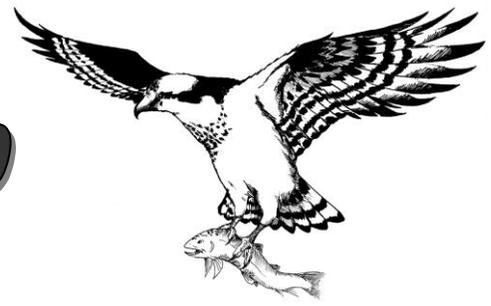


# THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society  
[www.cdaaudubon.org](http://www.cdaaudubon.org)

October/November 2008

VOLUME 18 ISSUE 2

\* NOTICE : OUR MEETINGS FROM NOW ON WILL BE THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH AND WILL BE HELD AT THE LUTHERAN CHURCH ON RAMSEY. (SEE BELOW)

## BOARD MEETING

DATE: November 5, Wednesday  
TIME: 4:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Mt. West Bank  
125 Ironwood Dr.

## NOVEMBER PROGRAM

DATE: November 5, Wednesday  
TIME: 7:00 p.m.  
PLACE Lutheran Church  
4800 North Ramsey  
SPEAKER: Katherine Cousins, Mitigation Staff Biologist, Idaho Department of Fish and Game  
PROGRAM: "Pack River Delta Restoration Project"

Visit our Web Site:  
[www.cdaaudubon.org](http://www.cdaaudubon.org)



**Cinnamon Teal**  
Photographed by Bill Linn

## PACK RIVER DELTA

The program to be presented by Katherine Cousins at our November Meeting

Erosion of the Pack River Delta by stream bank erosion, overland flow erosion and wave erosion has caused deterioration of the delta.

If you love kayaking or canoeing and have ever traveled the Pack River and its delta, or any other North Idaho rivers, you will want to attend this presentation. Katherine will reveal plans to preserve and restore this aquatic jewel, home to a diverse abundance of wildlife.

Ducks Unlimited was recently awarded a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant to restore wetland habitat in the Pack River Delta. Ducks Unlimited partnered with Avista Corporation and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), and others to come up with a plan to restore and protect the delta wetlands.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ed Buchler

My sincere thanks to Lynn Sheridan, our past President, for her excellent pass down of information and procedures to me. I hope I can keep the Chapter running as smoothly as she has for the past two years.

The Board, in an effort to conserve funds, unanimously voted to move the location of our monthly meetings to the Lutheran Church of the Master, located at the northeast corner of Kathleen and Ramsey, beginning with the November meeting. The conference room will accommodate nearly 100. The meetings will still be at 7 pm, but will occur on the first Wednesday of each month, the next one being on 5 November. Because the first Wednesday in October (1 October) occurs only two weeks after our September meeting, the Board voted to cancel the October meeting. The turn-around time is too brief to arrange for another newsletter, speaker, etc. I hope the new time and venue does not inconvenience anyone. It will save us a significant amount of money over the course of the year. Our thanks to Eula Hickam for alerting us to this opportunity.

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## President's Message Continued

Now that the field trip season is in full swing again, it might be timely to review the compensation plan that has been agreed upon by the Board for drivers of vehicles. Each car receives the same amount of money, assuming that each carries at least one passenger that is not a family member and completes the entire trip. If a husband and wife choose to drive only themselves, they do not receive a share of the costs. The reimbursement rate is 25 cents per mile. It is the trip leader's responsibility to calculate costs at the end of the trip and notify riders of how much they owe the driver.

As an example, two cars made the recent trip to the Turnbull Refuge, a husband and wife and one passenger in each car. The round trip was 110 miles (X 2 cars X .25/mile = \$55). \$55 / 6 passengers = \$9.17/ passenger goes into the pool for division equally among the cars. In this case, this is what each of the two riders owe their respective drivers. Let's be fair to drivers and make sure they are compensated for their time and vehicle use.

Also, I would like to welcome Valerie Zagar and Derek Antonelli as new board members. We look forward to their sharing their perspectives and providing inputs during our board meetings.



**ADOPT - a -  
HIGHWAY**  
Saturday, Sept. 27

Judy Waring

The great fall weather brought out eleven volunteers to clean up our two mile stretch of Highway 95. Either the weather or the donuts, whatever, the job was completed in an hour and a half, surprisingly fast. Fourteen bags of litter were put out for pick-up by the Highway Department. Among the unexpected finds were the remains of several unlucky animals who crossed the road at the wrong moment.

This will take place again next spring so look for an announcement in a spring newsletter and join the team.

Those taking part: Lynn Sheridan, Valerie and Mike Zagar, Joan and Bill Gundlach, Janet Callen, Dick Cripe, Roger Young, Shirley Sturts, Phil and Judy Waring.

## TURNBULL NWR

Field Trip, September 13

Judy Waring

Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge lies a few miles south of Cheney, WA and is a place of quiet beauty, with small lakes dotting the landscape and wooded areas offering shade on warm days. The day slated for our field trip was sunny and mild. Expectations were high. We didn't know that we were to be challenged by waterfowl in seasonal transitional plumage. There was a lot of head scratching going on followed by "oh, yes - that's what it is!"

Turnbull is a very large refuge and we spent part of our visit on the driving tour, stopping along the way to check out a lake or walk on a trail that led back to hidden bogs. We walked along an inviting trail around a good-sized pond filled with waterfowl, none of it easily identified. It took time and effort and patience. With some we had to concede defeat. But we ended the day with 26 species so we were happy.



## NOON TIME BIRDING

September 16, 2008

Lynn Sheridan

Shirley Sturts, Phil and Judy Waring (with dog Andy), Gale Horst, and Roland Craft met me at the Fernan Lake dock. On the way, I had passed under the freeway, and noted a few pigeons roosting and a couple of stick piles left from summer nests.

The heron rookery was quiet, but one was seen standing at lake edge. The new sign at the boat launch reading, "No Feeding of Wildlife: \$300.00 Fine" has cut down the usual large number of waterfowl but we still counted about 20 hopeful Mallards and a few hybrids. Fearless Andy was happy to wade into the water and chase away 6 fat barnyard geese. As we walked around the park, two Osprey were heard and seen, one successfully catching a fish, a painted turtle glistened on a log, a gull flew past, muskrat swam nearby, starlings babbled in the trees, and 6 or 7 House Sparrows flitted around a red berry bush.

There was very little activity around the lily pads at the east end of the lake,. A Bald Eagle flew above us, a jay species competed with a squirrel in a noisy duet, a few Mallard were present with a Great Blue Heron as a sentinel. Thanks, everyone.



## IDAHO BIRDING TRAIL SIGNS

Kris Buchler

The WREN Foundation of Coeur d'Alene has developed various sign projects for North Idaho. Its first large grant from Idaho Parks and Recreation supported the creation of 15 trail signs, several of which are placed along the Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes or other trailheads. These signs educate the public about wildlife and noxious weeds.

The Inland Northwest Community Foundation awarded WREN a grant to develop Idaho Birding Trail signs to be placed at IBT sites anywhere in Idaho. The first ten signs were designed for North Idaho locations. These are single species signs, each featuring a photo of a different species of bird that should help the novice in identification, as well as providing a glimpse into its life and natural history.

Many local people contributed to this project. Jenny Taylor and Kris Buchler wrote the text. Grady Meyers, formerly of the United States Forest Service in Coeur d'Alene, did the amazing artwork on the headers for all of the WREN signs. Local photographers from Spokane, Tom Munson and Michael Woodruff, contributed many of the photos. All the photos were donated with the help of Sara Focht, Idaho Fish and Game, in Boise, who facilitated the donation of photos to the Idaho Birding Trail Guide.

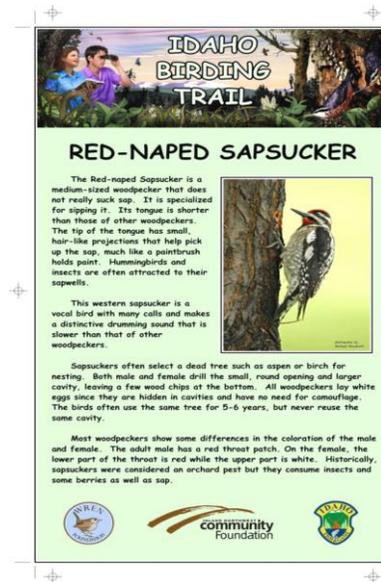
Sites for the first IBT signs include Boundary Creek Wildlife Management Area, Round Lake State Park, McArthur Lake Wildlife Management Area, Farragut State Park, Coeur d'Alene River Wildlife Management Area, Mica Bay (Audubon Adopted Wetland), Sandpoint City Beach, and Heyburn State Park.

A new grant and a sponsorship program will support new Idaho Birding Trail signs that WREN members will develop over the winter for other locations in Idaho. The Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation will provide most of the funding for the new signs, with sponsorships from organizations and individuals helping with \$150 donations. WREN welcomes comments and feedback about the signs.

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The Red-naped Sapsucker sign will be going up in Mica Bay. It will be placed along the trail going to the bird platform. The text reads:

## RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER



*The Red-naped Sapsucker is a medium-sized woodpecker that does not really suck sap. It is specialized for sipping it. Its tongue is shorter than those of other woodpeckers. The tip of the tongue has small, hair-like projections that help pick up the sap, much like a paintbrush holds paint. Hummingbirds and insects are often attracted to their sapwells.*

*often attracted to their sapwells.*

*This western sapsucker is a vocal bird with many calls and makes a distinctive drumming sound that is slower than that of other woodpeckers.*

*Sapsuckers often select a dead tree such as aspen or birch for nesting. Both male and female drill the small, round opening and larger cavity, leaving a few wood chips at the bottom. All woodpeckers lay white eggs since they are hidden in cavities and have no need for camouflage. The birds often use the same tree for 5-6 years, but never reuse the same cavity.*

*Most woodpeckers show some differences in the coloration of the male and female. The adult male has a red throat patch. On the female, the lower part of the throat is red while the upper part is white. Historically, sapsuckers were considered an orchard pest but they consume insects and some berries as well as sap.*

**To learn more or to sponsor a sign, call Kris Buchler 664-4739 or Jenny Taylor 666-9898**

**WINNIE THE WHIMBREL: RIP**

reprint from *The Collage of William and Mary Website*  
by Joe McClain | **September 9, 2008**



The fast-flying, wire-wearing, record-breaking shorebird known as Winnie the whimbrel is missing and presumed dead near the Wisconsin shore of Lake Superior on her way south and east from her Alaskan breeding grounds.

Bryan Watts, director of William and Mary's Center for Conservation Biology, said Winnie was likely on her way back to the east coast—possibly to the Eastern Shore—when she ran into sustained strong headwinds that probably left her weak and in an inhospitable place.

"We feel this bird ran out of gas, and didn't have a place to refuel," Watts said. "The area where she went down is remote and the ground cover is really thick, so it's not likely that the tracking unit or bird will be recovered." He said a group from The Nature Conservancy checked out the area, as did some local bird researchers mobilized by the CCB's Fletcher Smith, a native of the area.

Winnie made news after her record-breaking migratory flight last spring from the Delmarva Peninsula to the McKenzie River basin on the Alaska-Canada border. The bird was fitted with a state-of-the-art satellite tracking device weighing just over a third of an ounce by researchers from the Center for Conservation Biology and The Nature Conservancy.

Winnie left the study area on May 23. The scientists expected Winnie to head for known whimbrel breeding grounds south and west of Hudson's Bay. Instead, Winnie took off northwest, flying more than 5,000 kilometers (3,200 miles) in no more than 146 hours. The flight—probably nonstop—was a distance record for the species and Winnie logged an average flight speed of nearly 22 miles per hour.

After Winnie made her record-setting trip to the McKenzie River, she continued to her breeding grounds in Alaska's Colville River system above the Arctic Circle. She remained on the breeding grounds from June 7 to July 12, when she began moving west. Her transmitter was still working, allowing CCB researchers to track her movements along Alaska's western edge.

### **Trouble-filled return trip**

The bird ran into trouble as soon as she left Alaska on Aug. 3.

"She went down to a drainage that's a well-known staging area in the west coast of Alaska and staged for a long period of time," Watts said, then she took off south over the north Pacific and straight into the teeth of a cyclone. "We thought there was a chance the bird could be lost then. But it then went east to Washington, to Willapa Bay."

By coincidence, Watts happened to be at a conference in Oregon and he went up to Willapa Bay to look for Winnie, who was feeding up in what he called "a beautiful shorebird staging area" after fighting 50 mile per hour cyclone winds during her 1,000-mile flight from Alaska.

Watts couldn't find the bird, who stayed in Willapa Bay, resting and refueling from Aug. 7 to Aug. 23. He expected her to fly down the Pacific Coast, perhaps to wintering grounds in Central America, but Winnie surprised trackers by heading east again, on what would be the last of her great migratory flights.

"That bird turned inland and made another flight," Watts said, "another 1,000 mile flight. And then finally made it to Lake Superior there in Wisconsin." Winnie encountered stiff headwinds over the high plains, ending up in a poor foraging area and "just ran out of gas," Watts said.

"How frequently this sort of thing happens, we have no idea. We have evidence of major die-offs over the Atlantic where some birds go out and the storm comes and lots of carcasses wash up. We've actually lost a peregrine down over the Atlantic before," he explained. "It kind of highlights the significance of these places like the Delmarva, which have incredibly high food resources. That's why they're attracted to these areas. But to be lost in a place where you don't have much to feed on, that's a risk that the birds take." **Continued on page 5**

**Whimbrel continued from page 4**

### Whimbrel studies will continue

The CCB is continuing its study of whimbrel migration. "We have plans to put several more transmitters out next spring and fall and so once you start putting out numbers of these, you get a better sense of what the normal patterns are," he said.

Watts said they fitted another whimbrel with a transmitter three weeks ago, only to see it head for South America, flying into the Hanna-Ike-Josephine "conga line" of storms.

"There's nowhere to hide out there in the middle of the ocean," Watts said. "That bird made landfall in one of the islands of the Bahamas, a single flight. I'm hoping it stays there until that area clears."

The Center for Conservation Biology maintains a Web Page:

<http://ccb.wm.edu/programs/migration/Whimbrel/whimbrel.htm> which includes a map of Winnie's record-breaking westbound flight.

### **HAVE YOU FOUND A DEAD BIRD?**

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is asking for your help locating sick or dead ducks, geese, swans and shorebirds! Since late 2003, a highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (bird flu) has surfaced in more than 55 countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It has been found in some species of wild migratory birds, particularly swans and geese. The migratory patterns of waterfowl and shorebirds suggest the possibility of moving this virus to the North American continent. The good news: this virus has not been detected in any of the tens of thousands of waterfowl and shorebird samples collected in North America so far.



**To report sick or dead ducks, geese, swans or shorebirds, call the Idaho Dead Bird Line toll free 1-877-550-BIRD. Please do not call this number when: you find a dead bird that is not a duck, goose, swan or shorebird.**

**PROJECT FEEDER WATCH** - Sign up now for next

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season. They are now taking sign-ups for the 2008-2009 FeederWatch season, which begins on November 8. (go to <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/>)

**THANKSGIVING DAY BIRD COUNT** - Nov. 27 - Pick up a participation form at our November meeting, copy a form from our website or call Shirley Sturts 664-5318 for a form to be mailed to you.

### **FIELD TRIPS 2008-2009**

**PLEASE REGISTER:** Watch the website or newsletter 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 has been changed. **Participants share in a mileage reimbursement for the driver (see President's message).**

#### **MICA BAY SURVEY**

**DATES:** October 14 and November 11  
**TIME:** 8:00 a.m. **MEET:** Fairmont Loop and Highway 95  
**LEADER:** Shirley Sturts 664-5318  
**ACTIVITY:** We spend about 3 hours once a month counting birds at Mica Bay. Everybody is welcome including beginner birders. We will help you with identification skills.

#### **CRANBERRY BOG TRIP**

**DATE:** October 18, Saturday  
**TIME:** 8:30 a.m.  
**MEET:** Fernan Ranger Station.  
**LEADER:** Bill Gundlach 667-3339. Call by October 11 to arrange canoe transport  
**ACTIVITY:** Paddle to floating cranberry bog at Hidden Lake to pick cranberries. Wear appropriate bog footwear, bring lunch, water and berry container. Full day trip.

#### **CHAIN LAKES**

**DATE:** November 8, Saturday  
**TIME:** 8:00 a.m.  
**MEET:** Fernan Ranger Station.  
**LEADER:** Lisa Hardy 480-522-6056  
**ACTIVITY:** We will look for waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors and upland birds.

#### **RATHDRUM PRAIRIE**

**DATE:** November 22, Saturday  
**TIME:** 8:30 a.m.  
**MEET:** K-mart parking lot behind Mexican restaurant  
**LEADER:** Roland Craft 457-8894  
**ACTIVITY:** This is a half-day trip but sometimes is longer so bring lunch and water. We hope to find raptors, owls and upland birds before the prairie disappears.