,CEPP)

Northern Rough-winged Swallow 1st Canyon Road Ponds
 near Cataldo, April 22 (SLIN)

Cliff Swallow 1st Coeur d'Alene River Bridge at Harrison,
 April 22 (SLIN)

Barn Swallow 1st Cougar Bay, CDA Lake, April 22 (SLIN)

Gray Jay 1 Farragut State Park, March 23 (SLIN)

House Wren 1st Cataldo area, April 19 (SWEL)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1st Beauty Cr. Rd, April 17 (KBUC);
 1 Hayden L., Aril 21 (CCAM);1 Cataldo, April 22 (SWEL)

Western Bluebird 6-8 pairs Gertie Hanson Bluebird Trail in
 Hoo Doo Valley, April 16 (KEPP,CEPP,SSTU); 1 pair Mica
 Bay Bluebird Trail April 9,23 (MICA)

Mountain Bluebird 3-4 pairs Gertie Hanson Bluebird Trail in
 Hoo Doo Valley, April 16 (CEPP,KEPP,SSTU)

Orange-crowned Warbler 1st Hardy Creek near Cataldo,
 April 22 (SWEL); several Mullan Trail Road, April 22 (SLIN)

Nashville Warbler 1st Tubbs Hill, April 26 (KBUC)

Yellow-rumped Warbler 1st CDA, April 21 (CCAM)

McGillivray's Warbler 1st Tubbs Hill, April 26 (KBUC)

Vesper Sparrow 1st Rathdrum Prairie, March 29 & Cataldo
 area April 4 (SLIN); 1 Silverwood area, April 7 (CEPP,KEPP)

Savannah Sparrow 1st Rathdrum Prairie, April 12 (SLIN_

White-crowned Sparrow 1+ at feeder Cataldo area, April 5-
 present (SWEL); 1+ Osprey Inn, Harrison, April 22 (SLIN)

Yellow-headed Blackbird 1st Tamarack Ridge near
 Cataldo, April 14 (SLIN)

Brewer's Blackbird 1st Rathdrum Prairie, April 9 (SLIN)

Brown-headed Cowbird 1st Harrison, April 22 (SLIN)

NEWSLETTER QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take a few minutes to fill out this form and mail it to the address below.

Or telephone / e-mail Shirley Sturts 664-5318 ssturts@iea.com

Kris Buchler 664-4739 ekaerie@earthlink.net

Please respond by June 30.

- Please continue to send *The Fish Hawk Herald* by regular mail.
- Please notify me by e-mail and I will get *The Fish Hawk Herald* from the web site, www.cdaudubon.org
- I want to stay on your mailing list, but do not want every issue. Please send only the September issue each year.
- I do not want to receive the newsletter. Please remove my name from your mailing list.

Fold_ _ _ _ _

Fill in your name and address.

Please include your telephone number and e-mail address.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City and Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ E-Mail Address _____

*Thank You,
Board of Directors*

(Fold like an accordion - address inside)

Fold_ _ _ _ _

Place
Stamp
Here

Coeur d' Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society

P. O. Box 361

Coeur d' Alene ID 83816

