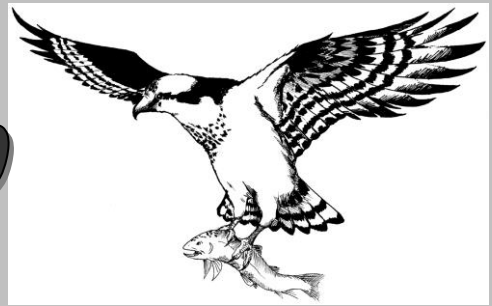


THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society

May 2003

VOLUME 12 ISSUE 9

COMING EVENTS

BOARD MEETING

DATE: May 13, Tuesday
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Mountain West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

DATE: May 10, Saturday
ACTIVITY: Plans not finalized, see our website or call Lisa 682-4808.

MAY PROGRAM

DATE: May 19, Monday
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: First Presbyterian Church, 521 Lakeside
PROGRAM: "An 800-Mile Hike For Wildlife Corridors"
SPEAKER: Josh Burnim - Over the past 5 years, Josh has covered a lot of ground becoming a naturalist and educator of Idaho's backcountry, trees and wildlife. The Sawtooths to Selkirk's Hike is a dream come true for Josh as he grounds himself in his passions - people and the landscape.

GARAGE SALE

DATE: June 7th
PLACE: Home of Theresa Potts (same place as the last 3 years)
TIME: 9 a.m.
CONTACTS: Jan Severtson 667-6209 or Theresa Potts 765-0229
Contributions of items for the sale are welcome and volunteers will be needed to collect, set-up, and take down. A FUN project!!!! Please join us!

—●—
Visit our website:
www.cdaaudubon.org

COMING SOON TO A TOWN NEAR YOU.....WEST NILE VIRUS

Lisa Hardy

As I write, I am keeping an eye on the quartet of Steller's Jays hopping and poking about in the maples outside my window. I have an inclination to anthropomorphize these birds with their goofy, bobbling crests and raucous voices. On many mornings, it is the grating voice of a jay that beckons me out of the dream world and into a new day. And so I am worried about how the oncoming wave of West Nile virus (WNV) is going to affect our local bird population



Common Raven
Photo by Wayne Tree

Since the first documented occurrence in an American Crow carcass found in New York City in 1999, West Nile has spread to all but four of the lower 48 states. The four states that have yet to harbor a case are Arizona, Utah, Nevada and Oregon. To the north, British Columbia has yet to report a WNV case, while the virus has already arrived in Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. But Dr. Mark Drew, Idaho's State Wildlife Veterinarian, believes that by next spring, "the map will be all colored in."

Idaho has only one documented case of West Nile, a horse in Canyon County that tested seropositive in October, 2002. This horse had traveled out of the state, and it is believed that the virus was not acquired in Idaho. But the dead raven in Newport, Washington last fall that tested positive suggests that the virus is in North Idaho now, and only awaits documentation.

Dr. Drew explained that West Nile virus is native to North Africa, the Middle East, and central Eurasia where it occurs at a low background level. In the Old World, it is an avian disease. That is also true in North America, but, just as Native Americans had almost no resistance to the smallpox brought by Europeans, our birds are sustaining heavy mortality from the virus that is new to them. To date, some 190 species of birds, 25 species of mammals (including humans) and 1 species of reptile (alligators) have been found to be infected with WNV.

Continued on Page 2

WEST NILE VIRUS

Continued from page 1

Biting mosquitoes transmits WNV from bird to bird. Unlike a disease such as malaria, which is transmitted by only a few species of mosquito, WNV has been found in 36 species of mosquito to date. Other modes of transmission appear to be from contact with feces or saliva, and eating the flesh of infected individuals.

Virologists have been amazed by the speed at which the virus has crossed the continent. According to Audubon's website, "The apparent ease with which it spread west during the summer and fall of 2002 is uncharacteristic of mosquito-borne viruses. In addition, the virus's pathogenicity – the degree to which it causes damage, disease and death – is highly unusual."

The route by which WNV arrived in North America is not known. It probably arrived in an infected bird, and that bird may have been a captive, imported individual, or a wild bird wandering to our east coast from the Old World. The actual strain of our WNV most closely resembles a strain from Israel, and thus the former possibility seems more likely; on our east coast, we are more likely to see a migratory bird from Europe or North Africa than from the eastern end of the Mediterranean, and such a bird would be carrying a European or North African strain of the virus.

Corvids, the family of birds that includes ravens, crows, jays and magpies, are especially susceptible to WNV. In addition to corvids, the virus appears to be taking a heavy toll on raptors; in the eastern U.S., large numbers of Red-tailed Hawk and Great Horned Owl carcasses have tested positive.

State health departments have used the testing of bird carcasses to locate areas into which the virus has newly spread. Those areas are then targeted with mosquito control measures. Idaho health departments will test corvid and raptor carcasses. If you find a dead bird, and it is a corvid (raven, crow, jay or magpie) or raptor (hawk, falcon, owl), and it is fresh, less than 24 hours old, you should call Idaho Fish & Game (769-1414) to come pick up the bird. If you must handle the bird, wear disposable latex gloves, or pick the bird up by inverting a plastic bag over your hand, and then pulling the bag up around the bird with your free hand. Double-bag the bird, and wash your hands. Remember that it is illegal to be in possession of protected bird species, including all raptors, and corvids except crows, in our area.

For more information and the latest news on West Nile virus, visit these websites:

http://www2.state.id.us/dhw/cdp/westnile/west_nile_index.htm

<http://www.audubon.org/bird/wnv/>

LIMERICK BY LYNN

**There once was a lad from
Kamiah**

**Who searched high and low
for Anhinga**

Not up in montane

Nor down on the plain

**But swimming the swamps of
South Florida**

Lynn Sheridan

BIRDING WITH A BROWN BAG

Tubbs Hill April 8

Lynn Sheridan



**Winter Wren
Photographed
by Wayne Tree**

It was a sunny, 70-degree day and lots of people were on the trail. Along the trail, I enjoyed lush green grass sprinkled with many yellow fawn lilies, violet grass widows, white spring beauties and shiny yellow buttercups.

The best bird was a Winter Wren singing and showing off. Others seen and heard were: Northern Flicker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pygmy Nuthatch, Pine Siskin, Song Sparrow, House Finch, American Robin, American Crow, a lone Common Goose and Gull (species). Walking back through a residential area I saw many Violet-green Swallow.

This was a solo walk, but not lonely. Please join me May 20th for another birding walk on Tubbs Hill - see Field Trips page 3 for details.

WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED

Wild Birds Unlimited is donating 10% of their sales from Audubon members to our Audubon Chapter.

Their store is at 296 W. Sunset Ave. #22, Coeur d'Alene. When you go there be sure to identify yourself as an Audubon member so that our chapter gets credit.

MAY - JULY FIELD TRIPS

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

1. Please register with the leader ahead of time.
 - a. It helps the leader plan the trip.
 - b. You will be informed if the trip time or location is changed or if the trip is canceled.
2. Fees: (to be paid to the driver of the car) \$5.00 - all day trips \$3.00 - 1/2 day trips.
3. We sometimes use radios to communicate between cars. If the radios are used we are asking participants to contribute \$1.00 toward batteries.

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATES: May 5 and 19, Monday

TIME: 8:00 a.m. NOTICE CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

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

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

SUMMER: Starting in June the survey will start at 7 a.m. the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month: dates Could change - let Shirley or Kris know if you are planning on coming.

BROWN BAG BIRDING TRIP

DATE: May 20, Tuesday

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

MEET: Tubbs Hill

LEADER: Lynn Sheridan (leave messages for Lynn with Kris Buchler 664-4739)

ACTIVITY: We will walk around the hill as far as time permits. Come help me look for birds returning from their winter homes as well as our year around resident birds, while enjoying spring wild flowers.

MARSH BIRDS

DATE: May 3, Saturday

TIME: 7:30 a.m.

MEET: carpool @ K-mart parking lot, behind Fast Burger

LEADER: Dick Cripe, 665-0010 or racripe@imbris.net

ACTIVITY: We will bird the rich habitat of the Hoodoo Valley north of Coeur d'Alene with a special emphasis on finding marsh birds such as American Bittern, Virginia Rail and Sora. This trip will take us along one of the Bluebird Trails maintained by our chapter. This is a half-day trip; bring water, and snacks if you need them.

FINCH ARBORETUM

DATE: May 17, Saturday

TIME: 7:00 a.m.

MEET: carpool @ K-mart parking lot, behind Fast Burger

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

ACTIVITY: Kris Buchler will lead our chapter in giving a guided bird walk and slideshow presentation at the Finch Arboretum in Spokane. The emphasis will be on identification of local birds by eye and ear. The event begins at 8 AM at the arboretum, and concludes at 11 AM; there is a fee to attend.

CENTURY COUNT - BENEWAH COUNTY

DATE: May 31, Saturday

LEADER: Shirley Sturts, 664-5318

ACTIVITY: This is our annual trip to count 100 species in a single day. We start at dawn and go until we drop. This year we are taking on Benewah County for the first time, but no matter where we go, we always have a blast! Contact the leader for details.

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North American Butterfly Association



**Western Tiger Swallowtail
Photographed by Wayne Tree**

Did you know there is a group that views butterflies in the same way that you view birds? The North American Butterfly Association (NABA) is interested in all aspects of netless butterfly appreciation including species listing, identification, and photography (even if you found bird photography difficult and frustrating, you'll find taking great photographs of butterflies is easy), conservation, and butterfly gardening.

Our quarterly magazine, *American Butterflies*, has spectacular color photos and articles by experts that provide the information you need for successful butterfly identification and gardening. Feature articles include detailed site guides to butterflying "hot spots" and explain the mysteries of butterfly behavior. Our color newsletter, *Butterfly Gardener*, focuses on creating butterfly gardens -- allowing you to create and visit gardens throughout North America -- while keeping you apprised of news about chapters and people.

We are working to save butterfly species throughout North America. NABA has helped endangered Shaus' Swallowtails in Florida and contributed to developing a long-

term survival plan for Monarchs. NABA has persuaded the U.S. Army to alter plans that would have destroyed the last colony of Regal Fritillaries in the East and has petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list Miami Blue (down to one known colony) as an endangered species. In addition, we are developing educational programs for schools and park rangers and naturalists.

The NBA 4th of July Butterfly Counts (held throughout North America) that NABA conducts and publishes, provide a fun-filled way for beginners and experts alike to help measure the health of the environment by taking its butterfly pulse

There are currently 30 local NABA chapters, organizing a wide array of field trips workshops, conservation activities, and butterfly gardens. If there isn't a chapter in your area (check our web-site listing at www.naba.org), why not start one?

Memorial Day Weekend Butterfly Count

This Memorial Day Weekend, NABA is launching its "Butterflies I've Seen" database. We are encouraging everyone to spend some time outdoors observing butterflies during the time period May 25-27. After you've seen butterflies at your local park, or in your own backyard, enter your sightings at the NABA website on the "Butterflies I've Seen" web pages. Your observations will provide important information allowing us to plot butterfly distributions and abundances throughout the United States, so that we can learn more about butterfly populations and how to conserve them. You can use

the system to keep track of your own butterfly observations.

Creating a NABA Butterfly Park

NABA is creating the premier butterfly gardens in the world on 100 acres of land fronting the Rio Grande River in Mission, Texas. But, we need your help to make it a reality! This land just east of Bentsen-Rio Grand State Park is being donated to NABA. The donation is contingent upon NABA raising \$500,000 to begin actualizing the project.

Your donation to NABA will be an important contribution to making our world just a little bit better. Donors of \$1000, or more, will be recognized, by having their name permanently displayed (unless you wish otherwise) in the Visitors' Center. Opportunities exist for naming structures and gardens at the Park.

The Lower Rio Grande Valley woodland is one of the most endangered ecosystems in the United States. NABA Butterfly Park will be an important link in the wildlife corridor along the Rio Grande River that is being created by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Lower Rio Grande Valley contains the most diverse butterfly fauna in the United States. Spectacular flower gardens, using a wide variety of beautiful native wildflower, shrubs and trees, will encourage vast concentrations of butterflies, providing explosive color and movements throughout the year.

The major North American education center about butterflies and their host plants will contain displays and interactive exhibits that will be

designed to provide exciting and educational experiences of both the general public and the more advanced butterflyers. A special area of concentration will be children's education.

As a major tourist attraction, NABA Butterfly Park will provide important economic benefits to the people of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, while providing a wholesome and healthful educational and recreational resource.

NABA Miami Blue Fund

More butterflies are imperiled in southern Florida than anywhere else in the United States. Miami Blues, once common throughout southern Florida, and now known from a single colony on the Keys. NABA, in cooperation with the Tropical Audubon Chapter of the National Audubon Society and with the Florida Native Plant Society, is implementing an action plan to save this butterfly. The Miami Blue Fund will support this plan and efforts to help other butterfly species on the Florida Keys that are also endangered.

NABA a non-profit organization is working to promote the public enjoyment and conservation of butterflies. Please support us in these efforts. Members receive [American Butterflies](#) and [Butterfly Gardener](#). For NABA membership and information visit their website at: www.naba.org or write to NABA, 4 Delaware Rd.,



Morristown, N.J. 07960

Mourning Cloak. [Nymphalis antiopa]

Photographed by Wayne Tree

"A few years ago Montana adopted this butterfly as it state's butterfly. It is an unmistakable butterfly. It is unique. It is also one of the very first butterflies to break hibernation and can be at times seen out flying on a warm winter's day. When the air temperatures reach over 50 degrees for a sustained period of time and they are out and about flying. Other early flyers are Milbert's Tortoiseshell and the California Tortoiseshell." *Wayne Tree*

BOUNDARY IN THE SPRING

Lisa Hardy

Mountain Bluebird



**Photographed
by Wayne Tree**

Our Saturday, March 29 trip to the

northernmost tip of Idaho fell in the middle of waterfowl migration. Most of the swans had already passed through, and the teal had not yet arrived, but we found thousands of Mallard and Northern Pintail. The only other duck species that could compete with these two dabblers was American Wigeon, present in hundreds, and contributing their characteristic whistling cries to the waterfowl symphony.

Our route took us first to the Boundary WMA on the border with Canada; then we made an

unsuccessful detour up Smith Creek to look for Boreal Chickadee. We found instead a group of Chestnut-backed Chickadees that had doubtless not experienced before such concentrated attention from a group of birders. Returning to the Kootenai River floodplain, we scoped out the flooded areas of the agricultural fields at The Nature Conservancy's Ball Creek Ranch, and checked on the bat houses. Finally, we searched through the waterfowl at the Kootenai NWR until dusk.

The highlights of the trip were returning land birds. At Boundary, we tracked down the characteristic drumming of a sapsucker, only to find, to our amazement, that it actually was a Red-naped Sapsucker. The sapsuckers had not yet been reported from the Coeur d'Alene area. This early male had found an acoustically desirable cottonwood snag on the international border from which to lure in birders. Also at Boundary, we were treated to the stunning color of two male Mountain Bluebirds, brilliant against the drab landscape. A brief glimpse of a White-crowned Sparrow at Kootenai NWR was further proof that spring is returning.

We noticed wildlife other than birds. Along West Side Road we looked down onto a foursome of mule deer feeding in the hops fields, underneath a grid of wires designed to support vines not yet emerged. At Kootenai NWR, we heard the calling of tree frogs.

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BOUNDARY IN THE SPRING

Continued from page 5

The Varied Thrush were quite vocal on the forested slope of the Selkirks. Another acoustic

highlight was listening to a pair of Great Horned Owls calling back and forth to one another near the Kootenai NWR. And perhaps the most beautiful song, that of the Western Meadowlark, started our trip at the Copeland Bridge, and then finished our day at dusk on the Kootenai NWR. *Trip participants: Kris Buchler, Janet Callen, Lisa Hardy, Lynn Sheridan*
Go to our website for the complete species list.

“SHOREBIRD”TRIP

Lisa Hardy

Our spring shorebird trip could have more aptly been called a “Killdeer” trip. In spite of glassing over acres of prime habitat, the only shorebirds we located were resident Killdeer and Wilson’s Snipe. (If you are wondering what a Wilson’s Snipe is, it is just a Common Snipe with a name change to distinguish it from its Eurasian equivalent that was, until recently, considered conspecific.)

We started out our trip at Wolf Lodge Bay with a beautiful Common Loon that appeared to be in full breeding plumage. Along the nearby KOA Campground road, we heard singing Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Winter Wren, and spotted a pair of Wood Duck.

On the Wolf Lodge Creek road, we saw Wild Turkey, and stopped to listen to a rhythmic whistled tooting, like a Northern Pygmy Owl, but higher pitched. We spent several minutes trying to catch a glimpse of the bird through the brush, until Ellen finally climbed the hill and found that the source of the toots was not a bird at all, but rather a Columbian Ground Squirrel. Brewer’s Blackbirds shared a wet pasture along Wolf Lodge

Creek with grazing longhorn cattle and 2 Wilson’s Snipe, which we could hear but not see.

Next we motored over the pass to Lane Marsh near Killarney Lake. Here we spotted our first Blue-winged Teal of the year associated with a handful of Cinnamon Teal. A Yellow-headed Blackbird skulked in the grasses. Then we spotted an all-white bird about the size of a coot, acting like a coot, in the midst of hundreds of coots scattered across the marsh. We drove to the next pullout for a closer look at what turned out to be a mostly albino American Coot. By mostly I mean about 90% white, with just a black dot on the forehead and a black patch on the lower body.

Roland had just been to Lane Marsh several days earlier, and explained to us that he had been participating in a field trip for people involved in the Basin Cleanup. The mission of the state-controlled Basin Commission is to ameliorate the effects of mine waste in the Coeur d’Alene drainage. Roland told us that there had been a number of dead swans in the marsh that day, and that one was collected for testing, while the remainder were taken to a part of the marsh that could not be seen from the trail. The swans were assumed to have died from lead poisoning, a result of ingesting the leaded mud clinging to the vegetation that makes up their diet. The field trip participants learned of several approaches for keeping waterfowl and contaminated sediments apart. A reporter from the Spokane paper was present, and a story was going to be in the Sunday paper. We saw no dead swans on Sunday.

Arriving at Mission Slough, a Clark’s Nutcracker flew across the road. We located a small

flock of a half-dozen – it seemed late for these corvids to still be down in the valley bottom. Hardy Loop yielded five understatedly elegant Gadwall, plus more snipe and Killdeer.

Page ponds wound up our day, and provided a totally unexpected highlight in the form of a river otter fishing in the west Page swamp. In spite of its high sediment lead levels, the swamp apparently supports a population of fish as we watched the otter imbibe a small sculpin or similar fish. West Page swamp is not the body of water where one would go to look for an otter; when Dick first announced that he was seeing an otter, we thought he was perhaps pulling our legs. Up in the sewage ponds were both Common and Barrow’s Goldeneye, Lesser Scaup, and Northern Shovelers.

Trip participants: Roland Craft, Dick Cripe, Debby Domy, Lisa Hardy, Ellen Scriven, Shirley Sturts.
Go to our website for the complete species list

LIMERICK BY LYNN

There once was a birder from
Idaho
Who asked of her handsome new
bedfellow
Find me a willet
On my life list to list it
Then, married, to Wallace we'll
go

Lynn Sheridan

FIELDTRIP

CENTRAL I

DATE: June 21-22, Saturday, Sunday
ACTIVITY: Central Basin Audubon from along the Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes. some new faces, contribute some local to date details.

OBSERVATION POST

Kootenai County Big Year Additions since the February and March Newsletter (see February and March Newsletter or go to our Website to see bird species seen so far this year in Kootenai County - Current total 112

Pacific Loon 2 Gotham Bay, Coeur d'Alene Lake April 6 (EKEN, MMOS,KBUC, EBUC,HSEV, JSEV, JWAR,PWAR, TPOT, RCRA,SSTU,SLIN)

Western Grebe a large raft Harrison Marina April 6 (MMOS)

Turkey Vulture 2 Wolf Lodge Bay area Meyers Hill Road April 2 (Hjal)

Ruddy Duck 2 Killarney Lake April 13 (ESCR)

Osprey 1 McEuen Field, Coeur d'Alene March 28 (TBEL)

Gray Partridge 12 Chapter field trip on Rathdrum Prairie Feb. 9 Lisa Hardy, leader (this one was overlooked in the February newsletter)

Calliope Hummingbird 1 Kidd Island Bay area at her feeder April 14 (BLUK)

Red-naped Sapsucker 1 Coeur d'Alene, Armstrong Hill April 7 (KBUC)

Savannah Sparrow 1+ Rathdrum Prairie April 7 (CCAM)

White-crowned Sparrow 1 Coeur d'Alene feeder April 18 (NMER)

Yellow-headed Blackbird 1 Hardy Loop Road west of Cataldo April 3 (LHAR)

Purple Finch 1 female Harrison April 6 (MMOS) (this is a first Kootenai County bird)

OBSERVERS Terri Beliveau (TBEL), Ed and Kris Buchler (EBUC, KBUC), Corinne Cameron (CCAM), Roland Craft (RCRA), Lisa Hardy (LHAR), Holly Jalenski (HJEL), Earl Kendle (EKEN), Steve Lindsay (SLIN), Betty Lusk (BLUS), Nancy Mertz (NMER), Matthew Moskwik (MMOS), Theresa Potts (TPOT), Ellen Scriven (ESCR) Herb and Jan Severtson (HSEV, JSEV), Shirley Sturts (SSTU), Phil and Judy Waring (PWAR, JWAR)

