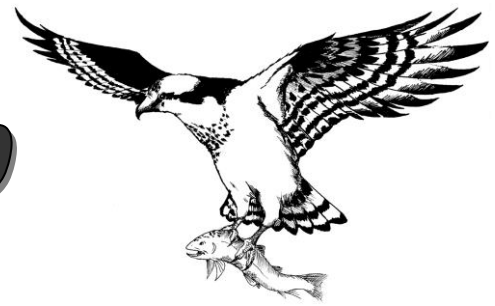


THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society
www.cdaudubon.org

October 2007

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 2

BOARD MEETING

DATE: October 15, Monday
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Mt. West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

OCTOBER PROGRAM

DATE: October 15, Monday
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: First Presbyterian Church,
521 E. Lakeside, Coeur d'Alene
SPEAKER: Kate Healy, USFWS,
PROGRAM: "MAPS: Monitoring
Avian Productivity and Survivor-
ship.". Learn what local mist
netting stations are finding out
about our bird populations.
RAFFLE: Raffle theme is "Harvest
Time", with a big pumpkin, local
produce, and home preserves.

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

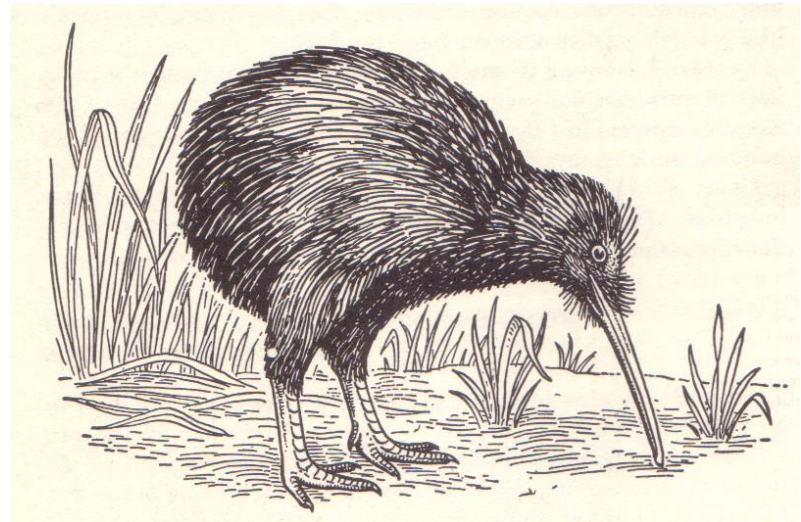
DATE: October 6, 2006
TIME: 8:30 a.m.
PLACE: Grange Hall, top of Mica
Hill.

Our Audubon chapter has
adopted a two mile stretch of
Highway 95 before the turn-off to
Mica Bay. We pick up trash twice a
year.

Juice and doughnuts will be
served before we start working.

Bring gloves. Grabbers are
provided.

BIRDING "DOWN UNDER"



Kiwi Bird
National Symbol of New Zealand

Two months in New Zealand

Judy Waring

Phil and I first planned to move to New Zealand for a year. That idea was soon scrapped for a six month stay, followed by the three month idea, and finalized as a two month visit in February and March of this year. New Zealand is not a hot destination for the serious birder intent on racking up the species but our agenda was to try everything, including birding.

Upon our arrival we bought a 1985 Honda Civic for \$500 US and traveled this way for the duration. The car worked perfectly. Phil and I were the problem. We had some harrowing moments until we mastered driving in the left-hand lane and clockwise roundabouts. The country is composed of two main islands with a scattering of lesser islands offshore. The south island is mainly green, rolling sheep farming country with mountains and lakes as a backdrop and a ratio of sheep to humans said to be 50 million to 5 million. Equally interesting, the north island has the larger population and has more development. We spent one month on each island.

We stayed almost exclusively in private rooms in hostels and that worked very well. They were clean, well-run businesses with fully equipped kitchens so that we could fix our own meals. The evenings were often spent visiting with people from all over the globe. We met more than 15 nationalities using the hostel system.

Continued on Page 2

BIRDING "DOWN UNDER"

Continued from page 1

Birds of interest



The **Kiwi** bird is the New Zealand national symbol, a flightless ground-nesting bird that has been decimated by predators like stoats and opossums. Humans have also played a part in their troubles as the hair-like feathers are sought by natives for ceremonial wear. The government has now moved populations of these rare birds to predator-free islands where they are making a slow comeback. We visited one of these sanctuaries off of the north island and, while we did not see the Kiwi, we saw several species that were new to us and beautiful. But never say never. This adage led to an interesting hunt for the Kiwi in an ancient kauri forest one night where a few of the birds remain. Knowing that the Kiwi is nocturnal, we arrived at dusk, walked into the forest, and sat silently in the pitch black for an hour, hoping to at least hear the distinctive call. Nothing, only the drone of mosquitoes.



The **Yellow-eyed Penguin** is endemic to New Zealand and is one of the world's rarest penguins so they were high on our priority list. The recommended way to view them is to arrive at the seashore just before dusk when they return for the night from feeding at sea. This we did and sure enough, at the given hour, they popped out of the surf and waddled up to the cover of brush to preen and settle in. A dangerous time for the Yellow-eyed is following the fledging of chicks. The adults go to sea for an intensive three weeks of feeding and then come to shore to molt. The feathers fall off entirely and they are vulnerable to predators so they must remain hidden until the new feathers grow. There is no feeding done during this period.



A bird that is common in New Zealand and that we expected to easily find is the **Pukeko**. It is the size of a chicken and is a cousin of the Purple Gallinule found in the American southeast. Search as we might, it took us five weeks to come across this bird. At last we found three of them walking delicately over the top of shrubbery feeding on seeds. They are quite spectacular with a glossy purple and black feathering and bright red beak, forehead and legs. An unusual nesting practice of the Pukeko caught my attention - they have communal nests. Two or three females will lay eggs in the same nest and the incubation and feeding is shared with the extended family.

Our New Zealand experience was successful in every way. The country is beautiful, safe, and English is the language used. We would be happy to field inquiries about travel ideas.

RAPTORS: MAGNIFICENT BIRDS OF PREY



It's that time again: raptor migration! Refresh your raptor knowledge, play games, learn about raptor rehabilitation at: www.audubon.org/bird/Raptors/index.html.

After reading about raptors on the Audubon website, visit the website of "Birds of Prey Northwest" and find out about their plans for a rehabilitation and educational center at Wolf Lodge Bay. Find out how you can help raptors and make this center a reality. Go to: www.birdsofpreynorthwest.org/index.html

MISSION OF THE BIRDS OF PREY NORTHWEST

Established in 1993, **Birds of Prey Northwest** promotes stewardship and conservation of raptors through educational programs with live birds of prey. We provide medical treatment and rehabilitation to injured birds of prey with the ultimate goal of returning them to the wild. The organization also collaborates with others on raptor research projects.

NOON TIME BIRDING

SEPTEMBER 18



Lynn Sheridan

(This popular one hour event led by Lynn Sheridan is a good way to get

to know what our chapter is all about.)

Ken and Kathryn Green, new-comers to the area, Sherry Breitenbach, visiting from Utah, and regulars, Dale Holst, Roland Craft and Kris Buchler joined me at noon at the west end of Fernan Lake.

Mallards and their "hybrid cousins" dabbled and dozed at the waters edge, while an otter swam by. The Great Blue Heron rookery was empty, but one was spotted in the shallows. Two Northern Flicker called from the top of a tree, while a few House Finch and Pygmy Nuthatch skittered through the bushes.

All, except Sherry, piled into a couple of cars to drive to the far end of the lake. Along the way, Kris stopped to show us where the resident Bald Eagle pair nested this summer, but none were seen. However, at the marshy east end, we found an juvenile Bald Eagle in a tree preening itself.

Kris's scope proved to be invaluable. We all enjoyed close up views of a Solitary Sandpiper that Kris discovered while scanning the area. Other bird sightings included several pretty male Wood Duck, some in eclipse plumage, a lone female Wood Duck, a Pileated Woodpecker, arriving noisily to eat hawthorne berries, a Double-crested Cormorant, American Coot, Great Blue Heron, Mallard,

a lone swallow (sp) and a Black-billed Magpie.

This was a wonderful outing--thank you, everyone.

CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROPERTY

Lynn Sheridan

On September 15, 2007, Joan Gundlach and I joined a group of conservation enthusiasts from Washington and Idaho to tour the newly established "conservation easement" property at Hauser Lake, property of John and Nancy Matheson. Their 150 acres of woods and meadows, and a portion of the lake will be kept free of development in perpetuity. We were invited by Chris DeForest, Executive Director of Inland Northwest Land Trust. We walked the trails, admired the old trees, saw nests of Great Blue Heron and an Osprey, and noted a few birdhouses for bluebirds. It will not be open to the public, as it is still private property and John and Nancy will continue to do a small amount of farming and logging. The property has been in his family for 90 years. A worth-while project!

**Membership Chairman
needed starting September,
2008 - Person will need a
computer and a printer for
making labels once a month
- Will train!!
Contact Jan at 667-6209**

OBSERVATION POST

FROM THE JOURNAL OF KRIS
BUCHLER

PEREGRINE FALCON ANTICS



Lisa Hardy has been monitoring shorebirds in the Chain Lakes all summer and decided to do a census at Boundary Creek Wildlife Management Area for Jeff Knetter, the manager. It was a good opportunity for me to brush up on shorebird ID so I agreed to go along. Jeff has used water level draw-downs to manage the habitat and vegetation growth. Earl Chapin, of Sandpoint, has been doing a state Big Year Count and had noticed excellent shorebird activity on the exposed mud, a rarity here in North Idaho. Ball Creek Ranch Preserve has also seen a great number of shorebirds, even though the mud there is from natural causes and our lack of rain.

Earl and Bev Chapin joined the Knetters, Lisa and me early Saturday morning on the first weekend of September. While focused on the wetlands and mud, someone actually looked up into the sky and noticed a

large bird fly behind the cottonwoods lining the road. Soon, two large raptors appeared in the sky and were quickly identified as Peregrine Falcons. The next 25 minutes or so were a birder's dream – falcons doing what comes naturally. The pair first buzzed the Canada Geese, causing a ruckus but not appearing to be a serious threat. Both birds eventually landed on the ground, quite a distance apart. One hopped around and appeared at first to be in trouble as it turned stones over. Close scrutiny with the spotting scope showed that it had a small mammal in its talons and it finally began to eat it. At the same time a line of about a dozen geese slowly marched towards it as if in an old west standoff. The falcon looked at them occasionally but didn't act alarmed.

In the meantime, the other falcon was harassed by a female Northern Harrier. This dispute took place both on the ground and in the air where talons were used and much fluttering went on as the harrier tried to drive the falcon away. If they had taken flight high into the air, the falcon may have predominated with a strong power dive, but the altercation never went that far. Eventually, all three birds flew away. Northern Harriers are fixtures of the WMA and the falcons may have been a migrant pair. We saw one of them later further south over some ponds filled with waterfowl.

While rafting on the Clark Fork River this summer, I saw a Peregrine Falcon eyeing us from its perch on a pinnacle above the canyon. I later encountered two observers who are part of a project in Montana. Check out his website:

www.montanaperegrine.org.

This was the first I had heard about the extensive monitoring Montana is doing. Jane Cantwell, of Birds of Prey Northwest, was involved in Peregrine Falcon restoration in the Midwest. Like the Bald Eagle, populations of the Peregrine Falcon were seriously decimated by the use of DDT. Captive breeding and releases have turned the numbers around but they are still a rare sight. There are rumors of a pair being seen along the cliffs of the Kootenai River near the junction with the Moyie River. A pair is known to nest in the Cabinet Gorge above the Clark Fork River. I have seen one bird at Johnson Creek, not far, as the falcon flies, from that site.

Shorebirds are interesting and an identification challenge. However, Peregrine Falcons in the air, doing what comes naturally, are a symphony. The memory remained with me the rest of the day.

BIRD TRIVIA

The largest living bird is the Ostrich of North Africa; it can grow to a height of 9 feet and a weight of nearly 350 pounds. It takes roughly 40 minutes to boil an ostrich egg, and although the shell is just 6/100 of an inch thick, it can support the weight of a 280-pound man.

OCTOBER FIELD TRIPS

PLEASE REGISTER: Watch the website for updates to our field trip schedule. Participants should contact the trip leader at least 24 hours in advance of the field trip to find out if the meeting place/time or destination have been changed.

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.

RADIOS: We will ask participants to contribute \$1.00 toward batteries as needed.

MICA BAY SURVEY

(2nd Tuesday of each month - 8:00 a.m. September - November and April; 9:00 a.m. December- March: 7:00 a.m. May-August)

DATE: October 9, Tuesday

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

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

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

NOON TIME BIRDING TRIP

(3rd Tuesday of each month - 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.)

DATE: October 16, Tuesday

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

MEET: Tubbs Hill, 10th Street Entrance

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.

CRANBERRY BOG CANOE TRIP

DATES: October 3, Wednesday, and October 13, Saturday

MEET: Fernan Ranger Station at 8:30 a.m.

LEADER: Dick Cripe 665-0010. Call leader by October 1 to arrange canoe transport.

ACTIVITY: We will paddle to the floating cranberry bog at Hidden Lake and pick cranberries. Wear appropriate footwear, and bring lunch and water as well as a container for your berries. This will be a full day trip.

MINERAL RIDGE TRAIL ON LAKE PEND OREILLE

DATE: October 27, Saturday

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

MEET: K-mart parking lot, behind Mexican restaurant

LEADER: Judy Waring 765-5378 and Janet Callen 664-1085

ACTIVITY: Mineral Point Trail, # 82 overlooks Lake Pend Oreille and is 2.1 miles one way. It is labeled "easy", with an elevation gain of 400 feet. In the same area is Lost Lake Trail # 81 and the two trails connect. Lost Lake is 2.3 miles long in a loop. It also is labeled "easy".

Hikers can have a choice of hiking 2.1, 4.4 or 6.5 miles if they so choose.

Bring water and a lunch and binoculars. It might be wise to wear some bright-colored clothing. For more information, and to let us know if you will join us, please call either Judy or Janet.

NOVEMBER 10, Saturday - day trip to Little Spokane River, Leader: Jan Severtson 667-6209

Details provided in the November newsletter.

SUBSCRIPTION FEE FOR "THE FISH HAWK HERALD"

All local Audubon members receive the September issue containing meeting and field trip schedules as well as the annual summary, but the remaining 8 issues will be sent only to subscribers. (See subscription form on the back page of this newsletter)

Please renew. Questions? Call 667-6209--Jan

The Fish Hawk Herald is provided free of charge on our website -- www.cdaaudubon.org