

THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society

www.cdaaudubon.org

September 2012

Volume 22 Number 1



Greetings, Fellow Birders

George Sayler

It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your president for the next two years, and I look forward to an interesting and exciting time for the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society. By my reckoning, we are in our 21st year and going strong. I've been a member most of that time, sometimes more involved than at others, and have benefitted greatly from the friendship and guidance of so many of you. My hat is off to Carrie Hugo and our other recent past presidents

for the wonderful work they have done to keep CDA Audubon healthy and active. I will do my best to insure that continues to be so, and that what we do meets the needs of our members and fulfills our mission statement.

As I consider our monthly meeting starting in September, and what lies beyond, I'm excited and optimistic. We have a strong membership base, many experienced birders willing to share their expertise, some great field trips and programs in the works, and the opportunity to make our voice heard in our community. We have a new website that Shirley Sturts has worked hard on, monthly newsletters to inform our community, as well as our own members, of our activities and meetings. We also have an experienced board that is ready to serve. All the ingredients are in place for a successful year of learning about our natural world, finding ways to care for it, and enjoying our wonderful feathered friends. I am excited and I hope you are too.

One thing I learned over the years is that any organization needs active members in order to be strong. There will be many opportunities to be involved, from helping with field trips, helping at the meetings, monitoring bluebird boxes, writing articles for the newsletter, and more. Please consider how you may be involved. I also learned that by being involved in activities I have grown and had more fun!

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SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

DATE: September 11, Tuesday

PLACE: Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 N. Ramsey, CDA

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PROGRAM "KEA Hayden Lake Wetlands Project" Come and learn what the Kootenai Environmental Alliance has been doing to help Hayden Lake, and in particular their artificial wetlands project and what they have learned from it.

Greetings Fellow Birders

Continued from Page 1

Our first meeting will be September 11th and we will have a few new wrinkles that should make meetings interesting as well as fun. We are even planning on having a couple of movie nights during the year so we can enjoy birding in another way. I hope to see you there and look forward to becoming better acquainted.

Finally, we all know good communication is important. I want to hear your thoughts, concerns, questions and input, and I will provide regular reports through our newsletter or perhaps the website. My e-mail address is gsaylercda@aol.com, and my home phone is 664-2787. So, join me as we work together to make this one of the best years yet for the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society.

And remember, if you're too busy to go birding, you're too busy!



FISH HAWK HERALD SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Our September issue is complimentary to all local Audubon members. To receive the October - May issues you need to subscribe: \$15 for one year or \$25 for two years. (See the subscription form on the back of this newsletter.) Some of you have paid for two years, and some have a different expiration date. Please call Jan at 667-6209 if you are unsure of your subscription status. The newsletter is free of charge on our website: www.cdaudubon.org

ALSO: Articles for the newsletters are welcome. Please submit to the editor, Shirley Sturts, at: shirley.sturts@gmail.com by the 15th of each month. All submissions are subject to editing.



ADOPT-A HIGHWAY FALL CLEANUP

Thank you to the sixteen individuals who showed up to collect roadside trash along Highway 95 on Saturday, May 12. With the large turnout, we finished our chore in less than two hours and still had the rest of the day to enjoy. We collected 18 bags of trash that are now in a landfill instead of cluttering the roadside.

The fall cleanup will be October 6, Saturday. You can sign up at the September meeting or call Mike Zagar at 208 819-5115. Plan to join us.

Bird of the Month

Eared Grebe - 1st North Idaho Confirmed Breeding Record

Shirley Sturts

Photograph by Terry Gray



I subscribe to Inland-nw-birders, a list-server for the discussion of birds and birding in the Inland Northwest. On August 1, 2012, Terry Gray and Cindy Hudson reported a pair of Eared Grebes with two chicks on the Genesee Sewage Lagoon, in Nez Perce County. This is a first breeding record that I know of in North Idaho. It would be interesting to know why this pair chose this location for nesting. Eared Grebes, unlike other grebes, are very social and nest in very compact colonies. Their nests are constructed from marsh vegetation heaped together with mud to form a platform that is attached to cattail stalks and other aquatic vegetation.

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Missoula Montana and the National Bison Range

May 19 and 20, 2012
Janet Callen



The big skies of Montana were blue as 14 Audubon members plus Olivia (age 8) and Grace (age 5) explored some of the birding and nature trails of the Missoula area. We hiked and birded in Pattee Canyon, Greenough Park, the Kim Williams Trail, and Kelly Island. The highlight of Pattee Canyon was a Williamson's Sapsucker. On the Kim Williams Trail we identified a pair of Lesser Goldfinches.

In Greenough Park, on a tree branch at eye level, was a temporary honey bee swarm. That is something to see. Google "bee swarms" for a picture of exactly what we saw.

The Moiese Bison Range is spectacular. Birding highlights included Western and Mountain Bluebirds, Bullock's Oriole, and several Lazuli Buntings. Antelope had not yet calved and were grazing and bedded down on the eastern slopes of the range. However, the Bison cows had golden-brown calves at their sides. The top entertainment of the day was provided by a pair of yearling black bears as the larger one climbed a small tree and then dropped back down to the ground and then up again while the other watched. As they ambled up the slope they casually flipped over rocks, like they were potato chips, and searched for food.

We left many Missoula area trails unexplored and ran out of time to visit Nine-Pipes Reservoir, but we identified 69 species on the trip. A very good dinner

at Quinn's Hot Springs near Paradise Mt. fueled us for the drive home Sunday evening. Ronn and Roberta Rich, Phil and Judy Waring, Roland Craft, Valerie and Mike Zagar, John Hopper, Lisa Hardy, Katie and George Saylor, Nancy Mertz, and Sue Williamson. Man in blue T-shirt with the dog just joined us for the photo.



A Field Trip to Fighting Creek Landfill-May 30, 2012

Janet Callen

Fighting Creek Landfill Gas-to-Energy Project

Kootenai Electric
A Tripartite Energy Cooperative PSE

A Kootenai Electric Cooperative and Kootenai County Solid Waste Partnership

KEC's Fighting Creek Landfill Gas-to-Energy project is now up and running. This generation resource will produce enough electricity to power approximately 1,800 homes from the methane gas produced by the decomposition of trash at the Kootenai County Solid Waste Facility.

It will also produce what is known as "renewable energy credits." These credits can be sold to other utilities and industries who have a regulatory obligation to reduce their carbon footprint. This helps keep your costs low and our environment clean.

The project was developed through a partnership with Kootenai County whereby KEC will pay for the gas that is used by the generators. The revenue generated helps lower the County's tax base, puts the methane gas to work, and provides a more environmentally friendly use and provides KEC's members with a low cost and stable source of power for the next 20 years. The facility, which cost just under \$7 million to build, was financed by the issuance of low interest Clean Renewable Energy Bonds.

LOCATION: 22089 S. Highway 95, Coeur d'Alene
OPERATIONAL: March 5, 2012
EQUIPMENT: Two Caterpillar 3520 - 1.6 MW engines
CAPACITY: 3.2 Megawatts
DEPT: Landfill Methane Gas - 1,200 CFM
OUTPUT: Around the clock, base load power
COST: \$7 million

The Methane-to-Electricity Process

Bill and Joan Gundlach and Pat Bearman joined me for a visit to Kootenai Electric Cooperative's Gas to Energy Project at the Fighting Creek Landfill. Although not a typical birding trip, it was very informative.

KEC is using methane gas produced by the decomposition of trash to produce enough electricity to provide 1800 homes with electricity. Previously the methane gas was burned off. As a result the facility prevents the equivalent of 21,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year. This is a cooperative partnership with Kootenai County and is projected to provide a low cost and stable source of power for the next 20 years.

Eared Grebe- continued from page 2

Thomas Burleigh, in *Birds of Idaho*, wrote, "This species is extremely sociable and breeds in colonies that are so compact that a group of twenty-five nests will occupy a space not over twenty feet in diameter." At the time he published this book, 1972, the Eared Grebe was only known to nest on Grays Lake in Bonneville and Caribou Counties. Starting in the 1980s Charles Trost, chairman of the Idaho Bird Records Committee, was reporting nesting colonies from Island Park Reservoir, Camas National Wildlife Refuge, Blackfoot Reservoir, Market Lake Wildlife Management area and other locations in southeastern Idaho with suitable habitat. Island Park Reservoir had as many as 60 nests. Charles reported 85-105 nests in the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, Owyhee County in the summer of 1993.

Do you suppose this pair in the Genesee Sewage Lagoon is a pioneer? Were they finding conditions too crowded in southern Idaho and looked for suitable habitat further north? It seems this small sewage pond fit their needs and they settled down, all alone, to raise a family. Will others of their species join them next year?

In another Inland-nw-birders email (August 6th), Terry recounts the following observation. "Kirsten Dahl and I birded The Genesee Sewage Lagoon and both adult Eared Grebes are busy feeding their chicks. Each adult is busy with one chick each. It was fun to watch as they are constantly finding something to feed the chicks." This fits the information I found in *The Birds of North America* No.433, 1999. When the chicks are first hatched the parents take turns carrying the young on their back while the other parent brings food. At around 10 days old, the parents divide the surviving young between them for feeding. In about 20 days after hatching, the brood is on its own.

Another interesting fact from *The Birds of North America* states, "Immediately after the breeding season, most of the population, adults and juveniles, move either to Mono Lake, CA, or Great Salt Lake, UT, to exploit the superabundant crops of brine shrimp and alkali flies that thrive in those waters." I've been to Mono Lake in late August and saw hundreds of Eared Grebe on the lake.

The Eared Grebes we see in north Idaho are fall and spring transients, plus an occasional winter visitor. They are all in their drab winter plumage, very similar to their close cousin the Horned Grebe and easily mistaken for them. Terry, Cindy and Kirsten had a rare treat when they found this pair decked out in their breeding plumage and tending two chicks.

See additional Eared Grebe Information in "Photo Gallery" www.cdaaudubon.org

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2012 Century Count

Lisa Hardy



Well, we picked about the most dismal day in June for the Century Count, and had our worst total ever - 88 species, even counting the Rock Pigeon seen by Janet Callen and "probably seen" by Carrie Hugo. Of course, we know that the world is going to end in December according to the Mayan calendar, so perhaps the results from our Shoshone County "big day" were not unexpected. The cold temperatures, and rain from mid-day on, kept most birds hunkered down and silent.

Things started out well enough in cool, cloudy conditions as we walked the trail both downstream and upstream of Enaville. Next we birded the Page swamps and sewage ponds, and by the time we headed up the North Fork to look for the Tennessee Warbler at about 10:30 AM we had a respectable 60 species under our belts. But then the rain started, and we had to work hard for every addition to our list. The Tennessee Warbler remained unresponsive, but we finally found a dipper after some searching.

Returning to the valley of the South Fork, we lost participants at a steady rate, while eking out a few more hard-won additions to our checklists.

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Century Count - Continued from page 4

A few urban species, such as crow, Eurasian Collared-Dove and starling, seemed unfazed by the rain, but we searched in vain for a humble House Sparrow, even infiltrating the Wal-Mart garden center, attired in our binocs and foul-weather gear.

Nancy and Sally called it quits after we raised an irritated response from a bedraggled Savannah Sparrow west of Kellogg, which fortunately approached closely enough for us to distinguish through our rain-fogged optics. Janet finally bailed about 6:30 PM after she, Carrie and I broadcast calls for Sora, Virginia Rail and American Bittern over the east Page swamp. raising only a feeble response from a lone, chilled Sora. Carrie and I stuck it out for another hour, scraping out another 3 species, the last being a bittern doing its oddball but thoroughly welcome gulping at west Page swamp in a steady rain.



Savannah Sparrow - photographed on the Hoo Doo Valley Blue Bird Trail by Peggy Albertson - not the bedraggled one on the Century Count©

What is interesting about the day is that we picked up a number of species that are difficult to find in the county, such as Bewick's Wren, Rock Wren, Ruddy Duck and Ring-billed Gull. But in Shoshone County, a successful big day requires tallying ALL of the usual suspects, plus some of the more elusive species, and we fell short on the usual suspects.

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Participants: Kris Buchler, Janet Callen, Ken Fisher, Lisa Hardy, Carrie Hugo, Sally Jones, Nancy Mertz, Jan Severtson, Shirley Sturts, Jaquith Travis.
Species list: see our Website: www.cdaaudubon.org, click "Projects".

Meetings/Events 2012-2013

Our chapter holds a general meeting each month, September through June; we have a guest speaker at our regular meetings. The meetings are open to the public, and provide a good introduction to our group for prospective members. We meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. at the Lutheran Church of the Master on the NE corner of Kathleen and Ramsey. Please check our website for any last-minute changes. Our June meeting is a picnic. www.cdaaudubon.org

Board Meeting

Date: September 4, Tuesday
(Board meetings will be the first Tuesday of every month)

Place: Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 N. Ramsey, CDA

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Adopt-a-Highway Fall Cleanup

Date: October 6, Saturday

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Place: Meet at Mica Grange Hall for donuts, coffee and road assignments. It may take 1-2 hours depending on number of volunteers. Long pants, sleeves and gloves are advisable. If you are planning to help with the clean-up, please sign the roster at the September monthly meeting as IDOT requires signatures prior to the event. For questions or more information call, Mike Zagar, 208 -819-5115.

Project Feeder Watch

The Cornell Lab is now taking sign-ups for the 2012-2013 Feeder Watch season, which begins on Nov.10. 2012. <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/>

Thanksgiving Day Bird Count

Thursday, November 22, 2012 - look for information in the November newsletter.

Yard Lists

January, 2013 - Time to turn in your personal Yard List totals for 2011 to: Lisa Hardy, basalt@earthlink.net.

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Meetings/Events Continued from page 5

Great Backyard Bird Count
February 15-18, Friday-Monday, 2013
<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>



42nd Anniversary of Earth Day
April 22, Monday, 2013

<http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/world/earth-day>

John James Audubon Birthday
April 26, Friday

National Arbor Day
April 22, Monday <http://www.arboday.org/arboday/>

International Migratory Bird Day
May 11, Saturday <http://www.birdday.org/birdday>

Kootenai Environmental Alliance

Noon meetings at the Iron horse Restaurant the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month, running September through June. Check their home page for information on upcoming meetings, or call the office at 667-9093, or email KEA at kealliance.org.
<http://www.kealliance.org>

- **KEA Lunch & Learn: Farragut State Park Management**

Date: Thursday, Sep 6, 2012
Where: Iron Horse Restaurant
Program: Chip Corsi with Idaho Fish & Game will be our speaker for the Lunch & learn to discuss Farragut State Park Management issues. Free & Open to the Public. Food and beverages available for purchase from the Iron Horse.

- **Moose Drool Field Day (with Forest Service)**

Date: Saturday, Sep 8, 2012
Description: Details to come – check their Website

- **KEA Lunch & Learn: Park(ing) Day**

Date: Thursday, Sep 20, 2012
Where: Iron Horse Restaurant
Description: see their Website

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Field Trips 2012-2013

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 will share in a mileage reimbursement for the driver.

Philleo Lake Special Access Trip

Date: September 8, Saturday

Leader: Darlene Carlton - 691-6160

Meet: Super 1 Post Falls parking lot, sw corner

Time: 7:30 AM, 7:45 AM **leave** for Spangle, WA

Activity: We will be joining biologist Ivan Lines with Spokane Audubon Society to visit Philleo Lake near Turnbull NWR. It is on private property and can only be visited with permission. Mid-September is the peak time of year to see migrant shorebirds on the expansive mudflats. Bring walking/hiking shoes if they walk down to the lake, binoculars or scopes if you have them, and something to drink. There is a primitive outhouse at the lake. The field trip will be over by noon. According to the Spokane Audubon website target birds will be: Great Egret; Peregrine Falcons; Solitary Sandpiper; Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs; all peep species; Spotted, Pectoral and Stilt Sandpipers; Long-billed Dowitcher; Red-necked Phalaropes.

Mica Bay Survey

Date: September 11, Tuesday (held 2nd Tuesday of each month - times vary depending on month)

Time: 8:00 a.m. **Note time change from summer**

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. Beginner birders are welcome. We will help you with identification skills.

Black Lake

Date: September 15, 2012 (Saturday)

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Meet: Fernan Ranger Station

Leader: Roland Craft 457-8894

Visit the Black Lake property (170 acres) of Bob Martinson for song and game birds and, time allowing, do some waterfowl viewing along the chain lakes.

Field Trips

Continued from page 6

Gold Hill near Sandpoint

Date: September 29, 2012(Saturday)

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Meet: Hayden Super 1 near Goodwill Trailer

Leader: Mike Zagar 755-0560

This is a six-mile round-trip hike with a vertical elevation gain of approximately 1,500 feet. The trail has good footing and several switchbacks to make the climb easier. There are beautiful views of Lake Pend Oreille, the Long Bridge and Sandpoint. We'll have lunch at the top. Bird sighting opportunities along the trail may not be the best because it is heavily forested, but a potential to bird in the Sandpoint area after the hike exists. Separate transportation will be needed if you decide to bird watch after the hike.

Turnbull Wildlife Refuge

Date: October 13, 2012 (Saturday)

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Meet: South side K-Mart parking lot

Leader: George Saylor 664-2787

A visit to Turnbull for fall migrants. This will be a half-day trip, but bring lunch or snacks.

Sprague Lake

Date: Saturday, October 27

Leader: Phil and Judy Waring

Meet: South side K-Mart parking lot

Time: 8 a.m.

This area is a dependable destination for Snow, Cackling, Ross's and White-fronted Geese. Trumpeter Swans have been seen here in late October as well as Scoters. This will be a full day trip so bring your lunch.

Mineral Ridge Hike and Bird

Date: November 10, 2012 (Saturday)

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Meet: Fernan Ranger Station

Leader: Janet Callen, 664-1085

Hike the trail, and look for waterfowl in Wolf Lodge, Beauty and Blue-Creek Bays. This will be a partial day trip, but bring snacks or a lunch. Target Birds; loons and other waterfowl.

To Be Determined

Date: November 17th, 2012 (Saturday)

Leader: Lisa Hardy 783-1262

Christmas Counts (possible dates)

Coeur d'Alene Date: December 14, Saturday

Indian Mountain and Spirit Lake

Dates: January 2 and 5, 2013, Wednesday and Saturday

Pend Oreille River and Lake

Date: January 26, 2013 (Saturday)

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Meet: K-Mart parking lot, south side

Leader: Bill Gundlach, 667-3339.

This will be a full day trip. Bring a lunch and water. This is primarily a waterfowl and eagle sighting trip.

Lincoln County Winter Bird Route

Date: February 23, 2013 (Saturday)

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Meet: K-Mart parking lot, south side.

Leader: Roland Craft 457-8894

This will be full day and is a repeat of a trip we did in 2012 in search of winter birds.

Target birds: Owls, Horned Larks, Snow Buntings.

Freeze Out Lake Wildlife Management Area near Fairfield Montana; 40 mi. w. of Great Falls

Date: Middle to the end of March, 2013-2 to 3 days

Meet and Time: To be determined.

Leader: George Saylor 664-2787

Ducks, herons, shorebirds, swans, and countless Snow Geese congregate at Freezeout Lake each spring, creating one of the nation's most spectacular bird-watching opportunities **Located**. Every spring, tens of thousands of Snow Geese appear at the WMA leading sometimes to numbers up to 300,000. In April the Snow geese head for Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Kootenai Wildlife Refuge

Date: Possibly late April, 2013

Leader: To be determined

A Hike

Date: May 6, 2013

Meet and Time: To be determined

Leader: Dick Cripe 665-0010

Details will be provided well before the hike.

Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest

Date: May 17-20, 2013

Leaders: Kris Buchler and Carrie Hugo

Check out this event at

www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com

Century Count

Date: Early June

Details in the April or May Newsletter

NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

Become a member of the National Audubon Society, the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Chapter and receive "Audubon" magazine"

INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP

- Regular \$20.00
- Two Years \$30.00
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Send this application and your check payable to:

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Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 422248
Palm Coast, Florida 32142-6718

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Vice President:
Eula Hickam (208) 661-3228

Recording Secretary:
Valerie Zagar (208) 819-5115

Treasurer:
Ronn Rich (208)664-3139

BOARD MEMBERS - all officers +
Derek Antonelli , Laura Bayless,
Darlene Carlton, Jan Severtson, Lynn Sheridan

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Publicity: Carrie Hugo

Field Trips: Roland Craft (208) 457- 8894
Janet Callen (208) 664-1085

Education: Valerie Zagar 819-5115

Conservation: Volunteer needed

Membership: Jan Severtson (208) 667-6209
Keith Sturts (208) 664-5318

Hospitality: Carrie Hugo (208) 689 -9600

Newsletter: Shirley Sturts (208) 664-5318

Mailing: Bill/ Joan Gundlach 667-3339

Webmaster: Shirley Sturts 664-5318

Historian: Carrie Hugo (209) 689-9600

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