



## Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival

Memorial Park, Pateros, September 16, 8 am - 3 pm

Volume 51 #1 September 2017

by Richard Scranton, Wenatchee

Join the Chelan/Entiat Ranger District, North Central Washington Audubon Society and HawkWatch International (HWI) for the Eighth Annual Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival! This free family event combines activities in Pateros with a field trip to the Wells Wildlife Area, and morning and afternoon carpool trips to the Chelan Ridge HawkWatch site. This all starts at Memorial Park in Pateros on September 16.

Chelan Ridge sits 5675 feet above sea level along the flyway of migrating raptors. Biologists who live at the Ridge during the migration season will offer insight into what it is like to live and breathe raptors and show how the birds are banded and tracked. This amazing experience includes environmental education and interpretation conducted by on-site educators, Forest Service personnel, and volunteers. During the day, there will be an 8 am and a 12:30 pm carpool trip from Pateros to Chelan Ridge. From there you can hike  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to the observation deck watching the sky for migrating raptors overhead. With any luck, visitors will also get a close encounter with a raptor - perhaps a Cooper's or Sharp-shinned Hawk - after it is banded and before it is released.

The Wells Wildlife Area field trip will be led by NCWAS board member and Master Birder, Mark Johnston. The

Department of Fish and Wildlife has developed extensive riparian habitat on the wildlife area providing dense cover for wildlife and good habitat for waterfowl and other birds.

### Raptor Workshop with Dave Oleyar

Join Dr. Dave Oleyar from HawkWatch International for a raptor ID workshop in Pateros at 7 pm on Friday, September 15. Dave comes to HWI after teaching upper level undergraduate courses in population ecology and conservation biology in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Science at the University of Idaho. He loves sharing his passion for ecology and conservation with others whether it is in the classroom, at a public talk, or over a pint at the local watering hole. Dave will also be available on Saturday at Chelan Ridge to help visitors with their ID skills. Sign up in advance.

In Pateros, there will be fun for all ages. One booth features: *What's that Bird?*, a fun analog birding simulation game where children find and name bird models in trees. The WSU Raptor Club will bring live raptors and talk about their life histories; other booths will offer hands-on science and plenty of bird education material. A HawkWatch International booth will let you know about their conservation efforts and help answer all your raptor questions. Other interesting educational booths will be added to our website - [www.ncwaudubon.org](http://www.ncwaudubon.org).

[ncwaudubon.org](http://ncwaudubon.org).

The festival is also a great place to check out cutting edge optics from Wild Birds Unlimited and the latest birding guides and books from Trails End Bookstore. Daniel Anderman will be back with his wonderful birdhouses for sale.

This festival is scheduled to coincide with the peak of southbound migration of raptors at Chelan Ridge — the best place in Washington to view fall migrating raptors. Past festivals have brought several hundred people to see hawks up close, enjoy Memorial Park, and spend the day learning all about raptors. So please join us for the 2017 festival!

To sign up for the Friday night workshop, the Wells Wildlife Area field trip and the Chelan Ridge field trip, please contact Richard Scranton at [rscan4350@yahoo.com](mailto:rscan4350@yahoo.com). To learn more about the festival please visit our website: [www.ncwaudubon.org](http://www.ncwaudubon.org).



Hawk banded and ready to be released.  
photo by Bill Dieters

The mission of the  
**North Central Washington Audubon Society**  
 is "to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing  
 on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of people and  
 the biological diversity of North Central Washington."

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

Communications | Treesa Hertzell | webmaster@ncwaudubon.org

Festival Coordinator | Richard Scranton | rscrans4350@yahoo.com

At Large:

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

Janet Bauer | jsrbauer@gmail.com

Virginia Palumbo | vwpalumbo@gmail.com

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North Central Washington Audubon Society is on Facebook too

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



Lewis' Woodpecker  
 photo by Peter Bauer, Winthrop

*To see our newsletter with all of the photos in color, please look for it on our website.*

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To join the National Audubon Society which also includes a subscription to the Wild Phlox, please see their website at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

Even though it's the middle of August, fall is in the air. Really, it is. I'm seeing lots of raptors of various kinds, many recently dispersed from the nest and some still relying on parents to teach them about hunting. Yesterday, on a hike in the North Cascades, I saw a Prairie Falcon and a Northern Goshawk, both rare sightings for me. Today I saw a Peregrine Falcon on my morning dog walk. This means it's time for HawkWatch International to start setting up at Chelan Ridge. Are you planning a visit up there this year? There is a brochure available at <https://hawkwatch.org/> to help you plan your trip and help ID some of the common raptors. And don't forget the Festival on September 16th in Pateros.

What did you do on your summer vacation? Karen Mulcahy had a terrific road trip to Northern Canada and Alaska and sent us a very nice article about it. I've always wanted to explore that area.

On my summer vacation, I was lucky enough to volunteer at a bird banding station on the Big Valley Wildlife Area! You might not think it was lucky if you knew I was getting up at 3:00 AM and if I told you about the bugs and there was that morning it was VERY humid..... And then we could not drive out to the site due to increased fire danger so we had to walk or ride a bike. However, it was great fun! Julie Hovis started this MAPS station. MAPS stands for Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship and is sponsored by The Institute for Bird Populations. Julie is a wildlife biologist, recently retired here from South Carolina where she did bird banding for ten years, studying bird populations on a military base as a civilian employee. Anxious to continue this kind of work as a volunteer, she obtained necessary permits and permissions from the state and did the difficult preliminary work to get the site set up. A banding station uses nearly invisible mist nets stretched between trees and shrubs to capture birds. Banders remove the delicate songbirds and then band and process them before letting them go. If the bird shows signs of stress, it is released immediately. Processing consists of identifying the species (not always easy when dealing with young birds), sexing them if possible, aging them and determining if they are breeding birds. We looked for fat, cloacal protuberances, feather molt and wear, in addition to the regular field marks used to identify bird species. It was marvelous to see up close such beautiful birds as Lazuli Bunting, Red-naped Sapsucker, Common Yellowthroat and others. However, even the so-called

'little brown birds' like finches and House Wrens have extraordinary details in their feathers. My favorite bird may have been the juvenile Townsend's Solitaire. We had been capturing adult Veeries and Swainson's Thrushes. The solitaire is also a thrush but I have long associated it with conifer forests at higher elevations, not the cottonwood forest in the valley bottom. We never did see an adult Townsend's Solitaire. Hopefully we will have an article from Julie later this year about the results of this summer's banding. She is also looking for help from experienced bird banders and she would like to offer a field trip to observe bird banding.



Juvenile Townsend's Solitaire  
banded and ready to be released  
photo by Teri J Pieper, Methow Valley

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## NCW Recent Bird Sightings

compiled from the ncwabird email list  
and eBird and Tweepers by Teri J Pieper

Chelan County: Two Baird's Sandpipers were seen at Walla Walla Park. There were Lewis's Woodpeckers nesting on top of Chelan Butte.

Douglas County: A Grasshopper Sparrow was seen near Leahy.

Okanogan County: A family of Harlequin ducklings was reported on the Chewuch River at the end of July. A resident of the Wolf Creek neighborhood photographed a Long-eared Owl fledgling in her yard. Two Flammulated Owls were heard at the top of Thompson Ridge Road on July 2. Least Flycatchers were reported near the Sun Mountain Beaver Pond.

Ferry County: At Sanpoil Lake, just north of Republic several varieties of shorebirds were present including Wilson's Snipe, Stilt Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper and Solitary Sandpiper. An American Redstart, a Veery and a Gray Catbird were noted near Bridge Creek. Yellow-breasted Chat, Gray Flycatcher & Lewis's Woodpeckers were present along the first part of Swawilla Basin. A Pacific Loon was seen on Lake Roosevelt from Swawilla Basin. A Boreal Chickadee was found at the Sherman Pass campground.

# Fodder from the Feeder

## Or, What I Did On My Summer Vacation

By Karen Mulcahy, Winthrop

As I write this I am sincerely hoping for a respite from the smoke and heat. No doubt our feathered friends are hoping for this as well. As we were gone June and July, we missed all the fledglings that hatched in our boxes - Western Bluebirds, Pygmy Nuthatches, Tree Swallows, and of course the cheeky House Wrens. Since we returned we have found it important to keep extra bird baths out in addition to the pond due to the hot weather. We have noticed many species hydrating furiously - especially the nuthatches (all three species and sometimes all at once), Mountain Chickadees and Pine Siskins. The red and western gray Squirrels enjoy the pond along with our resident mule deer with twins, and the wasps, so it's nice to provide the birds another safer place.

This year our travels took us north - to Alaska, and to Yukon and the Northwest Territories (NWT) in Canada. While we expected to see grizzlies cavorting on the sides of the roads and moose and their offspring sauntering along the marshes, we also hoped to see a lot of birds. We drove over 8000 miles and there were so many highlights it's hard to know where to begin.

We found many of the common northern birds such as Golden-crowned and White-crowned Sparrows, Savannah and American Tree Sparrows, hundreds of Yellow-rumped and Yellow Warblers, and many, many Black-capped Chickadees. I was unable to find one Boreal Chickadee though (sigh). And it was neat to see all the yellow-shafted Northern Flickers.

There are some places that I recommend for birding in the north - with the caveat that driving or flying to these places is not for the timid. A broken tail pipe, two flat tires and a minor refrigerator repair were part of the fun on our way up the Dempster Highway in the Yukon and NWT. But we were rewarded above the Arctic Circle with my first view of a Lapland Longspur on the coastal tundra of Tuktoyaktuk, NWT. I would have liked to do a birding tour, but our flight did not include that option. However I spotted that bird and an eider of some sort. We flew up to Tuk, but the winter ice road to this village on the Beaufort Sea has been replaced by a year round road that should open this fall. Full disclosure - it will be one helluva long drive!

Friends that were up in the Yukon at Tombstone Territorial Park just a week before us caught the birding festival and were able to see a Northern Wheatear - a bird that summers there and winters in sub-Saharan Africa! Other great birding spots are the Creamery Wildlife Preserve in Fairbanks, Potter Marsh outside Anchorage where I was able to hear and then spot an Alder Flycatcher - extremely common, but flycatchers are a tough lot to identify. Denali State Park has lots of fabulous hiking and plenty of Hermit

and Swainson's Thrushes as well as the myrtle Yellow-rumped Warblers. And we did finally see Pacific Loons in the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge, a lovely area in Alaska just west of the Canadian border on the Alcan highway. This refuge is along the northern border of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, the largest national park in the United States. It only has two roads leading into it - both quickly become dirt with many frost heaves and potholes and streams to ford at times. We camped along the Nebesna Rd access (the northern access) one night and came across the oddest sight - a duck kept trying to raid a swallow nest that was halfway up a tree in this small lake. I am now wondering if this is a common event? Outside of Haines, another memorable sighting was the Marbled Murrelets we watched off the coast on the Chilkat inlet where we parked our camper on the roadside for the night. And there was the Short-eared Owl that swooped towards us and up over the camper as we were leaving West Fork BLM campground, south of the town of Chicken - so named because they couldn't spell Ptarmigan!

Last, but not least, if you are on the Kenai Peninsula and have a rainy day - take in the SeaLife Center in Seward. It has an amazing aviary where you can see some fabulous birds including Tufted and Horned Puffins, Spectacled Eiders, Long-tailed Ducks and Rhinoceros Auklets to name a few. It was well worth the visit.

So many special memories from this magical northern world - but it's still fun to look out the window into the garden and watch our "home" birds. Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home.



Young Spotted Sandpiper along the Methow River  
photo by Peter Bauer, Winthrop

# Meet the NCWAS Board

An Ongoing Series  
by Penny Tobiska, Wenatchee

Richard Scranton has been on the North Central Washington Audubon Society Board for several years. His particular interest is Citizen Science Projects.

**Tell us a little about your background and how you came to be interested in the natural world.** I grew up back east and moved to the Seattle area in the late 70's ending up in Wenatchee in the early 90's. I have my own business in the Tree Fruit industry working as a Field Research Technician. My love for nature started in Massachusetts when my grandfather would walk me around his yard teaching me the names of all the plants, birds and insects we encountered. He also passed down books he just read, especially biographies of the icons of science. I started early in life hiking around New England and always had a desire to learn about the forest denizens. I feel lucky living in this area where we have such a diversity of habitat, lots of public land and relatively few people.

**You are the NCWAS leader for the upcoming Chelan Ridge Hawk Fest in Pateros. Are raptors your favorite birds?** I enjoy learning about all birds and raptors are one of my favorites. Their combination of

beauty, size and aerial skills are very impressive. This year we look to make HawkFest bigger and better with an emphasis on education and conservation. We hope many families come out to Pateros to enjoy the many activities and to take advantage of the raptor experts. Please check out the page one article in this edition of the Phlox to learn more about the festival.

**You have also been involved for the past couple of years with the Sagebrush Songbird Survey. How is that study**

**going and what have you learned so far?**

The Sagebrush Songbird Survey just finished its third year. All the Audubon chapters east of the Cascades are involved in collecting data on the number and variety of birds that use the Sage/Steppe habitat. This is important as we have seen this habitat become much smaller over the last thirty years, and it may put some birds at risk, especially those that breed exclusively in sagebrush. We are in the process of collecting data and will have an article in the Wild Phlox in a few months with the interim results. The study will last for at least two more years. Contact me if you would like to be part of this important citizen science project.



Richard Scranton  
photo provided

## David Sibley Featured at Leavenworth Bird Fest!

by Brook Hinton, Leavenworth

Mark your calendars for the 16th Annual Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest, May 17-20, 2018. Wenatchee River Institute is pleased to be partnering with Icicle Creek Center for the Arts to host David Sibley as the keynote speaker. Tickets will be available February 14, 2018.

David Allen Sibley released his first bird guide in 2000. National Audubon Society website: "Sibley painstakingly draws what he sees in the field—900 species for his most recent field guide—first in pencil and then in gouache paints. Putting together a book that documents each form of each species is a monstrous task. He's done it twice. For the second edition of his bird guide, which was published in spring of 2014, he drew 600 completely new images, 111 additional species, and made more than 3,000 revisions."

This program is sure to sell out. Mark your calendars and sign up early.  
[www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.org/](http://www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.org/)

## See the Film *Bluebird Man* in Twisp September 5

by Mary Kiesau, Winthrop

Bluebird Man is a 30-minute film about bluebird conservation and citizen science, focusing on the efforts of one man who has been monitoring and maintaining over 300 nestboxes for bluebirds in Idaho for 35 years. Following the film, local biologist Ken Bevis, and nest box maker Patrick Hannigan of Nice Nests, will speak about cavity-nesting birds and the role that nest boxes can play in the Methow Valley.

This movie is Co-hosted by North Central Washington Audubon Society and the Methow Conservancy. It will be shown September 5, at the Merc Playhouse, 101 Glover Street. Doors open at 6:30 pm with light refreshments available for purchase. For more information, contact 996-2870 or [mary@methowconservancy.org](mailto:mary@methowconservancy.org).

## Bird Walks at Beebe Springs

by Virginia Palumbo, Chelan

Come join us for Citizen Science bird walks at Beebe Springs Natural Area on the first and third Wednesdays each month. The data we collect is used by Ron Fox, the District 7 Wildlife Area Manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, for grant applications and site assessment. Beginners and advanced birders are welcome! Please contact Virginia Palumbo for the start time (which varies as the seasons change) at [vwpalumbo@gmail.com](mailto:vwpalumbo@gmail.com) or 682-5969. Discover Pass required for parking.

# Stuff and Fluff

By Maggie McManus, Cashmere

Wenatchee Valley College (WVC) Biology Department and the Wenatchee River Institute at Leavenworth both have freezers FULL of dead birds brought to them over the years. An effort is underway to begin thawing and preparing these specimens as study skins to be used for both scientific and educational purposes.

Dan Stephens (WVC) is Study Skin Trainer extraordinaire and has been kindly donating his time this summer to teach this fine art. Our hope is that by later this autumn, a handful of Dan's trainees will feel confident enough to branch out and offer their own trainings, both in Wenatchee and up in Leavenworth.

This will be an ongoing process over the next several years. If you are interested in joining in the fun, whether for a while or for the long haul, it is advised you schedule to visit a Stuff & Fluff session to observe, first. While it is

incredibly satisfying to see the end result once the bird is reincarnated into its original form (minus the heartbeat and any moisture), it also requires patience, focus, and follow-through. But then, my experience indicates most of you birders have already honed these three attributes.

If you would like to be included on the list of potential trainees, please email me with your name and phone number. I will make sure that you are notified as to upcoming trainings over the coming fall and winter.

Oh, and if you happen to mention this opportunity to friends, make sure that they know that no birding expertise is needed. A bit of fascination with anatomy and a steady hand with a scalpel help, though.

All are welcome!

For more information or to sign up, contact Maggie McManus at [mcmalusall@gmail.com](mailto:mcmalusall@gmail.com) or 423-0881

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## Meet the Falconer

by Susan Sampson, Wenatchee

Falcons and Harris's Hawks might be the most ecologically sound tools for keeping ravens and starlings out of the cherry crop in the Wenatchee Valley. Paulie Corry thinks so. Corry is a Master Falconer licensed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to deploy raptors to scare away nuisance birds that are otherwise protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty. Some lucky NCW Audubon volunteers and board members had a chance to visit with Corry and his falcons and hawks last week near a Wenatchee Heights orchard. It was a wonderful experience!

An orchardist hired him to protect the crop near Wenatchee this summer. Corry drove his pickup from San Diego, stopping every two hours along the way to be sure that his birds were fed, watered and cool enough. The Harris's Hawks rode in back, but his falcon hybrids, being more fragile, wore hoods over their eyes and rode in the cab with him where they stayed calmer and cooler.

Corry comes from a line of North Ireland falconers going back 300 years. He became a commercial falconer in 1987, working for the U.S. Air Force to keep birds off of March AFB. Air Traffic Control would put him in direct radio contact with pilots, where he could warn, "Geese to your southwest at 800 feet." He and his hawks have cleared

SeaWorld of gulls that were snatching tourists' food and chased gulls from landfills where they were strewing garbage up to a quarter mile away, polluting waterways or dropping it in Angels' Stadium.

In our region, when wild birds are feeding at dawn, he checks the sky for Golden Eagles that could kill his birds, then releases a falcon or hawk to fly over orchards. The nuisance ravens, robins and starlings set up an alarm, rise in a cloud, and go elsewhere to feed. After being alarmed over several days, they don't come back.



NCWAS Treasurer, Larry Tobiska holding a Harris' Hawk photo by Mark Oswood

Corry hinted at making up to \$70,000 in a summer's work, but the overhead and time demands on him are huge. Birds require as much constant attention as human babies. He admits that when orchardists see his bid for their work, they nearly faint from sticker shock. He counters that one flock of birds can devastate thousands of dollars of crops in a day. That's especially true in vineyards. If a single

damaged pinot noir grape weeps on other grapes in the bunch, it makes the entire bunch is unmarketable.

Paulie Corry came to Wenatchee for the first time this year. He likes it here and hopes to help with the fruit in future years.

# Wenatchee Naturalist Course

## Open Enrollment

by Susan Ballinger, Wenatchee

Registration is underway for the twelve-week fall *Wenatchee Naturalist Course* through the Wenatchee Valley College Continuing Education Program. Susan Ballinger is the designer and instructor of the Wenatchee Naturalist learning community, a partnership program of the college with Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (CDLT). During the fall course, participants explore habitats along local rivers and learn about the animals and plants and their roles in local ecosystem. The course also has a much deeper purpose. *“The mission is to cultivate awareness, understanding, and stewardship of the Wenatchee River region by developing an active corps of well-informed community volunteers.”* Susan said.

The course is designed for curious adults who enjoy learning about the natural world, but have limited formal science training. Participants take the class to expand their knowledge about the Wenatchee River watershed’s plants, animals, habitats, landforms and key conservation issues. *“The field trips are the centerpiece for the course,”* Susan said. *“I delight in taking people to the special places along the White, Entiat, Icicle and Wenatchee rivers.”* During these trips, she said, students often make new friends and discover places to return to with friends and family.

Students will learn through hands-on experience by using study collections, microscopes and field guides, and by listening to experts who visit the classroom and accompany the group on field trips. Susan introduces field note taking and drawing techniques that students can continue to practice once the course is completed, and they are introduced to the work of twelve local conservation organizations. The Wenatchee Naturalist website provides resources and links for continued learning during and after the course. Students receive a field journal, loaner library box and hand lens.

Susan hopes that those who participate in the Wenatchee Naturalist course *“will find new communities where they can make a difference as a volunteer in support of local conservation.”*

Susan’s childhood in Montana influenced her education, career and voice in the community. *“As a girl, I led my siblings on many adult-free adventures up a nearby hill to a lone serviceberry shrub that shaded a small patch of bunchgrass, shooting stars and yellow bells,”* she said. Her love of the outdoors led her into master’s degrees in biology and education, and to a career as a biologist, naturalist and educator. She and her husband Paul moved to Wenatchee and chose a house near the Jacobson Preserve, *“my special place,”* she said, *“that provides respite, relaxation, scientific inquiry, inspiration, healing and joy.”*

For more information contact:

Susan Ballinger at [skylinebal@gmail.com](mailto:skylinebal@gmail.com) or 669-7820



Paulie Corrie with one of his raptors  
photo by Mark Oswood, Wenatchee



This Rock Wren built a nest in a retaining wall south of Wenatchee. The owner enjoyed watching the bird’s activity, particularly as the bird built tiny pebble steps going into the nest hole. Sadly the baby birds did not survive the summer’s heat.

photo by Cheryl Morris, Wenatchee

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## *The Eagle Huntress*

### A Film Review

by Merry Roy, Wenatchee

*The Eagle Huntress* is an award-winning documentary film following a thirteen-year-old girl who trains to become the first female eagle hunter in twelve generations of her Kazakh family, a tradition usually handed down from father to son throughout centuries. The photography of the Altai Mountains in the Mongolian steppe is awe-inspiring as is the relationship of Golden Eagles to the family that hunts with them. Be sure to watch the special feature *The Eagle Huntress* by director Otto Bell. His description of meeting the family and filming them is fascinating. It is available through the North Central Regional Library System.

## *September Wild Phlox*

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### North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

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September 5	See <i>Bluebird Man</i> in Twisp	At The Merc Playhouse. See page 5 for more info.
September 6 and 20	Bird Walks at Beebe Springs	Observe birds and record the data with Virginia Palumbo. See page 5 for more info.
September 15	Raptor Workshop	With HawkWatch at Pateros! See page 1 for more info
September 16	Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival	Fun for everyone at Pateros and Chelan Ridge. See page 1 for more information
May 17-20 2018	Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest	With David Allen Sibley! See page 5 for more info



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[www.ncwaudubon.org](http://www.ncwaudubon.org)