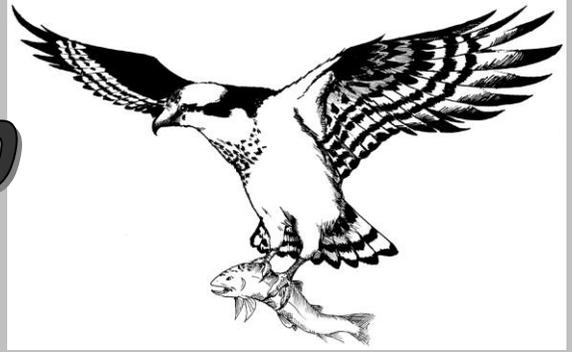


# THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society



NOVEMBER 2000

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 3

## PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

### BOARD MEETING

Date: November 6, Monday

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: Mountain West Bank 125 Ironwood Drive

### NOVEMBER PROGRAM

Date: November 20, Monday

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: First Presbyterian Church, 521 Lakeside

Program: "An Arctic Adventure"

Bill and John Gundlach will tell us in words and pictures about their three-week canoe trip in the wilderness of the Northwest Territories in Canada. On July 12, 2000 they flew 300 miles in a bush plane from Inuvik, NWT to Horton Lake. For the next three weeks they canoed down the Horton River to the Arctic Sea (350 miles). Bill and Joan are experienced canoeists and wilderness campers. This was their second adventure canoeing in the Northwest Territories

### THANKSGIVING DAY COUNT

This is one bird count that can be done in the comfort of your own home and won't take much time (one hour). Last year 431 counters in the eleven western states participated. They counted 161 species of birds plus a lot of mammals. John G. Hewston, count compiler, would like get over 500 participants this year.

To participate, pick up a participation form at the November meeting or call Jan Severtson 667-6209 and she will mail you one. The count is easy and fun to do - you pick any one-hour period during Thanksgiving Day for your count.

Pick up a data form at the November meeting or call Jan Severtson 667-6209. The count is easy and fun to do - pick any one-hour period during Thanksgiving Day for your count.

## WHAT A PARTY!



The Hayden Lake Country Club was the setting of our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala honoring community leader and environmentalist, Scott Reed. Eighty-five people dined, surveyed over 90 auction and raffle items and then participated in the evening's activities.

Dan Beard, Senior Vice President, Public Policy, National Audubon Society, was the guest speaker. After a humorous introduction and history of Scott's contributions as a board member for the National Audubon Society, he bestowed upon Scott the prestigious Presidential Award, National Audubon's highest honor for service. Also, in appreciation for Scott's support and advice with the founding of the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society, Kris Buchler, president of the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society, presented Scott with a blown glass sculpture by Steve Adams as a thank you from Audubon members.

Susan Weller, founder of the Coeur Audubon Chapter, was the surprised recipient of a personalized "Founder's Award". This award is a framed Bald Eagle art print by Charles Swartz, illustrator of A Sand County Almanac. There was also a passage from the book's author, Aldo Leopold. The chosen quote, a favorite of Susan's, was a written in calligraphy by local artist Sharon Gould.

"Top Hunter/Gatherer" was the title bestowed upon Shirley Sturts who brought in more auction/raffle items than ever imagined. Although there was no contest, her effort went way beyond the call of duty.

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# WHAT A PARTY!

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The evening's activities opened with a drawing for the first door prize, a watercolor painted and donated by Wes Hanson. The winner was Roger Young, a long time Audubon volunteer. Ed Buchler, as auctioneer, presided over our live auction. Ed, with his dry sense of humor, kept the bidding lively and spirited bringing in about \$1500. This was followed by ten silent auction items being given out to the highest bidders. The evening concluded with George Sayler and Janet Allen awarding 70+ raffle items to lucky winners.

Susan was responsible for the idea of the banquet, served as banquet committee chair and catalogued all the raffle and auction items. All the board members and officers contributed a great deal of hard work to the banquet and auction/raffle which brought in approximately \$2500 to support future chapter projects. Their efforts are much appreciated.

On behalf of our chapter we thank area businesses and individuals who contributed auction and raffle items. In addition to this we thank all participants for their generosity in making this evening a memorable event.

## EDUCATION REPORT

George Sayler

There have been several developments on the educational front. First, in August I presented an evening campfire program at Heyburn State Park. It was an introduction to birdwatching and birdhouses, and I found that I was way overprepared! It was a good learning experience for me and hopefully for the audience. The next morning I lead a bird walk along the lake. The highlights were a good view of a Great Blue Heron, which prompted a response of great awe from one 8 or 9 year old boy, and a nice view of Osprey with young on their nest.

In October I did a presentation on birds and their habitat for Lori Frank's Advanced Forestry Class at Coeur d' Alene High School. The session ended with a discussion of how the students would manage their plot of land to maintain it as suitable habitat for the many species of birds that might live there.

Finally, the effort to enroll classes in the Audubon Adventures programs is underway. Scott Reed has again volunteered to fund the program and I am attempting to re-enroll all the same classrooms from last year and expand the program. What a great way to educate young people about the importance of the environment and how they can help care for it.

## WHITE PINE FOREST FIELD TRIP

Lisa Hardy



Eight birders participated in the October 21 trip to the Deception Creek Experimental forest on the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River drainage. We started by birding along Fernan Lake, noting four Common Loon, several species of ducks, and a "pod" of five immature Bald Eagle. At the east end of the lake, we spotted the pair of adult Bald Eagle near the nest. Theresa Potts found a Ruby-crowned Kinglet along Fernan Creek, and we glimpsed a late American Kestrel. As we headed up to Fernan Saddle, blue sky was visible over Post Falls until we entered the cloud base and meandered east along the misted ridges. The trees on either side of the road were iced with fog frost.

We found the Montford Creek trailhead (after a bit of head scratching because it is not signed), and were encouraged by breaks in the clouds to leave our rain jackets in the cars as we set out. The purpose of the trip was to get a taste of how the now-vanished white pine forest of north Idaho once looked. Two factors have combined to topple the white pine from its once-dominant status. **Logging** operations began in earnest around the turn of the century, attracted by the extensive stands of this valuable timber. While the old-growth trees were being felled, regeneration of the white pine forests did not occur because of mortality from **blister rust**. Blister rust was introduced from Eurasia in 1910, and typically kills more than 90% of the white pine. Efforts to control the spread of blister rust were unsuccessful in the west, and while breeding of resistant strains holds some promise, it is difficult to imagine the white pine ever returning to its former glory.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

# WHITE PINE FOREST FIELD TRIP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The ecology of the white pine forest was not well studied before it disappeared, and we can only speculate on the shifts in animal populations with the change to a mixed forest of Douglas fir, grand fir, larch and hemlock. What we do know is that fire played an important role in maintaining the white pine forests. The rapid growth of the shade intolerant white pine seedlings allowed them to outpace other species in the clear areas following intense fires. As the white pine matured, shade-tolerant species grew up in the understory but were commonly wiped out by low-intensity fires that did not kill the white pine. Mature stands, with trees 150 years or older, became increasingly susceptible to damage from mountain pine beetle. When enough trees were killed by the beetle, the stage was set for intense fires, which once again leveled the playing field, and the cycle began anew.

The white pine that we saw in the Montford Creek drainage were mostly dead, but still standing. These trees were killed by pine beetle in the 1970's and '80's, and while impressive, they are not the giants so often depicted in historic photographs. On this day, the forest was moist and dripping from the recent rain, and we scrambled over numerous fallen trees along the disused path. Janet Callen acted as our tree expert, helping us to identify a few remaining live white pine as well as grand fir, huge specimens of hemlock, and shrubby Pacific yew. Shirley Sturts functioned as our pointwoman, forging relentlessly uphill over slippery obstacles, and prompting one astonished participant to "wonder what she was like *before* she retired". Shirley also led us in spotting the typical avifauna, such as Winter Wren, Varied Thrush and Red Crossbill. The carcass of a bull moose was found on the trail, cause of death not clear, and we noted plenty of bear and elk sign.

Our thanks go to Joyce Stock, silviculturalist with the U.S. Forest Service, for bringing the white pine story to our attention and providing information. Once again, Ken Eppler kept careful records. We hope new members, Clyde and Barry Runkle, will join us again soon.

Trip participants were Kris Buchler, Janet Callen, Ken Eppler, Lisa Hardy, Theresa Potts, Clyde and Barry Runkle, Shirley Sturts. 25 species total.

## NOVEMBER FIELD TRIPS

### **MICA BAY SURVEY**

**DATES:** November 8 & 22, Wednesdays

**TIME:** 9:00 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:** November 14, Tuesday

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

**MEET:** Tubbs Hill, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Entrance

**LEADER:** Lynn Sheridan 667-4606 (work)

**ACTIVITY:** Take a break from your daily routine for a hour nature walk on Tubbs Hill.

### **Boundary Wildlife Management Area**

**DATE:** Nov. 5, Sunday

**TIME:** 7:00 a.m.

**MEET:** Rosauer's Parking Lot, east side

**LEADER:** Shirley Sturts, 664-5318

**ACTIVITY:** Morning - Bird the Kootenai NWR  
Afternoon - Tour the newly established Boundary Creek WMA with Pat Cole from Idaho Fish and Game. We will return late afternoon. Bring water and lunch

### **Thompson Lake - Harrison**

**DATE:** November 19, Sunday

**TIME:** 8:00 a.m.

**MEET:** Cove Bowl, east end of Sherman

**LEADER:** Lisa Hardy 682-4808

**ACTIVITY:** We will look for waterfowl at Thompson Lake, check for loons on Coeur d'Alene Lake and hawks on Harrison flats. Bring a lunch and water. We will return home early afternoon.

## ***And grants me an honorary place within the jay clan***

Continued from the October Newsletter

By Susan Weller



Photo by Wayne Tree

Jay seems awfully scruffy and has bird dandruff—little dried bits of the sheathing that encase his emerging feathers. He seems preoccupied with his tail and wings today. Blowing on him lightly initiates a bout of enthusiastic preening. A bird louse unnerves me when he flies from Jay's crown, hits me in the eye and disappears. These sidling little fly-sized vermin have always disgusted me. They don't transfer to humans because they are host-specific but I am never fast enough to capture and squish one. I am pleased Jay is preening a lot today and is stretching out his wings with his legs.

### **14 July**

I played a tape of Steller's Jays today and Jay got real quiet and solemn. He is very alert and intelligent. He responds with irrepressible curiosity at the merest addition to his enclosure—a stick or a pinecone—even a new leaf. He likes social contact and seems captivated by me. He pecks at the freckles on my hands and arms and listens raptly to my voice. He particularly likes singing and my jay-mimicry. He has begun to tap his bill and wipe it on his perch often while eating. He takes poorly aimed stabs at the seed and berry mixture I feed him, and seems pleased when some sticks to his bill so he may get a taste.

He drinks water frequently and has begun to play a little. I got him to drink the first time by wiggling my fingers in his water dish. Now, when I splash my fingers in his water dish he jumps in and begins to bathe. He mimics my actions and seems to learn from them. He is very sharp and learns something the first time I show him. Oh, I feel inadequate to show him all he must learn to survive!

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### **15 July**

Jay has learned to scratch his head with his foot by bringing his leg up over his wing. He's constantly grooming and looks better kept as a result. He now sleeps with his head tucked in to the feathers on his back.

Time to upgrade Jay's living arrangements today. I moved him into Nessa's current crate. She's had it since she was a puppy but can surely live without it a few weeks. I wedged larger ponderosa pine branches inside and wove in smaller Douglas fir branches. I decorated further with a spray of serviceberries and leaves. Pine needles, bits of moss and pinecones hide the newspaper on the bottom of the crate. I scattered birdseed too, even though he cannot feed himself. Jay hops into his new quarters with enthusiasm and begins to inspect every square inch. He actually gleans the pine needles in a bunch of ponderosa pine foliage. The added space allows him to show off his growing agility. He is much happier in this space as it is four times the size of the cat carrier. He wants to be engaged in and with his environment and grows bored very easily. I'm spending a lot of time with him. His appetite has slacked off a bit but it's normal—nothing to worry about.

### **16 July**

Jay is incredibly active. I have to bring him out of the crate to feed him and I do so cautiously. Because he cannot feed nor fend for himself he must not get away from me.

He's attempting to take food directly from the tweezers but his aim is off. He watches raptly when I use the tweezers to flick leaf debris aside or to probe cracks and crevices. When I find something to eat there and feed it to him, he is amazed. Today, he's not eating much because he's too preoccupied with all that is going on around him.

We've been practicing short flights today. He flies from my hand to the loose bark on a wind break tree, then between the tree and the birdbath. We splash around in the birdbath and he takes short baths that encompass a lot of water throwing but little actual bathing. Strangely, when he accomplishes some new task he likes to be praised. When I praise him he struts and ruffles up his crest, acting altogether pleased with himself.

CONTINUED IN THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

# BLUEBIRD TRAILS

Theresa Potts

In September's article about the Gertie Hanson Bluebird Trail, I said that I would share the results of last summer's bluebird activity. We're not quite ready with all our figures, but I will tell you about another project connected with our bluebirds.



Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology alerted us that Terry Whitworth, a researcher collaborating with The Birdhouse Network, was studying the effects of blowfly parasitism on cavity nesting birds using nest boxes. Blowfly larva will often harm young birds by sucking the blood from the birds, making them anemic and more susceptible to starvation, hypothermia and other parasites, such as mites, fleas and lice.

We sent quite a few of our nests to Terry to be examined. He then sent us the results. Some of our nests had enough blowflies to cause anemia in the young. Dorene Scriven (We told you about her book in the previous bluebird article) has information in her book about insecticides that can be placed in the nesting box and would help eliminate the blowfly. These insecticides listed by Dorene will not harm the young birds. We will give them a try. A number of dead young were found in the nests on the trail. Perhaps blowflies contributed to their deaths.

Stay tuned for further articles about our bluebird trail!

# BIRDING WITH A BROWN BAG

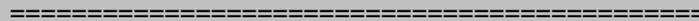
OCTOBER 10

Lynn Sheridan

Shirley Sturts met me at the south end of Fernan Lake on this cool dry October day. Autumn colors were reflected in the still water with only a few mallards and fishermen present to ripple the surface. A Belted Kingfisher and Northern Flicker were heard as we spotted Song Sparrow, Black-capped Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch in the bushes. Driving along the lake we found 2 Common Loon. One was still partly in sharp breeding plumage and the other in muted winter colors. As we studied them through the scope, two more popped up, both in winter

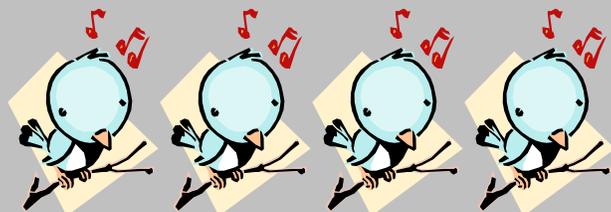
plumage. While we enjoyed loon watching a pecking sound was heard in a big hollow snag but the culprit wouldn't show.

At the east end of the lake among the dying lily pads were 2 male and 1 female Wood Duck, 1 Great Blue Heron and 6 American Coot. In the pond on the other side of the road we counted 13 Mallard. In nearby thickets a chorus of Mountain and Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch and Golden-crowned Kinglet were heard and viewed. Overhead flew 3 rather quiet Red-winged Blackbird and 2 raucous Common Raven. It was a lovely hour of birding.



"Our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty. It expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values as yet uncaptured by language. The quality of cranes lies, I think, in this higher gamut, as yet beyond the reach of words."

*Aldo Leopold*  
*A Sand County almanac*



## BIRD FEED FOR SALE

### Black Oil Sunflower

50LB \$14.00  
25LB \$ 7.50

### Niger (Thistle)

\$1.25 LB

Available at Regular Meetings  
or call Janet Callen at  
664-1085

Here is a sneak preview of signs to be placed at 25 different lake locations around Kootenai and Benewah Counties. The signs--intended to educate anglers and boaters to the presence of the common loon--will also be erected in Sandpoint and Priest Lake. Coeur d'Alene Audubon donated cash for the signs to the interagency Watchable Wildlife Program sponsored by federal and state agencies.

Membership dollars and donations are utilized in a variety of ways at Coeur d'Alene Audubon. Your dollars make the publication, printing, and mailing of the Fish Hawk Herald possible. Your dollars allow newsletter editor Shirley Sturts to explore new ways to communicate the Audubon Cause, like through our newly developed web page.

Coeur d'Alene Audubon also has a number of checklists and brochures that are provided free to Audubon members and the general public.

Your dollars make it possible for education chair George Saylor to develop programs and slide presentations for local schools and civic groups.

Funds and donations help us to support and protect wildlife species and their habitats through special projects.

**Please donate to the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society--**we put your conservation and education dollars to work! Your tax-deductible contribution may be mailed to Coeur d'Alene Audubon, Box 361 Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814.

## COEUR D'ALENE AUDUBON SOCIETY ON THE WEB AT [www.cdaudubon.org](http://www.cdaudubon.org)

Shirley Sturts, webmaster

Have you checked our website recently and wondered why it had not been updated since March? The National Audubon Society is no longer hosting chapter websites. They will, however, link chapter websites to their new hosts.

We recently purchased our own domain name: [www.cdaudubon.org](http://www.cdaudubon.org) and we have been accepted by Enviroweb.org for hosting our website. They host non-profit conservation organizations for free.

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

# Look Out For Loons!



Help keep this lake safe for wildlife. Enjoy loons at a distance.

- **Stay at Least 300 Feet From Loons on the Water**
- **Avoid Nesting Areas**
- **Retrieve All Fishing Line and Tackle from the Water**
- **Use Lead-Free Sinkers and Jigs**

Loons are protected under state and federal law. If you see anyone disturbing loons, please call your local conservation officer.







I am currently working on an update to our website and hope to have us online in the next week or two. I have many new ideas for expanding and improving the website but this takes time. You should see several changes over the next year. Our website will be updated monthly to keep our members informed about meetings, events and field trips.

Members, this is your website. Feel free to make suggestions on what you would like to see included or changed.

## OBSERVATION POST



**OBSERVERS:**

Ed Buchler (EBUC), Kris Buchler (KBUC Ken Eppler (KEPP), ), Bill Gundlach (BGUN), Ed Haglund (EHAG, Jerry Hanson (JHAN), Steve Lindsay (SLIN), Palouse Audubon Field Trip (PAS), Theresa Potts (TPOT), Clyde Runkle (CRUN), Lynn Sheridan (LSHE), John Shipley (JSHI), Shirley Sturts (SSTU), Judy Waring (JWAR), Phil Waring (PWAR), 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>

**Pacific Loon** 1-2 Hayden Lake, Oct. 7 (LHAR, SSTU,JWAR,PWAR w/PAS) - also seen by SLIN,TPOT,SSTU before and after this date

**Common Loon** Largest number 40+ Camp Easton, CDA Lake, Oct. 7 (LHAR, SSTU); Smaller groups 1-10 observed on several October dates in several locations throughout October; 2 on our Mica Bay Survey, Oct. 9 and 27 (KEPP,TPOT,SSTU,BGUN,KBUC,CRUN); 1-4 Fernan Lake, between October 4-22+ (SSTU)

**Horned Grebe** 10+ Hayden L. Oct. 20 (KBUC,SSTU,JSHI)

**Bufflehead** 6 Spokane River/Blackwell Island, October 17 (LSHE); 50+ Hayden Lake, Oct. 20 (JSHI,SSTU,KBUC)

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** 1 Armstrong Hill, Oct. 22 (KBUC)

**Osprey** Some last seen dates: 1 Kingston/Cataldo area, Oct. 4 (LHAR); Hell's Gate State Park, Lewiston, Oct. 6 (TPOT); Oct. 6 Cougar Bay, CDA Lake, Oct. 6 (EHAG)

**Bald Eagle** 1 Mica Bay Survey, Oct. 27 (KBUC,KEPP,SSTU,BGUN,CRUN)

**Rough-Legged Hawk** 1<sup>st</sup> seen this fall Rathdrum Prairie, Oct. 11 (SLIN); 1 Rathdrum Prairie Oct. 20 (JSHI, SSTU)

**Merlin** 1 Post Falls area, October 20 (SLIN)

**Ruffed Grouse** 1 Mica Bay, CDA Lake October 16 (RYOU) 1 around her house Armstrong Hill all fall (KBUC)

**California Quail** 8-12 Mica Bay Survey (KEPP,KBUC,SSTU,CRUN,BGUN)

**Sanderling** 1 Harlow Point Road, CDA Lake (Harrison area), Oct. 7 (LHAR,SSTU w/PAS)

**Pectoral Sandpiper** 1 Harlow Point Road, CDA Lake, Oct. 7 (SSTU,LHAR w/PAS)

**Long-billed Dowitcher** 3 Harlow Point Road and 1 Thompson Lake, Oct. 7 (SSTU,LHAR w/PAS)

**Northern Saw-whet Owl** 1 was found mid-October in a weakened condition on Thompson Road and turned into Beth Paragamian, from Watchable Wildlife. Kris Buchler took it into Steve Lindsay for evaluation and was providing care for the little fellow. Unfortunately it was in too weak a condition to recover and it died a couple of days later.

**Great-Gray Owl** 1 seen over several days at Newman Lake by many birders, Oct. 10-Oct. 21+ by TPOT/SSTU Oct. 18 and KBUC,EBUC Oct. 19. A huge owl - an awesome sight!!

**Northern-Pygmy Owl** 1 Mica Bay Survey Oct. 27 (JHAN)

**Northern Flicker** 2 at her feeders 16<sup>th</sup> Street CDA, Oct. 17 (LSHE)

**Pileated Woodpecker** 1 heard Mica Bay Survey,Oct. 27 (KBUC,KEPP,CRUN,BGUN)

**Red-naped Sapsucker** 1 in his yard Fernan Hill CDA, Oct. 1 (RYOU)

**Northern Shrike** 1 Mica Bay Survey, Oct. 27 (SSTU,CRUN,BGUN,KEPP,KBUC)

**White-breasted Nuthatch** 1 Thompson Lake, October 7 (SSTU,LHAR,w/PAS)

**Gray Jay** 2 Fernan Saddle, October 2 (RYOU)

**Steller's Jay** 1 at his feeder Fernan Hill Oct. 9 (RYOU)

**Blue Jay** 1 in his yard off and on since September 1 and 1 Blue/Steller's Jay hybrid (head of Steller's and body of a Blue), Oct. 8 Front Ave. CDA (BGUN) 1 in his yard on Fernan Hill 3+ different times between Sept. 30 - Oct. 17

**American Crow** 2 Mica Bay, CDA Lake, Oct. 6 (JHAN) (It is unusual to see crows in Mica Bay); 50+ are hanging around at the east end of Sherman just as they did last year in October (KBUC,SSTU)

**American Pipit** Large flocks Rathdrum Prairie, Oct. 11 (SLIN)

**Yellow-headed Blackbird** 1 Thompson Lake, Oct. 7 (LHAR,SSTU w/PAS)