



## Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest Special Guests

Volume 45 #8 May 2012

by Gail Roberts, Bird Fest Coordinator

Bird Fest begins Thursday, May 17 and goes through May 20, with field trips including the new: "In Search of White-Headed Woodpeckers" and "Snow Birds." In the evening, attend the opening reception of Nature Artists at Icicle Studios. Included are original works by guest artist Ed Newbold, who created the artwork for the Washington Birding Trail maps.

Friday continues with exciting field



LEAVENWORTH  
SPRING  
BIRD FEST

trips. Many outings include a botanist, so you will learn about the habitat as well as the birds. Special this year, Idie Ulsh, Science Advisor for BirdNote, teaches "Tune into Birds" a birding by ear workshop and field trip. Come to our ten year anniversary and meet special guests Dr. David Craig (Keynote) and Ed Newbold with a special presentation by conservation biologist/author Dr. Thor Hanson on his well-regarded book "Feathers: Evolution of a Natural Miracle."

Bright and early Saturday morning continues with field trips, family

events, a bird banding demonstration, and entertainment at the Gazebo. After the evening barbecue, get a fascinating glimpse into the world of corvids with Keynote Dr. David Craig, Willamette University. His presentation, "Friends or Foes: The Field Readable Bird," reveals new research findings about behavior and development in rapidly expanding crow populations. Dr. Craig will share ways that citizen scientists can participate in crow and other wildlife research.

Sunday rolls along with a favorite Sunday bus tour through the coulees with Dr. Dan Stephens, and other outings to seek birds in a variety of habitats before culminating with our traditional Songbird Concert, featuring Michael Carlos, the Marlin Handbell Ringers, and select young artists from Dr. Sally Singer Tuttle's private cello studio.

Registration begins May 3 at 8 AM. Pick up a program at a Forest Service office or nature center near you, or check online at [www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com](http://www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com)



Birding field trip at Fish Lake  
photo by Michael Patterson

Friday's events include  
Birding by pontoon boat  
Advanced birding by ear  
Birding by ear for beginners  
Hike & draw with Heather Murphy  
Birds and flowers of Icicle Ridge  
Wood Duck Walk  
Nature artists at Icicle Studios  
Feathers and Fins  
Birding in the backyard  
Tune into birds  
Birding by raft  
Waterfront raptors  
Recycled art show  
Owl prow!l  
Tenth year Celebration  
And more. And that's just Friday!

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

**Chelan Ridge Hawk  
 Migration Festival  
 September 8**

The Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival will be held September 8, 2012. Make plans to be at Pateros' Memorial Park for the all day affair with shuttles to the ridge, vendors, analog (and real) birds and many other activities. Watch our website and Facebook page for updates as the plans are finalized.



Red-shouldered Hawk. This species has been observed at Chelan Ridge; however it is completely unexpected.

photo by Teri J Pieper

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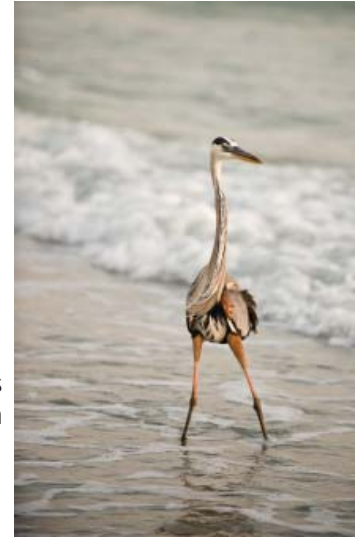
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To join the National Audubon Society which also includes a subscription to the Wild Phlox, please see their website at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) or drop us a note and we will send you a form for a special rate introductory membership.

Many thanks to all who offered us tips on what to see and do during our trip to Florida and other parts of the SE. It was amazing to see the different habitats and birds and other wildlife. It was a warm dry winter back there and already water levels are low. The bird migration was 'early' so in Florida especially, we missed species that were already gone. We had fewer opportunities for birding farther north so perhaps we passed some along the highways. All in all we identified over 120 birds with forty species being lifers for me! There were surprisingly few warblers and almost no sparrows; however there were LOTS of tall charismatic wading birds. My first Wood Stork was spotted alongside of the freeway. Ken spotted our first Swallow-tailed Kite while driving and talking on the cell phone. It was quite the adventure. And not to mention the alligators and turtles and lizards and even a rare gopher tortoise! Our favorite unexpected birding place was Six Mile Cypress Preserve in Fort Myers. It had more water than the Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary and more birds too. Myakka State Park was another good birding location. All of these are featured in the well-designed and useful Great Florida Birding Trail maps. I liked Florida more than I expected to and if we get another opportunity, we will return and next time we will be sure to see the Everglades.



One small pond at Six Mile Cypress Preserve held over 70 tall white birds - Great and Snowy and Cattle Egrets, White Ibises and Wood Storks; plus one Great Blue Heron.



Even the Great Blue Herons looked exotic standing in warm Gulf water.

photos by Teri J Pieper

Don't forget, the color versions of our newsletters can be downloaded from the NCW Audubon website



Glossy Ibis



White Ibis. I felt like its name should be Red-faced Ibis. In the west there are White-faced Ibises with nearly no white on their faces.

## Osprey Cam at Liberty Bell School

Ospreys nest next to the tennis courts at the Liberty Bell schools between Winthrop and Twisp. This year their habits are being studied by anyone with a computer and internet access thanks to a new webcam. These birds will have no secrets. You can view the Osprey nest at [www.ustream.tv/channel/methow-valley-sd---osprey-cam](http://www.ustream.tv/channel/methow-valley-sd---osprey-cam). Ustream is a free service so you will see ads when you go to the site. Many thanks to the volunteers who got the electricity to the pole and also to the local electric co-op for getting the camera up to the nest.

Are there other bird cams around North Central Washington? Let me know and I will share them with our readers.

# Recent Travels of the Analog Birds

by Mark Oswood, Wenatchee

Some years back, we obtained grants for purchase of a mixed-species flock of artist-carved wooden Birds, painted with field marks. These Analog Birds (as distinguished from point-and-click Digital Birds) make ladder-assisted short flights into trees and shrubs. Once settled on branches or tree trunks, the Birds are models of patience, allowing beginning birders of all ages the twin joys of searching (“like an Easter Egg Hunt!” said one student) and coming to know (with simplified field guides).

The Birds have gigs all around the Pacific Northwest. Earlier this year, the Birds flew to Seattle, for a sleep-over at the 2012 Northwest Flower and Garden Show. The Birds had upscale accommodation in the “Birdsong” display garden, created by Washington Parks Arboretum and Seattle Audubon.

We’ve been acclimating the Birds to tabletop venues, most recently at Secrets of the Shrub-Steppe (Wenatchee Valley

Museum and Cultural Center) and Earth Day (in the park, Leavenworth). With no trees or shrubs at hand, each Bird perches on a custom stand, carved and painted. A laptop computer cycles through a gallery of photos and songs of each of the Birds (using BirdJam software). Some birds innately sing their species’ songs while other birds must learn their songs, when young, by hearing them. Clearly, the Analog Birds are not innately endowed with song; we’re hoping that BirdJam will be the teacher they never had.

Analog Birds are most often seen by school kids. The Birds recently spent a day at Bridgeport State Park, as the stars of our “What’s that Bird?” program. Elementary schools from Bridgeport, Brewster, and Waterville were hosted by the US Army Corps of Engineers for Earth Day. Over the years, the Birds have learned a subtle balance, of hiding but not remaining hidden.



The analog birds were featured in this display at the Pacific Northwest Flower and Garden Show  
photo by Rhonda Bush



Students celebrate Earth Day at Bridgeport State Park with our Analog Birds. Photo by Jenny Graevell



The White-breasted Nuthatch on a tabletop venue.  
photo by Mark Oswood

*This is the second year I have helped Mark with What’s That Bird? at our local Earth Day event. It is an amazing program and the children LOVE it!! It takes time to get it set up, and two people are needed, or three. The day of the event 3 or more adults are needed to help Mark explain the program and keep an eye on things. But you will have so much fun, time will just fly by. So, next time you hear Mark asking for help, VOLUNTEER. He can’t (and shouldn’t) have to do this alone. You won’t regret it, I’m sure. I doubt Mark has ever had to turn down help, so YOU are needed.*

*Thanks.*

*Meredith Spencer, Bridgeport*

# Spring Festival June 1-3

by Kim Romain-Bondi, Mazama

## Celebrating Birds and Botany in the Methow Valley

It is a magical time to welcome our migratory birds back to the Northwest, and appreciate the new growth and blossoms of spring. Celebrate the season with a weekend of festivities at the North Cascades Basecamp in Mazama. Birds and plants are the stars of the show as we explore their interactions and lives together. So get out your binoculars, loupes, and guide books and join in the field trips, activities, art projects, presentations, poetry readings, music, local food, and more!

Weekend activities include live raptor demonstrations, nest identification and owl pellet workshops, bird and plant field id, kids' games, and art projects and classes. Speakers, teachers and field trip leaders include: Dana Visalli (Naturalist and Educator), Joe Arnett (the rare plant botanist for the Washington Natural Heritage Program), Howard Ferguson (WDFW District Biologist Spokane); Scott Fitkin (WDFW District Biologist Okanogan), Steve Bondi (North Cascades Basecamp), John Adams (NW watercolorist), and volunteers from the NCW Audubon Society and Washington Native Plant Society's Okanogan Chapter.

On Saturday there will be guided field trips to learn about birds, botany and co-evolution. Sunday there will be a

guided trip to learn about Riparian Birds of the Upper Methow Valley. Sign up in advance for all field trips as space is limited.

On Saturday there will be BBQ available at noon or bring your own brown bag lunch. Dinner will be available Friday and Saturday nights. Friday evening's program will feature Dana and Joe talking about Plant and Bird Co-Evolution. This duo will amaze us all with their range of knowledge about the ways birds and plants interact. Saturday Howard Ferguson will have a program on birds and their habitats. Howard is an expert birder and enjoys sharing his knowledge with birders of all levels.

On Saturday and Sunday, John Adams, NW watercolorist, will teach Painting Birds and Colors of Spring. Pre-register for this class.

This event is sponsored by the North Cascades Basecamp, Washington Native Plant Society Okanogan Chapter, Methow Biodiversity Project, and North Central Washington Audubon Society. See the North Cascades Basecamp website for more information and full weekend schedule [www.northcascadesbasecamp.com](http://www.northcascadesbasecamp.com). Or call the Basecamp to pre-register for field trips 996-2334.



Cedar Waxwings  
photo by Teri J Pieper

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## Birding 101 Offered in the Methow

by Mary Kiesau, Winthrop

“Birding 101” - A class for beginning birders with “Wenatchee Naturalist” Coordinator, Susan Ballinger, June 15th, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm . Cost is \$35. Optional field trip to a local birding “hotspot”, June 16th, 7:30 am – 10 am Susan Ballinger’s engaging Introduction to Birding class, cosponsored by North Central Washington (NCW) Audubon Society and the Methow Conservancy, is perfect for beginning birders. Participants in this workshop will be introduced to the basics of bird biology; learn about bird behavior and habitats; view images of common birds of our area, and learn how to use field characteristics as an aid to bird identification. The presentation also includes a hands-on time review how to use field guides and binoculars. Susan will also cover field etiquette, and give us practical tips for comparing and choosing binoculars and audio and technological tools.

This class is limited to 20 people and registration is required. Contact the Methow Conservancy at 996-2870 or [info@methowconservancy.org](mailto:info@methowconservancy.org) to register.



Red-naped Sapsucker  
photo by Mary Kiesau

# Fun Times With the Chelan Douglas Land Trust

by Bridget Egan, Wenatchee

**Butterflies, Bugs, & Blooms at Stormy Creek**, May 12, 9 am - noon. Phil Archibald leads this exploration of full-blown spring glory on our Stormy Creek Preserve! Learn about spring wildflowers, songbirds, and butterflies along the Entiat River. Limited to 12 participants, free for Land Trust members, RSVP required. No dogs please.

**Naturalist Hike at Horse Lake**, June 2, 8 am - noon. Neal Hedges will lead an exploration of the habitats and wildlife of the Horse Lake Reserve. The property is home to many different reptiles, mammals, birds, and plant species. Neal will lead the group on a search for species and offer insight on their behaviors and habitat. RSVP required. Trip is limited to 12 and free for members. Non-members may join at a discounted rate for this hike!

**Birding at Horse Lake**, June 9, 6:30 am - noon. Join master birders David and Beth St. George on a citizen science birding trip at Horse Lake Reserve. The group will look and listen for beautiful spring migrants like Lazuli Buntings who visit the Reserve each year, as well as year round residents like Western Meadowlarks. Tallies will be collected and added to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology e-Bird database to help track the patterns of migrating birds. RSVP required. Trip is limited to 15 and free for members. Non-members may join at a discounted rate for this trip!

**The Tyee and Rat-Hatchery Fires: Rare Event or Harbinger of Things to Come?** June 14, 7 pm - 9 pm Barn Beach Reserve. On July 24, 1994, lightning ignited

a wildfire at Tyee Creek that raged across 135,000 acres, burning up 35 homes and cabins before it was contained 33 days later. Nearby, the Hatchery and Rat Creek fires consumed another 40,000 acres, making 1994 one of the worst wildfire years in eastern Washington's history. On June 14th, renowned photographer & biologist John Marshall and research ecologist Dr. Paul Hessburg will team up to tell this story, at the Barn Beach Reserve. Paul will kick off the evening with a presentation that highlights key changes in the ecology of wildfires in eastern Washington. John will present his repeat photographic studies of the 1994 wildfires. Come join us for what promises to be an interesting and informative evening. The presentation will be followed up by a field trip to the Mountain Home property on Saturday, June 16, where the newly learned ecological concepts can be seen in person. We will discuss and practice healthy forest management techniques and will thin small trees along the roads and trails.

**Geology 101** June 19, 6 pm - 8 pm, Chelan-Douglas Land Trust Office. Come join us for a two-part class on the geology of the Wenatchee River Valley and surrounding area. At the evening session, Kelsay Stanton will discuss the kinds of rocks found in the region as well as how plate tectonics shape what we see. On the June 23rd field trip, we will check out the outcrops! Time and details TBA

For more information and to RSVP call 667-9708 or see the website, [www.cdlandtrust.org](http://www.cdlandtrust.org)

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## Earthworms and Sparrows and Snakes - Oh My! CDLT Volunteer Opportunities

by Bridget Egan, Wenatchee

What do a giant earthworm, a sparrow, and a rattlesnake have in common? All three are on the spring to-do list for Neal Hedges, stewardship director of the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust. Neal will be conducting volunteer surveys on Land Trust properties in Wenatchee and Leavenworth and is looking for some willing volunteers. Birders are needed on May 14th and 16th to scout the Wenatchee Foothills in anticipation of Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest. Volunteers will help look and listen for different species on an early morning walk. After bird fest, Neal is turning his sights from the skies to the subterranean. Volunteers will help look for the notorious—but not often seen—giant Palouse earthworm. The worm has been seen in our area, and Neal will lead a team to survey the Land Trust's Mountain Home Ridge property on May 23rd. Reptiles will also be sought out by Neal and stewardship volunteers when he conducts surveys in Wenatchee and Leavenworth in June. If you are comfortable around snakes and lizards, join Neal to learn about the different species that live among us! All trips have limited capacity, so an RSVP to [neal@cdlandtrust.org](mailto:neal@cdlandtrust.org) is required. You can also call the office at 667-9708 or sign-up on our website, [www.cdlandtrust.org](http://www.cdlandtrust.org)

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## Okanogan Spring Birdathon

by Heather Findlay, Omak

Save the date! Our annual Okanogan Audubon Spring Birdathon will be held on Saturday, June 2. Meet at Todd & Heather's house at 6:45 a.m. for heading out by 7:00 a.m. sharp. Not sure of our exact route yet, but we usually cover some of the hot spots around Okanogan Valley and up into the Okanogan Highlands. Hope to see you there! Feel free to call if you have questions: Todd & Heather home 846-0475, Heather cell 429-8167.

# Notes from Mazama

It's April 23, a gorgeous sunny day in the Methow.

Yesterday the thermometer exceeded seventy degrees and it looks like more of the same today.

Spring is definitely in the air. The frogs have been busily singing to the world, sporadically during the day and in full chorus at night, at times almost deafeningly, but what a pleasant sound to retire to. This is punctuated each night by owls hooting and sometimes screeching.

On the pond there is the annual pair of Mallards, two Wood Duck drakes and a hen. They live a life of floating harassment by the Mallards who have determined that the pond, and all the goodies we distribute therein belong to them and noducky else. These ducks get more and more tame each day. When the ducks first arrived they would flush at the sight or sound of a human, now they mostly coast away. The woodies who flew initially, now paddle more rapidly to the far end, out of our sight.

Two days ago I was working on the irrigation near the upper pond, a shallow open area punctuated by small trees on its banks. As I worked my way down the line two very black ducks flushed and flew away, leaving the water no more than 30 yards from me. They were front lit and very black, and showed no other coloring. I could not see their beaks. These birds appeared to be a tad larger than Mallards. They uttered two quacks and were gone.

I am, as stated regularly, a "Birder" - note the capital B. Some I recognize, most I cannot identify. I find this a fine state of affairs for to paraphrase an old cliché, I don't lose the birds for the feathers. So I went to five birding tomes seeking black ducks. Only two of the books had Black

photo and article by Bob Spiwak, Mazama

Ducks listed, none had illustrations. One book had them on the map as being an eastern US species. I spoke with one expert on the phone, who deduced they were Canada Geese, a tribute to my failing vision. I emailed one of the world's top birders who actually seemed excited, but knew of no black ducks at this part of the globe. I found that American Coots matched the color sort of, but not the size. Scoters were better, but hardly at the dry side of the Cascades. I would swear on that stack of five books I saw what has been described, eyesight notwithstanding.

*Editor's note - interesting that Bob mentions that the black ducks flew off with two quacks. Are there any other birds besides Mallards that actually quack?*



Wood Ducks seen through Bob's living room window create a surreal image with the ripples and aspen reflections

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## Butterfly Conference in NCW

by Joyce Bergen, Winthrop

The Washington Butterfly Association (WBA) annual conference is within easy reach this year, at Eden Valley Guest Ranch near Oroville, June 22-24. This informal and fun gathering pleases butterfly enthusiasts of any age, from experts to beginners.

Depending on the progress of the blooming season, field trips on Saturday and Sunday may take in Mount Hull, the Scotch Creek Wildlife Area, or the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area. Participants on WBA field trips catch, identify, and release butterflies; there is no collecting.

Friday evening, Dave Nunnallee introduces us to the area with a talk on "Where We Are and What We Might See". Dave is a co-founder of WBA and co-author of the widely acclaimed Life Histories of Cascadia Butterflies. Friday evening Dana Visalli delivers the keynote address - "Butterflies and Plants; A Cozy Coevolutionary Relationship". Dana, a botanist and naturalist living in the Methow Valley, has published The Methow Naturalist for 16 years.

To learn more about this conference and to register, visit the WBA website [www.naba.org/chapters/nabaws/conference.htm](http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabaws/conference.htm).



Frittillary  
photo by Tom Munson

**May Wild Phlox**

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**North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar**

May 17-20	Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest	See page 1 Tenth Annual! Celebrate Spring Birds in NCW
June 2	Okanogan Spring Birdathon	See page 6 Search the Okanogan for interesting birds.
June 2	Mazama Spring Festival	See page 5 Celebrate Birds and Botany at the Basecamp.
June 9	Horse Lake Birding	With the Chelan Douglas Land Trust. See page 6
June 15-16	Birding 101 in the Methow	With the Methow Conservancy and NCW Audubon. See page 5
September 8	Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival	Details to come! Watch our website and Facebook page for details in the next few months.



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Visit the NCW Audubon Society website for updates on these and other events  
[www.ncwaudubon.org](http://www.ncwaudubon.org)