



The Wild Phlox

Published by the North Central Washington Audubon Society
Connecting People with Nature since 1966



Artwork © 2018 Heather A. Wallis Murphy

Volume 52 #9 June 2019

Highlights from the Four-County Bird Count

compiled by Teri J Pieper,
Methow Valley

Data is still coming from the NCW Audubon first four-county, beginning of summer bird count. By all accounts it was a fun and birdy day for the participants with good weather, maybe a little too warm at times, and lots of birds in wonderful habitats. Our region covers Chelan, Douglas, Ferry and Okanogan counties and offers up a diverse array of habitats from shrub-steppe to high mountains. This year, the snow melted quickly so birders were able to cover a lot of ground. Being the first year, we had a limited number of teams so not everything was covered, if that's even possible! For instance, no one was able to cover eastern Ferry County. Maybe next year we will see more birders ready for the big day.

I traveled to Ferry County to bird with my friend Betty in the San Poil valley (have you even heard of it, let alone been there? It's fabulous!), some of the mountain lakes, and also Mud Lake and Curlew Lake. We picked up over eighty species while missing numerous ones we thought we would see – most raptors, all the wrens and most of the woodpeckers. It's hard to say what that means but it was an interesting data point. The highlight for me was seeing Black Terns at Mud Lake! These beautiful birds used to nest at Lost Lake, and I've missed seeing them there on our annual camping trip. We also saw them at a private property near Wauconda the day before the count. We enjoyed seeing and hearing Yellow Warblers at most every stop and the songs of the Veery which were common along the river. While we saw some Swainson's Thrushes, we never heard them sing.

Board members Richard Scranton and Mark Johnston birded the Okanogan Highlands which covers an area north of Tonasket to the Canadian border and east as far as Wauconda. This richly diverse landscape offers plenty of lakes and wetlands along with shrub-steppe, ponderosa pine, and Engelmann spruce stands at the higher elevations. They marveled at the beauty of this remote region and the many stunning vistas and finished with 92 species. There were many highlights including: Blue-winged Teal, Bobolink, Wilson's Phalarope, and Williamson's Sapsucker.

Chapter president, Art Campbell went with a group around the western half of the Colville Reservation. He reported a couple of fun occurrences. The first happened along the Nespelem River early in the morning. The riparian area along the river was incredibly birdy with Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, Gray Catbird, Veery, Common Yellowthroat, Western Wood Pewee, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Yellow Warbler creating a cacophony of birdsong. They



Birders in the Sinlahekin
photo by Kent Woodruff, Twisp

followed a pair of redstarts with binoculars and watched as the female flew into a shrubby area where she fed a young bird with down still clinging to its body! The second occurred at Goose Lake west of Nespelem. They were counting the hordes of waterfowl on the lake when Michelle said, "What's that big brown thing in the lake?" They all swung their binoculars around. "OMG, that's a moose!" The lake is fringed with wetlands, but the surrounding area is open dry shrub-steppe and grassland, so finding a moose at this spot was a real surprise.

Kent Woodruff reported a sad find in far north Okanogan County. In a patch of invasive burdock (a plant covered with large burrs that often get attached to curly-haired dogs, she said with some authority), they found a dead bat that had apparently flown into one of the burrs and become impossibly stuck where it died a slow death. He said he knew of several other instances where bats have died like this. On the other hand, he said "While at Thirtymile Meadows late in the day, we thought the bog-birch, wet meadow habitat looked good for Lincoln's sparrows, and sure enough, with patience, we were rewarded."



Yellow-breasted Chat
photo by Bruce McCammon,
Wenatchee

Continued on page 5

The mission of the North Central Washington Audubon Society is to:
 “Enhance, protect and restore healthy natural ecosystems and native biodiversity using science, advocacy, education and on-the-ground conservation to promote the welfare of birds in North Central Washington”

It’s Tough to be a Bird

by Gloria Spiwak, Winthrop

Wind turbines kill bats and birds both at night and during the day. The best way to keep this from happening is careful siting so as not to place them in feeding grounds, on migratory routes or stopover sites. Of course, they are built where the wind is best, and land is available.

Some facilities are exploring ways to have the arms stop when birds are in the area. This requires fitting birds with transmitters. Some wind power generators that know they are on a migration route plan to turn the turbines off when a flock of say, migrating geese is approaching.

It is difficult to get accurate counts of birds and bats that have been killed by the turbines because the bodies of small animals are hard to find, and they are quickly consumed by scavengers. The count is not required by law, except in Hawaii. Wind turbines are on the bottom of the list of bird killers. More are killed by electrical towers and lines, communication towers, windows on houses and buildings (especially tall buildings with lights), chemicals and the most lethal, according to US Fish and Wildlife, is outdoor cats.

North Central Washington Audubon Society

Officers, Chairs, Board Members:

President - Art Campbell | 996-8168 | rapakivi@methow.com

Vice President | OPEN

Treasurer | Larry Tobiska | ltobiska@nwi.net

Secretary | Penny Tobiska | ptobiska@nwi.net

Conservation | Mark Johnston | 548-5766 | S697striata@frontier.com

Education and Outreach | Penny Tobiska | ptobiska@nwi.net

and Mark Oswood | 662-9087 | moswood@nwi.net

Field Trips | Janet Bauer | jsrbauer@gmail.com

Membership | Mark Oswood | 662-9087 | moswood@nwi.net

Newsletter | Teri J Pieper | 630-6224 | teripieper@hotmail.com

Science Officer | Don McIvor | 997-9456 | puma@methownet.com

Festival Coordinator | Richard Scranton | rscran4350@yahoo.com

Social Media | Monica Maxwell | monicalynnm1979@gmail.com

Bruce McCammon | 503-380-3733 | bruce.mccammon@gmail.com

Virginia Palumbo | 682-5969 | vwpalumbo@gmail.com

Merry Roy | 881-1083 | merry8roy@gmail.com

Julie Hovis | jahovis711@gmail.com

Joe Veverka | joe_veverka@yahoo.com.

Communications | Treesa Hertzelt | autumn207@comcast.net

Website - www.ncwaudubon.org

Subscribe to our email list at www.ncwaudubon.org

Mailing address - PO Box 2934 Wenatchee, WA 98807

North Central Washington Audubon Society is on Facebook too

All phone numbers in the Wild Phlox are area code 509 unless otherwise indicated.

North Central Washington Audubon Society Wild Phlox Subscription Form

Subscribe to NCW Audubon Wild Phlox One Year, Nine Issues - \$15 Suggested donation

I prefer to get the Wild Phlox electronically (email address required below)

Separate subscription to Phlox NOT needed for NAS members in good standing

Donation: I would like to support NCW Audubon’s programs of education and conservation. Enclosed is my additional donation of \$_____

Please do NOT acknowledge my donation in the Wild Phlox

Memorial in the name of _____

Please mail check and form to Post Office Box 2934 Wenatchee, WA 98807-2934.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone number _____ Email _____

Planned Giving: Please consider giving a planned gift to NCW Audubon to support our education and conservation programs for generations to come. Your charitable gift will be tax deductible. It could go to an endowment fund or to a specific program or as a gift to our general operating fund. Remember, your gift to North Central Washington Audubon will go to fund programs in North Central Washington!

To join the National Audubon Society which also includes a subscription to the Wild Phlox, please see their website at www.audubon.org



It is nesting season for migratory birds in NCW right now. If you walk near a river or other riparian habitat, you are likely to hear a wealth of bird song. But listen quick – it won't last long. After the bird song season, it will be time for the calling of baby birds, longing to be fed. That's already started near our house with Say's Phoebes, Western Bluebirds, Great Horned Owls and Tree and Violet-green Swallows already feeding youngsters. And not long after that, the migration season happens again. Male Harlequin Ducks may already be returning to the ocean as the females raise the ducklings. In the far north, male shorebirds will soon begin their journey too. So, I guess what I'm saying is, you'd better get outside now and enjoy the songbirds while they are here.



Harlequin Duck on the Twisp River
photo by Richard Murray, Twisp

Speaking of migration, Ken and I went to Alaska last month. It was my first trip to the 49th state and quite an experience. I recommend it. We attended the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival, visited Denali and took the ferry from Bellingham to Juneau. Notable for me was seeing caribou for the first time, brown bears up close AND I added four new birds to my life list - Rusty Blackbird, Pacific Golden-plover, Rock Ptarmigan and Mew Gull. I've probably see the gull before but didn't know it. We also enjoyed watching courting Arctic Terns and marvelled at their migration all the way from Antarctica!

I apologize for the lack of a bird sighting column this month but with all the wonderful bird sightings listed in the article about the four-county big bird day, I thought we could skip it this time. And Penny's article about the successful rescue of a Mallard family on busy Wenatchee Avenue seems far more interesting!



Male Ruddy Duck
photo by Janet Bauer, Winthrop

The June issue signals a summer break for the Wild Phlox. It will return in September, so you have another good reason to spend more time outside! And if you need something else to read, Merry Roy has put together a suggested reading list with reviews on page four. I will be reading Kenn Kaufman's new book - *A Season on the Wind* - about bird migration



Least Flycatcher
photo by Joe Veverka, Cashmere

A Real Life *Make Way for Ducklings***

by Penny Tobiska, Wenatchee

On a busy Friday afternoon before Apple Blossom, we pulled up to the stop light at the intersection of Wenatchee Avenue, Maple Street and Miller Street, one of the busiest places in North Central Washington. Beside me on the sidewalk was Mother Mallard and her nine ducklings.

AACCKKKK - she was starting to cross this intersection heading to the Columbia - right direction, wrong path. There was no way she was going to safely get across that busy highway. I leapt out of the car and herded them back into the junipers in the ShopKo parking lot. Another woman arrived, we discussed tactics and options - all poor. That mother duck wanted to get to the Columbia River several blocks away. No way was that possible with five lanes of traffic and those little guys' 3/4" legs.

Trying to catch a mother duck with a sweater did not work. Herding didn't work. I called the Humane Society and got the answering machine; I recorded our info even though I knew they did not rescue wild animals. In the meantime, my husband and two more people were helping. Then, two police cars appeared. They were concerned with safety

because frantic Mama Duck twice flew into the intersection. We were able to shoo her back to the brush and to grab some of the tiny ducklings and put them in a basket, but they kept falling through holes in the basket. Then an officer from the Humane Society arrived. What a relief - a pro. After several attempts, she captured Mrs. Mallard with a large net and put her in an animal carrier; we gathered the ducklings in another. What a relief to see the Mallard family riding to Riverfront Park for release by the Columbia River.

During that intense thirty minutes, everyone involved was "in the moment." Everyone wanted to rescue Mrs. Mallard and her ducklings. No one asked about politics or religion. I hope that the family prospers at the park. Wish we could visit with them.

**Caldecott medal winner *Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey tells the journey of Mrs. Mallard and her eight ducklings from the Charles River to the Public Garden in Boston Common (with the aid of some helpful police officers). In the common, bronze sculptures of the Mallard family delight visitors of all ages.

Suggestions for Summer Reading

by Merry Roy, Wenatchee

Reading is one of my favorite activities and reading about birds - what could be better! Here are a few books to consider for your summer reading.

At the top of my reading list is *Bird Tales: One Hundred Photo Essays* by Bruce McCammon. Fresh off the press, *Bird Tales* chronicles Bruce's photos, where he took them, and the "story" behind the photograph. The photographs are beautiful, and the stories are encouraging for all would-be bird photographers. Bruce is well-known for his regular contributions and photos in *The Good Life* magazine, for his photo blog, and for his poster *Common Birds of North Central Washington*. We are blessed to have Bruce as an NCW Audubon board member.

Any book by Bernd Heinrich is great. Starting with *Bumblebee Economics* (1979) his books focus on close day-by-day observations of wildlife around his cabin in the Maine woods. As a 'hands and knees scientist', climbing trees, setting up experiments with bees, ravens or other bird neighbors, he has kept daily records of his observations, hypotheses and conclusions for most of his life. Heinrich mentored University of Washington professor John Marzluff and his wife in working with ravens, resulting in the first book of his that I read, *Ravens in Winter* (1989).

One Wild Bird at a Time: Portraits of Individual Lives, Bernd Heinrich (2016) focuses on individual birds and their fascinating behaviors. The Ruffed Grouse's tunnels under the snow, the Blue Jay's social screams, flickers hammering a nest hole in the side of his cabin, the communal behavior of Red-winged Blackbirds versus their territorial behavior are among the chapters. Heinrich observes, records, asks questions and watches some more. Some of his questions are answered, but often one answer leads to another question. He tells us "learn by watching whatever bird you see".

Life Everlasting: the Animal Way of Death, Bernd Heinrich (2012) is about how the animal world deals with death. A friend wrote asking if he could have a green burial in the woods around Heinrich's cabin. This letter was the impetus for writing *Life Everlasting* with chapters about beetles that bury mice, scavengers (including vultures, crows, bears and deer as well as early humans and desperate people today), dung beetles, salmon life cycles, sea life, and trees. Heinrich writes that each of these is "yet another way life transforms itself into another life." He concludes with how these parts of nature inform us about ecology and spirituality.

Another Season of *What's That Bird?*

by Sue Sampson, Malaga

Opening Day

NCWAS opened the *What's That Bird?* season in April with Earth Day festivities at the Bridgeport State Park. A team of five volunteers taught bird-watching skills to one hundred lively, shrieking second-graders and to one somewhat older student, Jacob. He was interested enough to return at day's end to help us pack up.

New Binoculars!

Student birders at this year's *What's That Bird?* used our new flock of thirty Kowa binoculars, a model designed for youth. We heard plenty a "Whoa!" and "Wow!" as students brought birds into view for the first time. NCWAS purchased the binoculars with grants from the Community Foundation of North Central Washington, the Charlotte Martin Foundation, and a cost break from Kowa. The new binoculars replace an older set that had been used hard and refurbished time and again until they were beyond repair.

The test of the new binoculars came with eleven days of *What's That Bird?* at Confluence Park in Wenatchee. The sessions were part of Youth on the Columbia activities for school children organized by the Wenatchee Valley Museum & Cultural Center. Activities include learning some Indian lore or trying out Indian crafts and rides in the Wenatchee Row and Paddle Club's Voyageur canoes.

The Bird Show

The local Ospreys nesting on a platform at the edge of

Confluence Park put on a great show for the students, chirping endlessly, flying over the Columbia, diving in and returning to the nest with fish in their talons. Merry Roy spotted a neatly eviscerated fish that an Osprey had dropped on the grass. Bruce McCammon added a new feature to the birding program: He set up a spotting scope on the nest to give the students a chance to peek at the birds.

As a side show, a flock of Canada Geese grazed in the middle of a field at the park. One of our students exclaimed, "Two of those geese are different!" We got our binoculars on them and verified that two Greater White-fronted Geese had taken a break from their migration to feed at the park. It made our day that a student was interested and observant enough to spot the visitors.

Who Did It

We were not able to sign up enough volunteers to offer *What's That Bird* for every day of Youth on the Columbia. We need at least three volunteers per session and having four is a big help.

Those who did fill out the program included Patrick Bodell, Susan Evans, Bruce McCammon, Dianne McCammon, Monica Maxwell, Caitlin Newman, Walter Newman, Mark Oswood, Jackie Reynolds, Merry Roy, and Sue Sampson.

Please watch your *Wild Phlox* newsletter for a call for volunteers for autumn's Wenatchee River Salmon Festival or the fall or next spring's sessions. Think of them as pleasant outings among herds of kids. No experience is necessary - you'll pick up the program fast. Thank you!

Four-County Bird Count Highlights - continued from page 1

Board member, Virginia Palumbo reports in the Chelan valley, there were eleven teams of birders totaling seventeen people. Some people did a yard count, others a driving count, and others birded in the field. With several lists still not turned in, they had 77 species and 1048 individual birds. Highlights include nesting Golden and Bald Eagles, Rock and Canyon Wrens, five Lewis Woodpeckers, Loggerhead Shrike, Evening Grosbeak and Red Crossbills, both Bluebirds, and Clark's Nutcrackers. Most noticeably absent were any real numbers of Chickadees, with only one Mountain and one Black-capped thus far in the count. The heat did seem to decrease numbers at most locations.

And from board member Janet Bauer - "To help inaugurate NCW Audubon's June 1st "Big Bird Day", four of us volunteered to spend the day birding the upper Methow Valley. The day dawned warm and sunny and we began with a walk to a marsh just outside of Winthrop where Yellow-headed Blackbirds greeted us with their loud raucous calls. Twelve male Ruddy Ducks busily swam around the marsh showing off to the females with head bobbing and bubbles. On the hillside above the marsh, we observed a "triple" site with Pygmy Nuthatches, House Wrens and Northern Flickers all nesting in the same snag. We continued up valley with a walk into Riser Lake where a Ring-necked Duck and pairs of Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teal were observed. Unfortunately, the newly placed Wood Duck boxes along the lakeshore appear to be providing nest sites for House Wrens instead.

Stopping next at Big Valley, a Lazuli Bunting sang sweetly, and a Brown Creeper, Yellow Warbler and Northern Harrier dressed up our list. Further up valley on the Community Trail, we were thrilled to get an unobstructed view of a Yellow-rumped Warbler nest. Foster's Pond by Mazama had expected Canada Geese and an unexpected lone male Bufflehead. Up Lost River Rd, we were finally able to add more woodpeckers to our list with Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers and Red-naped Sapsuckers all sighted. In an attempt to add some higher elevation birds to our list, we drove up to Washington Pass but were only able to record one Pine Siskin along with numerous people and cars. On our way back down, we stopped and walked through the Lone Fir campground and were rewarded with beautiful looks at a Varied Thrush and Townsend's Warbler.

All in all, we birded for close to eight hours, made eleven stops, and recorded 75 species. It was what we four birders would call a great way to spend the first day of June."

Meredith Spencer reports that she and Betty Hagenbuch found 75 species on the Waterville Plateau and Badger Mountain. Highlights for them included Sora, Black-crowned Night-Heron, White-throated Swifts, Clark's Nutcrackers and Sage Thrashers.

Board member, Joe Veverka sent this report from the lower Wenatchee Valley: "I started the day at 3:30 am south of Camas Meadows along NF-7200 listening for owls. I was able to hear

several Flammulated Owls and a few Great Horned Owls. Other predawn highlights include Common Poorwills and winnowing Wilson's Snipe displaying overhead. Sunrise was spent at Camas Meadows with the snipe continuing, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes joined the chorus as well 34 additional species. I struck out on sapsuckers. Next (6:15 am), I birded Mountain Home Preserve and Canyon Crest Trail south of Leavenworth. My target here was bushtits. I missed them but I did find about 40 other species. Notable species here include a spunky Least Flycatcher, a couple Willow Flycatchers, a Fox Sparrow, Ruffed Grouse, Dusky Grouse, and Calliope Hummingbirds.

Stop 3 (9:10 am) was Nahahum Canyon just across the Wenatchee River from my home. Here I found 37 species including a Pacific-slope Flycatcher at the canyon bottom, a Lewis's Woodpecker up past mile marker 1, and a Golden Eagle riding a thermal over the west ridge. Afterwards I stopped home for brunch and to see the family. Also, it is a good place to see Vaux's Swifts. As I was heading back out the door to continue the odyssey, I said I'd give periodic updates. My four-year-old daughter shouts "We get periodic cupcakes!" Nope, but that's a great idea. I began the afternoon in Wenatchee. I checked Horse Lake Road for the resident California Scrub Jays without success. I did find two Black-chinned and an Anna's Hummingbird and my first of many Bank Swallows. I hit Walla Walla Point Park and Horan around 1:00 pm. Nothing unusual to report but I did find my target Bewick's Wrens as well as Western Grebes, Gray Catbirds, and a singing Common Yellowthroat. I ended up with 50ish species; considering the time of day and heat this was a surprise. Burch Mountain (3:10pm) was 82degrees, 10 degrees cooler than Wenatchee. When I got out of the car up top, I was again expecting little activity. It was a great stop! Clark's Nutcracker, Pygmy Nuthatches, many Red Crossbills, a Townsend's Solitaire, and a few singing Brewer's Sparrows. On the way down I made a stop for grassland birds. Western Meadowlarks are reliable even on a hot afternoon. I also picked up a Rock Wren singing below from a craggy east slope.

My final stops (6:00 pm-9:15 pm) included YoYo Rock Boat Launch, Tarpiscan Road, and Colockum Road. Still blazing hot with much heat distortion over the river. A few Spotted Sandpipers were actively foraging along the bank at YoYo Rock. While sitting and waiting for something crazy to fly up the river I heard the familiar twittering of a White-throated Swift flying high overhead. Not so crazy but a near miss for the day. Along Tarpiscan Road a Lark Sparrow was prominently perched on a rock singing. As I started up Colockum Road I saw a Common Nighthawk flying low over the valley. It was the 113th and final species of the day. I ended the count at 9:15 pm at the Kittitas County line with 1,196 birds counted."

As of today, June 10, the total is 176 species for the four-county area!

A Sense of Wonder

I happened to look up around 7:30 tonight. The day had been in the 60s. Then it grew overcast, billowy clouds in different shades of gray. I felt a raindrop. It didn't seem like it was going to rain. Occasional raindrops, little prickles of cool. Up above were dozens of swallows. These birds have arrived now. They were circling and circling. There must've been a tiny insect irruption to borrow that word from ornithology. I watched them for a while and saw they were going

toward the south, the river, and moved where I could watch them go.

I thought about the sense of wonder, watching tiny birds circling. I could take any meaning I wanted out of this, or maybe not have noticed at all. Most people wouldn't. The sense of wonder comes from seeing the world as new as a fresh morning, that everything in a day is in some way given to you, even all the mundane stuff.

by Paul Anderman, Leavenworth

Spring is a kind of fresh morning, the world awaking, new species arriving, seeing them again. Looking up, perhaps by chance, perhaps not, seeing all those birds just for me alone, well, I hoped my sense of wonder was intact. You have this sense when you are a child. You lose it when you grow up, unless you try. I'll be 72 in four days

I went into my writing room. A scattering of rain made a rhythm. Then fell silent.

Okanogan Highlands Alliance Summer Activities

On the Hunt for the Humble Bumble Bee

Learn New Skills to Make Your Summertime Hikes Buzzworthy

by Julie Vanderwal, Okanogan Highlands
and Rich Hatfield, The Xerces Society

On June 22, community members have an opportunity to learn about the bumble bee species in our area, their importance to our ecosystem, as well as ways we can help conserve them. In an effort to learn more about bumble bees to improve evidence-based bumble bee conservation guidance, the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, in partnership with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and the Oregon Bee Project, has launched the Pacific Northwest Bumble Bee Atlas. On a hike in the Okanogan Highlands, Rich Hatfield, Xerces Society conservation biologist, will share information about the Atlas Project, how to participate, and the value that the project will have to our area, both locally, and regionally. The group will conduct a point survey at Lost Lake to help determine the number of bumble bee species living there.

This field trip will connect the community with our native bumble bees and other pollinators and the contributions they make. The event will provide inspiration and a user-friendly method of getting involved in community-based science to make positive strides toward effective conservation.

Rich Hatfield is a Senior Conservation Biologist with the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. The Xerces Society, founded in 1971, is a non-profit environmental organization that focuses on the conservation of wildlife, through the protection of invertebrates and their habitat. Rich is a leader in bumble bee conservation, with a demonstrated history of effectively using science, advocacy, and community-based science to protect wildlife and their habitat. Rich has a Master's degree in Conservation Biology from San Francisco State University. He has special knowledge of our region's species and issues due to his ongoing involvement in the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area in Okanogan County.

This event is provided in partnership with Humanities Washington, with community member financial support.

Digital Tools For Naturalists

by Julie Vanderwal, Okanogan Highlands

Many of us carry smartphones as cameras and for a few of our favorite apps, but do you ever wonder about other apps that might help you explore the natural world?

On July 13, Learn how to make your phone or tablet into a suite of resources for identifying a wide variety of natural elements, from wildflowers and wildlife to trees and mountain peaks. Participants will be provided with a list of apps to choose from prior to the event, depending on what aspects of the natural world community members most want to explore. If you have a favorite app you think we should include on our list, email julie@okanoganhighlands.org with your suggestion.

The group will visit a site with a panoramic view of the Pasayten Wilderness, and practice identifying peak names. We will then explore the Lost Lake Wetland and Wildlife Preserve, using apps appropriate for the species we encounter. After the event, participants are encouraged to enjoy Lost Lake with swimming, canoeing, or kayaking, and continued observations of the beautiful and diverse plant and animal species that make the lake and forest their home.

Both events:
Due to the nature of the outdoor events, participation is limited, and priority registration is being offered for OHA members. Waiting lists are being generated on a first-come, first-serve basis. To begin or renew OHA membership and be first in line to register for the summertime events, community members can donate online, or contact OHA for more information. Further details will be provided to those who register for the field trip. To sign up for this event, please email julie@okanoganhighlands.org or call 476-2432.

An Exercise in Looking

by Joan Zanol, Wenatchee

“What do YOU see when you look at this bird?” Richard Crossley asked a group of new bird watchers and seasoned birders. “How big is it? Bigger than a robin? What does the tail look like compared to the body? Is it long? What does the beak look like? What is the bird doing? Where is it?”

Crossley peppered the group of fourteen birders at the Leavenworth Spring BirdFest with questions. He urged us to look closely at each bird and create our own memory. He told us not to worry about the name of the bird. We should be creating our own relationship with each bird, remembering our own descriptors so we could remember each bird intimately. The color of the bird? The song of the bird? That was much less important to him than what each birder remembered about the bird’s body and habitat and behavior.

In the early morning misty light at Camas Meadows, we stood and watched as finches lighted on treetops, as robins chased each other in the grasses and blue blooming camas. We saw bluebirds in the distant aspen grove. Woodpeckers flew swiftly through the meadow to land within deep tree cover.

Birding with Richard Crossley, photographer and creator of the Crossley ID Bird Guides, was not about a list of birds or finding more species. It was an exercise in looking.



Birders high above Lake Chelan during the four-county count
photo by Bruce McCammon, Wenatchee

BirdFest: Audubon Photos on Display

photo and article by
Bruce McCammon, Wenatchee

NCW Audubon hosted a display of the winning photos of both the 2018 National Audubon Society contest and the 2019 NCW Audubon contest at the 2019 Leavenworth Bird Fest. We displayed twelve large prints in the traveling exhibit of the National Audubon photo contest and seven prints from the NCW Audubon contest. The National Audubon winners are beautiful and creative prints of Great Gray Owl, Black-necked Stilt, Long-tailed Tit, Cobalt-winged Parakeet, Red-winged Blackbird, Wood Duck, Bald Eagle, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Greater Sage-Grouse, Roseate Spoonbill and Willets, Anhinga, and Pyrrhuloxia. The NCW Audubon prints included Calliope Hummingbird, Northern Pygmy Owl, Osprey, White-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Cedar Waxwing.

All nineteen of these prints were displayed together to allow 72 visitors to easily compare the images. Each viewer was asked to study the prints and then answer the question: “Which print from each category would you hang on your wall?” This

informal survey showed that the “people’s choice” awards would have gone to the National Audubon photo of the Wood Duck in snow and the Northern Pygmy Owl image from the local NCW Audubon contest. Asking the question seemed to make people take a bit longer as they looked at each photo. Most people really studied the images while a few reacted almost instantly to one or two of the prints. Keynote speaker Richard Crossley studied each print intensely and offered his critique of each. Crossley thought that all the photos were lovely but he favored images that he felt took more time and skill to photograph. His favorite from the entire collection was the Cobalt-winged Parakeet print based on the challenge he assumed the photographer faced while making the image. Each person views photos differently and with a different background. It was fun to visit with Crossley and others as they critiqued and appreciated the prints.

Photos mentioned here can be seen at www.audubon.org/magazine/summer-2018/the-2018-audubon-photography-awards-winners and www.ncwaudubon.org/2019contest.html



June Wild Phlox

North Central Washington Audubon Society
Post Office Box 2934
Wenatchee, WA 98807

NON-PROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
WENATCHEE, WA
Permit No. 21

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

Items in bold text are sponsored or co-sponsored by NCWAS

June 15	Twisp Field Trip	With Mark Johnston. See www.ncwaudubon.org or last month's Phlox
1st and 3rd Wednesdays	Beebe Spring Bird Walks	With Virginia Palumbo. See www.ncwaudubon.org
Every 3rd Wednesday	Horan Area Monthly Bird Walk	See www.ncwaudubon.org for details
Once a month	Mountain Home Preserve Bird Surveys	With Chelan-Douglas Land Trust. www.cdlandtrust.org
Once a month	Horse Lake Reserve Bird Surveys	With Chelan-Douglas Land Trust. www.cdlandtrust.org
June 22	Learn about the Humble Bumblebee	With Okanogan Highlands Alliance. See page 6
July 13	Digital Tools for Naturalists	With Okanogan Highlands Alliance. See page 6
July 13	Whitebark Pine Ecology	With Methow Conservancy. Space is limited. www.methowconservancy.org



You can find the Wild Phlox online at our website - www.ncwaudubon.org
The beautiful photos are even nicer in color.



Printed on Recycled Paper

Visit the NCW Audubon Society website for updates on these and other events www.ncwaudubon.org

