



artwork by Steven D'Amato

Emperor Penguins: Elite Divers of the Bird World

Volume 44 #3 November 2010

Article by Torre Stockard
photos by Ed Stockard

"All the world loves a penguin: I think it is because in many respects they are like ourselves, and in many respects what we should like to be. Had we but half their physical courage none could stand against us... Their little bodies are so full of curiosity that they have no room for fear."

— Apsley Cherry-Garrard — *The Worst Journey in the World*

Tuesday, December 7th:

The Methow Conservancy's Annual Holiday Social AND "1st Tuesday" Program at the Twisp River Pub. Holiday Party starts at 5pm with free appetizers. Guests can also order drinks and/or dinner from the Pub menu. The "1st Tuesday" program, co-sponsored by North Central Washington Audubon Society is "Emperor Penguins: Elite Divers of the Bird World," with speaker Torre Stockard. The program will be from 7:00 - 8:30pm. The Conservancy will also give out its two annual conservation awards. The event is free and everyone is invited!

Penguins have long captured the fascination and admiration of many an explorer, curious scientist, or any lover of wildlife. We marvel at how a living being can be so finely adapted to thrive in an environment as harsh as Antarctica, and perhaps our feeling of connection to these amazing birds is heightened by the fact that they are one of the few species left in the world with no fear of humans. Of the 17 species of penguins, the largest (and most regal) is the emperor penguin. As many people know, it has a most unusual reproductive strategy, with males incubating a single egg

while fasting for 4 months in the dead of winter. (They sure picked the short straw when it came to that evolutionary adaptation!) But among their other attractive features, emperor penguins are also the most highly-accomplished divers of the bird world, and as such, are a prized subject of diving physiology research.



Torre Stockard spent 6 field seasons in Antarctica with a group of fellow researchers from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, to probe the mysteries of how emperors are able to dive so long (almost 30 minutes) and so deep (500 meters or 1600 ft.) on one breath of air. The Scripps research into the ecology and physiology of emperors has been

ongoing since the 1960's, led by Drs. Jerry Kooyman and Paul Ponganis; their sea ice field camp has come to be known affectionately as "Penguin Ranch". Technological developments in recent years have enabled researchers to attach data loggers and even cameras to free-diving birds, opening a new window for us to understand the remarkable adaptations that allow emperor penguins to be such elite, even extreme, divers.

Torre Stockard received her PhD in Marine Biology from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. After studying emperors near McMurdo, she and her photographer husband Ed were lecturers aboard a cruise to the Antarctic Peninsula. Following subsequent jobs at National Geographic and in Greenland, she has come back to roost full-time in the Methow Valley. Torre is the webmaster for NCW Audubon and enjoys birds at home, on her bike and from her kayak, among other places.

Field Camp at the Emperor Colony





Daniel S. Kilby

The mission of North Central Washington Audubon 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."

NCW Audubon Contacts
President - Mark Oswood
 662-9087 moswood@nwi.net
Vice President - Jeff Parsons
 548-0181 jparsons@nwi.net
Treasurer - Teri J Pieper
Secretary - vacant

Education - Mark Oswood
 662-9087 moswood@nwi.net
Newsletter - Teri J Pieper
 630-6224 teripieper@hotmail.com
Membership - Mark Oswood
 662-9087 moswood@nwi.net
Conservation - Rachel Scown
 860-6676 raeplay6@aol.com
Bird Sightings - Torre Stockard
 birdsightings@ncwardubon.org
Science Officer - Don McIvor
 997-9456 puma@methownet.com
Programs - Bridget Egan
 433-7306 mtnegan@gmail.com
Webmaster - Torre Stockard
 webmaster@ncwardubon.org
Field Trips - Dan Stephens
 DStephens@wvc.edu

Board Members
 Penny Tobiska
 ptobiska@nwi.net
 Heather Findlay
 heather@eaglesun.net
 Nancy Warner
 nwarner@applecapital.net

Other Contact Information
 www.ncwardubon.org/
 info@ncwardubon.org
 ncwardubon.blogspot.com/
 PO Box 2934 Wenatchee WA 98807

November. Certainly not my favorite month. It simply links the lovely fall days to the winter season full of play that is slowly making its way down the mountains. It's a good time for reading books, catching up on projects, making holiday gifts and artwork. Birding is slow, to say the least.

It appears that the last of our visiting Anna's Hummingbirds may have finally gotten the message about November and left for warmer climes. In western Washington they do winter over at homes with feeders. Should freezing weather occur, those feeder fanciers rush out to wrap the fragile purveyors of sugar water with some sort of artificial heat to prevent a frozen mess and hungry hummers. I am relieved that they have left and I can wash the hummingbird feeders and put them away til next March.

The Steller's Jays have returned with their demanding ways and bossy calls. Recently, one jay was on the deck railing screeching, going from window to window as if demanding that I do something. Usually they stay out on the snags and yell from farther away. Finally I noticed another bird on the snag, a light colored bird, small than a jay and bigger than a finch and something I hadn't seen for a while. It was a Northern Shrike, sometimes referred to as a 'butcher bird'. It often kills and eats other birds and the jay seemed pretty upset about the newcomer. Soon the shrike flew and the jay settled back to its regular habits.

On page three, I have included The Birders' Code of Ethics from the American Birding Association. Since last month's article on Spotted Owls I have learned of birders practically demanding the right to continue to hoot up the endangered owl without regard for the bird's safety or existence. This bothers me greatly. Additionally I have learned that it's not unusual for a professional photographer or paid bird guide to use 'mousing' to lure in other owls. This is a practice that is used by scientists, who supposedly know what they are doing, to study reclusive species but is it alright for others to do it? What do you think?

**North Central Washington Audubon Society
 Membership Form**

_____ Subscribe to NCW Audubon Wild Phlox One Year, Nine Issues \$15

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

_____ New Membership to National Audubon Society (NAS), includes one year Wild Phlox, \$20

(Renewals - Please renew your National Audubon Membership by filling out the forms sent to you by National and sending directly to NAS, thank you)

Make check payable to Audubon; mail to Post Office Box 2934 Wenatchee, WA 98807-2934.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Chapter Code C9ZY100Z

Principles of Birding Ethics

from the American Birding Association

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

1. **Promote the welfare of birds** and their environment.

1(a) **Support the protection** of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, **exercise restraint and caution during observation**, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area;

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) **Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird**, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) **Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist**; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. **Respect the law, and the rights of others.**

2(a) **Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.**

2(b) **Follow all laws, rules, and regulations** governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) **Practice common courtesy** in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. **Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.**

3(a) **Keep dispensers, water, and food clean**, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) **Maintain and clean nest structures** regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, **ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.**

4. **Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.**

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

4(a) **Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders**, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

4(b) **If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent.** When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

4(c) **Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.**

4(d) **Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment**, and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) **Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.**

4(f) **Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable** to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) **Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests.** Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

Please Follow this Code and Distribute and Teach it to Others

The American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics may be freely reproduced for distribution/ dissemination. Please acknowledge the role of ABA in developing and promoting this code with a link to the ABA website using the url www.aba.org.

Notes from Mazama

by Bob Spiwak

Well, here it is almost the beginning of November. The state has ruled an early legality for studded tires, mainly because of early snows in the Cascades and the Idaho panhandle. Today is October 26, and a friend who came over Washington Pass yesterday reported about five inches of snow on the roadside; the NOAA forecast is for up to 24 inches by the coming weekend.

Snow aside (as is if were that simple) this being the 26th means we go back on Standard Time on the 7th of November. It will be lighter when we rise, making for some excellent low light photography of whatever fall foliage remains where you live and beyond. It also means it will be dark coming home from work, if you are gainfully employed. Here in the Methow, there are not many such workers who labor in the traditional sense, like in an office or some other commuting type endeavor.

The calendar also tells us that there's less than two months until the Christmas Bird Count season. Remember to keep the binocs from any sudden temperature changes, and if they are cold, wrap them tightly in a plastic bag when going indoors.

Same applies to cameras, and the reverse is true when again you venture out into the frigidity. Let them acclimate in the bag before removing them.

In the wonderful world of wildlife, we have seen a few chickadees and crows and an occasional bald eagle hereabouts. More chipmunks, fewer squirrels. All else seem to have fled to their warmer climes. The inordinate bear infestation we have had for a couple of months has eased off; their raids on bastions of domesticity being attributed to a lack of berries, apples and other natural foods that were lacking up here in the far north.

There is a developer from California who wants to lease some acreage from Washington State Parks to make the local Bear Creek nine hole golf course, near Winthrop, into an eighteen hole course. This, if nascent plans hold out, bodes well for wildlife because as part of the deal, if it goes through, would be rehabilitation of wetlands that in past years have become dry and invisible. This mitigation would extend far beyond the six acres under discussion. More on this as it progresses.

Join a Powerful Force for Nature: Project FeederWatch

Ithaca, NY—One backyard at a time, participants in Project FeederWatch are doing their part to unravel nature's mysteries—simply by sharing information about the birds that visit their feeders from November to April. The 24th season of Project FeederWatch begins November 13, although new participants can join at any time. People of all ages and skill levels can be FeederWatchers and do their part to help researchers better understand trends in bird populations. Participants count the numbers and different species of birds at their feeders and enter their information on the FeederWatch website at www.FeederWatch.org.

By collecting information from all these feeders in all these backyards, scientists at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are able to track patterns in bird populations and movement from year to year, all across North America.

Here are just a few key findings based on nearly a quarter-century of FeederWatch data:

- Populations of Evening Grosbeaks, once one of our most common backyard birds, continue to decline.
- Many species are expanding their ranges to the north, including Northern Cardinals and Anna's Hummingbirds.
- The nonnative Eurasian Collared-dove is invading North America at an unprecedented rate – it is now found in backyards from Florida to Alaska.

“By engaging the public we are able to pick up fluctuations that could be the result of climate change, habitat destruction,

from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology disease, or other environmental factors,” said project leader David Bonter. “These are large-scale changes that we would not be able to see without the massive amount of data we receive from our participants. Keeping an eye out in your own backyard can make a difference.”

To learn more about joining Project FeederWatch and to sign up, visit www.FeederWatch.org or call the Cornell Lab toll-free at (866) 989-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Cornell Lab members) participants receive the FeederWatcher's Handbook, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds, a calendar, complete instructions, and Winter Bird Highlights, an annual summary of FeederWatch findings.



Now there's a feeder bird!
Emperor Penguin bursts out of the icy waters.
photo by Ed Stockard

Christmas Bird Counts and an Upcoming Field Trip

The first of our region's Christmas Bird Counts is December 14th at Bridgeport. Contact Meredith Spencer at merdave@homenetnw.net for more information. Dan Stephens is once again leading the Wenatchee CBC on January 2nd. This is the 49th annual count in Wenatchee! Chelan's CBC is December 30th with Steve Easley in charge. Look for more counts and detailed information in the December Wild Phlox. For a listing of CBC's around the state, see www.wos.org/WACBCs.htm.

And Dan Stephens will lead a Columbia River waterfowl field trip starting in Wenatchee, going up the river on the Chelan County side to Bridgeport and then down river on the Douglas County side, on December 12. This will be a great warm-up for the Christmas Bird Count season!



I wonder who gets to count these Emperor Penguins
photo by Ed Stockard

Across

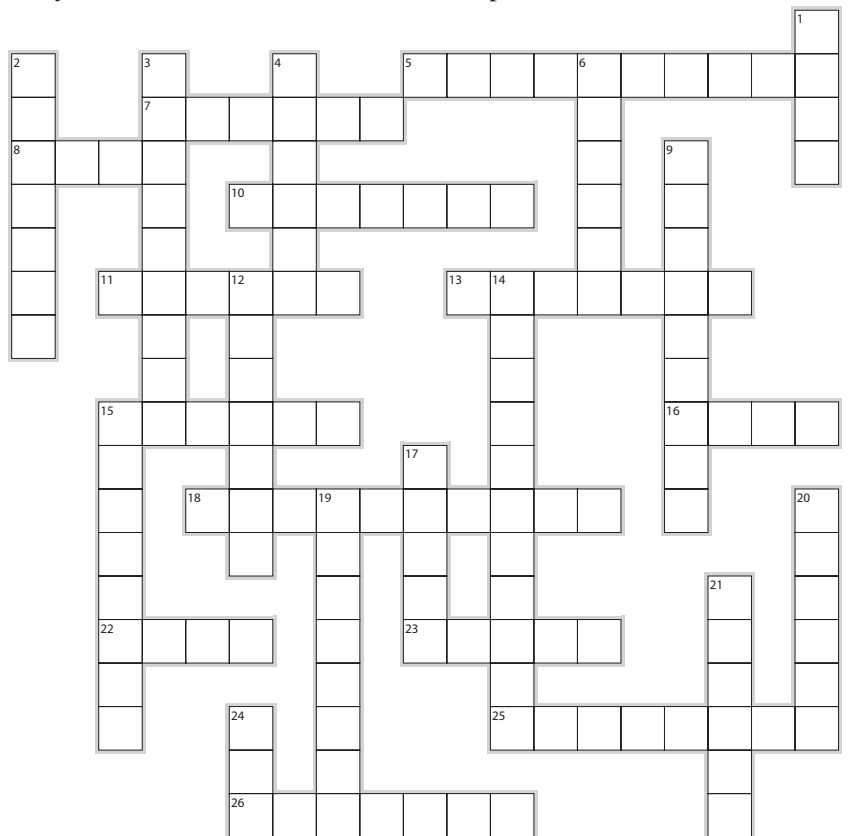
5. ivory-billed _____
7. fish-eating raptor
8. secretive bird of marshes; thin as a _____
10. these feathers overlap flight feathers
11. bobs for insects, in streams
13. legendary bird of fire
15. "butcher birds" - their prey get the point
16. shedding and growth of new feathers
18. perching birds
22. "left behind" poison in wetlands
23. in chimneys, overnight
25. shallow-minded ducks
26. smallest falcon

Down

1. crop of stones? must be true _____
2. feathers made of this protein
3. WA state bird
4. jam and jelly eater, at feeder
6. Say's _____
9. annual bird census, the _____ Bird Count
12. pouched fish eater
14. nectar-feeding pollinator
15. violet-blue patch on wing of a male mallard
17. a murder of _____
19. chipping, song, and vesper _____
20. rusty red-brown
21. from the "Almost vegetarian wildlife cook book" - "Just a smidgen of _____"
24. sage grouse strut their stuff at a _____

Beat the November Blahs

Are you fed up with November's dreary weather and short days and anxiously awaiting winter snows and skiing, snowshoeing and ice skating seasons? Or Christmas Bird Counts? Or worse yet, waiting for spring? Mark Oswood, president of North Central Washington Audubon Society created just the solution to pass some time during these long dark evenings. A bird-themed crossword puzzle! So put on your thinking caps and get out your bird book and give it a try. Answers will be posted in next month's Phlox and on the NCW Audubon Society website. Have fun! And let us know if you like puzzles, or not. And if you do like them, do you have ideas for other bird-related puzzles?



Naturalize your Backyard Bird Feeding

from the Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife's
Crossing Paths News Notes

As sure as leaves turn color and fall to the ground at this time of year, bird feeders are filled and placed in backyards across Washington. Window-side, arm-chair birdwatchers enjoy drawing both migrant and resident birds into close-up view in this traditional way.

It's a tradition to continue only if you keep those bird feeding stations immaculately clean; use high quality feed and feeder types that only birds can access; locate them to avoid problems with window collisions, predatory cats, and other wildlife like deer and bears; and recognize that feeding only provides temporary benefits to some birds.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) recommends simplifying and "naturalizing" the tradition of backyard bird feeding by landscaping with plants that provide berries, fruits, seeds, or nuts for your feathered friends.

Many of these natural bird feeding plants will add beautiful color to your fall homescape. And there's no time like fall, when plant root systems slow down and go dormant, to add trees, shrubs and even some

perennials. (*editor's note - in the colder regions of eastern Washington, it may be too late for fall planting; also some of the plants listed are not hardy in these cold winter areas*)

Some of the best plants that provide soft fall and early winter fruit include Pacific crabapple, red-osier dogwood, elderberry, gooseberry, huckleberry, western serviceberry, and madrone. Plants that best provide fruit that will last through winter and into early spring, when food is in short supply, include barberry, currant, firethorn, Douglas hawthorn, Rocky Mountain and western junipers, Sitka and Cascade mountain-ash, Oregon-grape, snowberry, sumac, and wild rose.

Three great seed and nut-producing trees for western Washington landscapes are hazelnut, vine maple, and birch. For larger areas, include oaks and conifers.

Wildlife-friendly seed and nut trees for other parts of the state include alder, Douglas fir, and other conifers.

More birds than not use seeds, and lots of shrubs and perennial flowering plants provide them. But the key to this naturalized bird feeding is to leave those "dead heads," or spent flowers with all those seeds. Leave that

kind of clean up for spring, and enjoy watching your bird visitors do some of the work this fall! Among the best seed-producing shrubs are mock-orange, ninebark and oceanspray. There are dozens of garden perennials that are good seed-providers, including aster, black-eyed susan, blanketflower, calendula, goldenrod, columbine, coneflower, coreopsis, cosmos, fall sedum, lupine, nasturtium, sunflower, sweet pea, and yarrow.

Check with your local nurseries for other appropriate plants that will not be weedy or invasive in your part of the state.

For more information about naturalizing your backyard bird feeding, see WDFW's Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary program at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/backyard/>.

A good source of detailed information about plant species is available in the "Landscaping for Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest" book by WDFW wildlife biologist Russell Link, available through WDFW's North Puget Sound regional office in Mill Creek (see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/book/>.)

East Cascades Audubon Society Announces Completion of Oregon State Birding Guide

Planning a trip to Oregon? Well, be sure and check out this new online resource before you go.

"Birding Oregon" is an online birding guide packed with information on more than 1000 birding locations throughout the state. Each location contains:

- DeLorme Map information
- geographic coordinates
- Google Map & Google Earth links
- detailed directions to each site
- description of the kind of birding to be experienced onsite
- additional links to resources such as

bird lists, site brochures, or alternative activities that are site-specific

To access the site, go to <http://birdingoregon.info> and click on the county of your choice. Don't miss the additional resource information below the site guide map. Here you will find information about local blogs, birding projects, birding news, Oregon birding organizations, and all kinds of birding information that will help improve your birding experience and birding skills.

In the future, the Chapter plans to integrate the site with birdnotes.net,

which promises to provide the user with access to additional utilities that are useful to many birders. Other items to be added include species finding guides and "best sites" listings that will help those who have limited time to bird a particular county. The web page is designed to be a living document that will continually change as Oregon birding changes. Input from the general birding public will be used to fine tune and add to the overall document. Suggestions for additions, deletions, or changes will be welcome.

Oil and Birds: Too Close for Comfort Louisiana's Coast Six Months into the BP Disaster

from the
National Audubon Society

October 13, 2010, Audubon released a new report on the status of birds, oil and the Louisiana Coast. Its findings – and its warning that the future of birds and the region's ecosystems remain uncertain because oil and other threats are still too close for comfort – are the result of recent field surveys conducted by a team of Audubon colleagues. They returned to Louisiana nearly six months after BP's Deepwater Horizon disaster began spewing oil into the Gulf to assess the health and overall condition of birds and coastal habitat, visiting some heavily oiled sites, and some that received little or no oiling.

The Audubon team, led by Tom Bancroft and including Reid Bishop, Melanie Driscoll, Paul Kemp, Bruce Reid, David Ringer and Karen Westphal, found plentiful birds that appeared both resilient and loyal to their normal habitats as the tragedy's six-month anniversary approached. But the team also found cause for concern, as expressed in David Yarnold's statement in the press release, excerpted below:

"People shouldn't be fooled into thinking that the danger to birds and the environment is over just because the oil stopped flowing," said Audubon President & CEO David Yarnold. "It's going to take years of monitoring just to understand and start dealing with the long-term impacts of the oil—and they're just part of a much bigger threat."

This report leaves no doubt that Audubon's ongoing work in the Gulf – both in direct response to the spill and to address long-term environmental threats facing the region – is more important than ever.

Learn about Native Plant Restoration with the Native Plant Society

by Pam Camp, co-chair
Wenatchee Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society

The Wenatchee Chapter of the WA Native Plant Society invites the public to their final fall meeting on Thursday, November 18, 2010, 7 PM, at the Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center. The program features farmer and restoration ecologist, Jerry Benson, and his talk is titled "Using and Producing Native Plant Seed for Restoration."

Up until the last few years, if you have ever wanted to use native grass or wildflowers in your garden, yard or in a restoration project, you would have had limited luck finding the local native seed. Sources of Eastern Washington native seed are now coming available largely due to the work Jerry and others have done in the last few years to understand how to grow and harvest these native species as a crop. Each species has its own particular growing and harvesting requirements to discover. But that is only half the story. Getting native seed reestablished in restoration areas also presents new challenges. Jerry

will share challenges and techniques on restoring landscapes for endangered sage-grouse and pygmy rabbit. He will also talk about the program to re-establish native plant diversity on 62,000 acres of land in northern Douglas and Kittitas counties.

Jerry Benson grew up with a farm background, is trained as a botanist and worked as a restoration ecologist for 30 years for the WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife. He now owns Benson Farms in Moses Lake, WA and operates one of the largest and most successful farms for production of native grass and wildflower seed in the northwest.

The Washington Native Plant Society (WNPS) is a forum for individuals who share a common interest in Washington's unique and diverse plant life. For more than 30 years WNPS has been a great source for native plant information and action. Visit the Wenatchee Chapter website at www.wnps.org/chapter_info/chapter_programs.html#wenatchee.

Gray Crowned-crane



Last month I had a chance to visit Skagit County for a little rest and relaxation featuring kayaking and birding. The Snow Geese were already present at the Hayden Reserve on Fir Island. Friends I was birding with said that according to a Tweeters report, an African Gray Crowned-crane was also frequenting the area. This is a bird that does not migrate and it is assumed that it escaped, either from a zoo or an exotic bird collector. We were lucky enough to see it in its new fenced and covered quarters where the obviously human-raised bird was safe from predators. For me it was a lucky opportunity, being in the right place at the right time to see a stunning and exotic bird.

photo by Teri J Pieper

November Wild Phlox

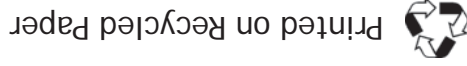
North Central Washington Audubon Society
 Post Office Box 2934
 Wenatchee, WA 98807

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

November 13	Project Feeder Watch begins	Observe and report birds. See page 4 for details
November 18	Native Plant Restoration	With the Native Plant Society. See page 7 for details
November 19	Robert Glennon, water crisis expert speaks in Cashmere	Washington Water Project of Trout Unlimited. RSVP: jwasberg@TU.org, 509-881-5464
December 7	Emperor Penguins Elite Divers of the Bird World	NCWAS's own Torre Stockard and the Methow Conservancy along with NCWAS. See page 1 for details
December 12	Columbia River Waterfowl Field Trip	Dan Stephens will lead this all day trip. See our website or next month's Phlox for details
December 14	Bridgeport Christmas Bird Count	Check with Meredith for the details. merdave@hometn.wnet
December 30	Chelan Christmas Bird Count	See next month's Phlox for details
January 2	Wenatchee's 49th annual Christmas Bird Count	Check with Dan Stephens for details DStephens@wvc.edu
February 5	Waterville Plateau Field Trip	More fun with Dan Stephens. See the December Wild Phlox for details



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