



Free Birding Workshop in Wenatchee!

Recent technology and apps like iBird and Audubon Birds for iPod allow birders to bring volumes of knowledge into the field in a lightweight, portable manner. It's great for a beginning birder to listen to a Golden-crowned Sparrow's call while looking at their range and photographs. However, from experience I can say that even the latest handheld technology cannot compensate for a lack of knowledge of the biology, likely habitat, and field marks of our common birds. It's one thing to see a pretty Golden-crowned Sparrow on your screen; it's quite another to be able to identify it and link it to its family before it flies off to another serviceberry bush. Knowing these basics allows birders to develop an eye and ear for common birds in our area and develop the lifelong bug for birding.

Biologist and educator Susan Ballinger has a passion to help us would-be expert birders do just that. "I enjoy introducing newcomers to the adventures of birding and helping them to develop a lifetime of new learning," Ballinger said. She will bring her expertise and fun, hands-on approach to Wenatchee, November 4th, with a workshop sponsored by the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust. The session will focus on the basics we all need to have fun in the field and

Learn About Birds
Thursday, November 4 - Wenatchee Valley
Museum and Cultural Center, 6:00 - 8:00 pm.
Saturday, November 6 - field trip, details
announced on November 4.
RSVP to 667-9708 or bridget@cdlandtrust.org



Birding on a Chelan-Douglas Land Trust field trip
Photo provided by CDLT.

identify birds. By looking at photos, listening to audio, and engaging in hands-on activities, participants will learn how to identify field marks and develop the skills to get out, have fun, and see the many species in our area. The class will also cover how to choose good binoculars and use them in the field. Participants are encouraged to bring their own field guides, binoculars, and audio tools to Thursday night's program.

The workshop continues on Saturday, the 6th when participants take a field trip to the Horan Natural

Volume 44 #2 October 2010

by Bridget Egan
Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

Area in Wenatchee to look for waterfowl and other birds on the Columbia and Wenatchee Rivers. Accompanied by NCW Audubon members, participants can test their skills and newly found knowledge. This is a great opportunity to polish your skills, have fun in the field, and get ready for Christmas Bird Counts! The workshop is free and open to the public. Discounted memberships to the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust will be available at the workshop. Please RSVP to 667-9708 or bridget@cdlandtrust.org

Learn to recognize field marks that will help you learn the difference between Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks. This is a Rough-legged Hawk from the WSU Raptor Club at the Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival. photo by Teri J Pieper



Editor's Note

First off, from the editor, my apologies for such a late newsletter. Working on the Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival got in the way of doing this on time and now here it is, already October as I finish this up and you are wondering, what happened to the Wild Phlox? And I'll be frank with you; November is going to be late and probably December too. It's just hard to get good volunteer help these days (if this was an email, that would be followed by a smiley emoticon, but this is a newsletter so I will refrain). Since we don't have a January issue, I intend to catch up with the February Wild Phlox.

The festival was a BIG success. All involved agreed that our committee and volunteers did a great job pulling off a first-time-ever event with just a little over three months of planning. If you see one of the folks involved, do be sure to say "Congratulations".

In the area of bird news – a visiting friend, who happens to be an expert birder, pointed out to us that the few remaining hummingbirds that are still using our feeders are Anna's Hummingbirds! It's another species for our yard list. At this time of year, I don't look closely at the hummers because their coloring is usually dull and I find they are difficult to identify. Now we are faced with the decision of when to remove the feeders. One person suggested that if we keep them up too long, and then remove them when it's already cold, the birds will not find any food as they begin a delayed migration. Someone else has told us that the birds will go when it's their time. In our climate we can't keep feeders out all winter since they will freeze. It is a dilemma. I have decided since the weather is unusually warm and no freezing cold spells are in the immediate forecast I will continue to feed them for a little longer, at least.

And apologies for using the wrong caption under the cover page photo last month. The bird is a Sharp-shinned Hawk, not a Merlin.



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."

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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.

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Learn About Penguins, in December, in Twisp

by Torre Stockard

North Central Washington Audubon Society and the Methow Conservancy are teaming up in December to present a program on Emperor Penguins. Torre Stockard will give a presentation about the amazing diving abilities of these largest and most charismatic of all diving birds, as

well as a glimpse into what it's like to carry out research in Antarctica. The presentation, "Emperor Penguins: Elite Divers of the Bird World", will happen the evening of Tuesday December 7, in Twisp, WA. Details to follow in the November issue of The Wild Phlox.

Fall "To Do" List From Your Backyard Wildlife Family

From the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Crossing Paths Newsletter

Your family may be making those fall outdoor chore lists, as daylight hours shrink, temperatures drop, and the urge grows to "batten down the hatches" in the yard and garden.

Here's another "to do" list from your local wildlife "family" that you may find easier to check off:

- Leave some "dead heads" on your flowering plants to provide seeds for some of us birds and other animals
- If you must rake leaves off grass lawns, just pile them under some shrubs, bushes or other nooks and crannies to provide homes for those insects that we birds love to eat; leaves make great mulch to help your plants,

anyway!

- Keep that dead or dying tree right where it is (unless, of course, it's truly a hazard to you), so we can feast on the insects in the rotting wood or make winter roosts or dens in its cavities
- Give yourself and your mower a rest for at least a portion of your lawn so we've got a patch of taller grass to hide and forage in
- Save just a little of that dead bramble thicket for us - it makes great winter cover and we don't need much! Fall is a good time to plant shrubs, so replace invasive, exotic Himalayan and cutleaf blackberries with native plants of higher wildlife value like

- blackcap (native black raspberry) or red raspberry; native currants or gooseberries found in your area; or native roses such as Nootka or baldhip.
- Pile up any brush or rocks you clear around your place to give us another option for nests and dens
- Take it easy on yourself and let go of the "perfect" garden image; we wild animals like less tidy, "fuzzy" places because there's usually more food and shelter there
- Get yourself a comfortable chair, sit back, and congratulate yourself on having made a home for wildlife and a haven of relaxation for yourself!

Birds in Washington

From the Tweeters Listserv
September 2, 2010

Dennis Paulson, Museum Director Emeritus, Slater Museum of Natural History at the University of Puget Sound, has just revised the Birds of Washington list on the Slater Museum website, based on the latest AOU Check-list supplement. There is a downloadable pdf associated with it. On Tweeters he said "I jumped the gun and included the recently observed Lesser Sand-Plover on it, assuming that record would be approved by the Washington Bird Records

Committee with ease." If you follow the Tweeters listserv, you may recall that this rare bird was found at Ocean Shores recently and scores of birders disregarded their carbon footprints in order to see it and photograph it for their birding lists.

The newly updated list maybe be found online at www.pugetsound.edu/academics/academic-resources/slater-museum/biodiversity-resources/birds/birds-of-washington/

Sit! And Watch Birds

From the Bird Watcher's Digest

The Big Sit! is an annual, international, noncompetitive birding event hosted by Bird Watcher's Digest and founded by the New Haven (CT) Bird Club. Every team that observes this year's "Golden Bird" has a chance to win \$500. We hope bird watchers from around the globe will unite on this special day, Sunday October 10, by participating in this event (it's free!). The Big Sit! is sponsored by Swarovski Optik.

The Big Sit! is like a Big Day, or a bird-a-thon in that the object is to tally as many bird species as can be seen or heard within 24 hours. The difference lies in the area limitation from which you can observe. **THIS FREE EVENT** is **OPEN** to every person and club in any country!

The simplicity of the concept makes The Big Sit! so appealing. Find a good spot for bird watching - preferably one

with good views of a variety of habitats and lots of birds. Next you create a real or imaginary circle 17 feet in diameter and sit inside the circle for 24 hours, counting all the bird species you see or hear. That's it. Find a spot, sit in it, have fun.

For more information see: www.birdwatchersdigest.com/bwdsite/connect/bigsit/about.php

Don't Give a Hoot!

Are We Loving Some Birds to Death?

Birders are generally conservation-minded people. They truly care about the animals they are interested in seeing and hearing. However, in their quest to observe as many species as possible some birders are using tools that can be harmful to the birds they are trying to find. In particular, the use of tapes/MP3s and callers to locate birds can result in unintended negative consequences to the species attracted through the use of these tools. In **some** cases, the modest use of playback calling is an acceptable way of locating a bird. At other times it is very risky and exposes a bird to harm by calling it out from a hiding place or causing other problematic changes in behavior. Biologists and birders alike have an ethical and biological responsibility to know when not to use playback to find birds.

A 2006 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service survey of wildlife-associated recreation activities estimated there were nearly 48 million birders 16 years of age and older in the U.S. With this many birders it becomes more important than ever to pursue this activity ethically and with bird conservation in mind. The United Kingdom's Birdwatcher's Code states it eloquently: *avoid disturbing birds and their habitats – the birds' interests should always come first.* The recent explosion in affordable technology has made it easier to overlook the birds' interests. Internet posting of sightings, publication of localized birding guides, and advances in digital music players and compact speaker technology enable birders to follow detailed directions to known locations of rare birds and draw them out. Some birders' relentless pursuit of the northern spotted owl is one such example of the harm that may come from the use of modern technology.

The northern spotted owl was listed under the Endangered Species Act as

Many people contributed to this article including:

Janet Millard, Don Youkey, Kent Woodruff, Bill Gaines — USDA Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest
Stan Sovern — Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University
Eric D. Forsman — USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station
Dan Stephens — Wenatchee Valley College, North Central Washington Audubon, board member - Washington Ornithological Society
Jeff Parsons — Vice President, North Central Washington Audubon
Ken Bevis — Habitat Biologist, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Threatened in 1990. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the spotted owl primarily due to threats stemming from the loss of suitable habitat through timber harvest, but other factors included additional habitat loss from wildfire and competition from other species, especially the barred owl. Despite its listing and the additional protections it has been

Exposing a spotted owl to predatory attack is the most serious consequence posed by unethical birding. Calling for spotted owls without a permit is not only unethical, it is also illegal

afforded, the northern spotted owl continues to display a rangewide population decline. Now that the range of the barred owl completely overlaps that of the northern spotted owl, the degree of competition for food, habitat, and space has never been greater. Disturbances caused by human presence and noise can add to the stress caused by habitat removal and competition.

There is a growing consensus among owl biologists that barred owls are pushing spotted owls out of their territories and may also be causing a reduction in spotted owl vocalization. Birders who use playback to incite spotted owls to call may be inadvertently putting spotted owls at risk by causing them to vocalize when they would normally be trying to stay

“under the radar”. Human presence near nest sites also causes spotted owls to vocalize more frequently. Barred owls (as well as goshawks, red-tailed hawks, and great horned owls) have been observed attacking spotted owls on a number of occasions. Being near an active nest site or using playback to incite spotted owls to call is likely to increase the odds that spotted owls will be killed or driven from their territories. While the risk of an attack on a spotted owl may be low, it is not zero, and it is literally a matter of life and death.

Exposing a spotted owl to predatory attack is the most serious consequence posed by unethical birding, but other negative effects can occur:

- An owl that spends time looking for the perceived owl (playback) in its territory does not spend that time foraging for itself and for its young. The energetic cost of needlessly defending a territory may be a higher price than the owl or its chicks can pay.
- Playing calls within a territory may make an owl think the territory is already occupied, and the owl may needlessly move on to seek a vacant territory. Vacant territories are increasingly hard to find in a landscape overrun by barred owls.
- Unattended chicks in the nest are potential prey not only to the raptors listed above, but to corvids as well.

(Continued on next page)

(Don't Give a Hoot, continued from previous page)

All of these impacts added together (and repeated if multiple uninformed birders visit the same site during the year) may lead to nesting failure, site abandonment, or death of spotted owls. *A Birder's Guide to Washington*, published in 2003, included detailed directions to many known spotted owl sites. At least two of these nest sites near Cle Elum, WA have become vacant or only sporadically occupied by single owls since this book was published – possibly due to the dramatic increase in birder visits.

Calling for spotted owls without a permit is not only unethical, it is also **illegal**: it is a violation of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and can be considered “take” which can lead to a fine of up to \$25,000 and 6 months in jail. Causing a spotted owl to leave shelter and have it fixated on you while you observe and possibly spotlight it, *significantly disrupts its normal behavior*; a form of “take” through “harassment.”

All birders should be familiar with the American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics, which states up front: 1(b) *To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger... 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.* Part of the joy of birding should be the development

of your fieldcraft while giving fair chase to your quarry, not relying on a crutch like playback to lure birds into easy view. Birding should be as much about the methods used as it is about the numbers, and your county or life list is all the more impressive when acquired skillfully and ethically.

Locations of ESA listed species should never be posted on web sites such as eBird, Tweetsters, or similar e-bulletin boards. Principled birders have no way of knowing who will read their posts, and what methods the next person may use to attempt to locate the bird. The spotted owl is but one example of why using call playback is not an ethically or environmentally responsible means of attracting sensitive species for viewing. **As a birder, your need to tick another county or life bird is never more important than a bird's life.** No biologist wants to see a species go extinct on their watch. Please help contribute to the spotted owls' recovery rather than contributing to their demise by allowing them to find and defend territories and raise their young undisturbed.

American Birding Association (United States), Principles of Birding Ethics:

www.aba.org/about/ethics.html

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (United Kingdom), Birdwatcher's Code:

www.rspb.org.uk/advice/watchingbirds/code/index.aspx

Spotted Owl
photo by Art Barnes, used with permission



A Great Day for a Festival

People are Talking About it

The Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival

After an early start of sign ups, field trip carpools and last minute shuttle shuffling, the wonderful Torre Stockard handed me a cup of coffee. It was then that I sighed, stopped, and finally really looked around. Three kids were hammering away at bird boxes while Ken Bevis happily supervised; Kim Bondi was painting owls and hawks on little faces at the Basecamp Booth; the WSU raptor club was lounging on the grass with a barn owl while a group of five got close enough to see the skin under its feathers. I knew that a few thousand feet above, people were getting up close and personal with a hawk—maybe the first time they had the opportunity. The sun was shining, people were laughing, and I realized that I was smiling an idiot’s smile. At that moment, only an hour or so in, the Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival was already a success.

Bridget Egan, committee chair



Irma Keeney releases a raptor at Chelan Ridge photo by Alexis Monetta

I think the Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival demonstrated the power of partnerships. I don’t think any one agency or group could have pulled off such a successful first time event by themselves. The energy and skills that each partner brought to the partnership was what made it such a huge success. It was also rewarding to see folks who came all the way from Seattle solely for the purpose of attending the festival. Of course, having a 92 year old resident from Manson joining us for a walk out Chelan Ridge and then to see her joy at being able to release a banded hawk was also inspiring.

Mike Liu, District Ranger, Methow Valley Ranger District
Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest



Nancy Warner shows off her new nest box. photo by Ken Bevis

Rachel Scown tries some new binos at the Wild Birds Unlimited Booth. photo by Teri J Pieper



The raptor club from WSU was awesome. They really knew their stuff and were so good about involving people with the hawks and owl. And they were tireless. They engaged all ages - all day. They deserve major kudos

Susannah Young, artist



Widget, the Barn Owl from the WSU Raptor Club, gets his photo made by Torre Stockard photo by Teri J Pieper



Widget photo by Torre Stockard

I’ve been a semi-serious birder all my adult life, but have avoided raptors because they’re so hard to identify. The excellent talk at Chelan Ridge clarified the differences in prey species, environment, and behaviors of three different types of raptors. Our discussion of the flap-and-fold flight of Sharp-shinned Hawks, which allows them to maneuver through forests in pursuit of songbirds, was punctuated by a Sharpie doing exactly that through the trees around us! Super!

Carole McMillan, artist

Many Thanks

by Teri J Pieper

Where to start thanking everyone that helped make the Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival a big success? The Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest employees who drove and co-piloted the vans and also helped guide the hikes at Chelan Ridge – Thanks so much for giving up part of your weekend! And thanks to the Forest Service for the vehicles too. The City of Pateros was very gracious and welcoming letting us use their lovely Memorial Park and also the City Council meeting room. Jessi May provided the beautiful artwork that graced our T Shirt and poster. The North Cascades Basecamp gave the WSU Raptor Club a night's

lodging for them and their birds and treated them to a big breakfast Sunday morning. The Washington State University Raptor Club got up early Saturday morning in Pullman and brought their birds to our festival to the delight of everyone. Our vendors and booths – Wild Birds Unlimited, Meredith Spencer's honey, Susan Fishburn and her Bird Nerd merchandise, Winthrop Gallery artists – Gloria Spiwak, Carole McMillan and Susannah Young, Tommy Days and Shannon O'Brien – Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest and let's not forget Ken Bevis who along with Methow Valley Lumber, Don McIvor and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, provided us with nest box materials so that everyone

who wanted to could build a nest box! Thanks to Pateros' own Sweet River Bakery for providing coffee to our volunteers! And then there were the tireless (tired?) North Central Washington Audubon Society volunteers and our steering committee – Bridget Egan (chair), Teri Pieper, Kent Woodruff (Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest), Nikki Price (HawkWatch International), Mark Oswood and Torre Stockard. Three AmeriCorps volunteers helped at Chelan Ridge. Other volunteers in Pateros were David St. George, Dan Stephens and Mike Irwin all leading field trips; Rachel and Arnie Scown, Susan Snover, and Nancy Warner. Thanks to everyone who helped and if I've missed your name, I apologize.



Torre Stockard helps a young person build a nest box.
photo by Ken Bevis

Our Chelan Rige hike guides, Chris and Gabe, were friendly and they explained the counting and the capture activities plus pointing out incoming raptors. I found the recovering burn area fascinating, with its charcoaled snags, high altitude shrub-steppe and forbs. At the time we visited, there was a surprising number of visible songbirds, often perching on the burned snags or resting on the rock outcroppings. Our group saw at least five more raptors as we walked along. Following a presentation by a young volunteer, we also had the opportunity watch the release of a Sharp-shinned hawk by one of the visitors.

Jane Grant

Congratulations on a fine 1st Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival!

Anonymous comment

What is the University of Washington Herbarium and Why is it Important?

by Susan Ballinger
Wenatchee Native Plant Society

The Wenatchee Native Plant Society would like to invite its membership and the public to a talk by Dr. David Giblin, Plant Collections Manager for the Burke Museum. The program will be held Thursday, October 21, 7:00 pm, at the Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center.

An herbarium is a collection of pressed and dried plant specimens, and a description of when, where, and by whom they were collected, arranged in a systematic manner, and serving as a permanent physical record of the occurrence of an individual plant at a specific place and time. Herbarium collections include fungi, lichens, algae, moss, and ferns as well as flowering plants. Herbariums are essential for the study and verification of plant classification, the study of geographic distributions, and the standardizing of nomenclature. Like botanical gardens and arboretums, herbaria are the "dictionaries" of the plant kingdom,

the reference specimens essential to the proper naming of unknown plants.

Dr. Giblin's ongoing projects in the Herbarium include overseeing the development of web-based applications to share collections data. In addition to overseeing the plant collections, Dr. Giblin conducts field work and research in the San Juan Islands, North Cascades, and Mount Rainier, and studies aquatic plants in the Northwest. Dr. Giblin received his M.S. from the University of Washington's College of Forest Resources, and earned his Ph.D. at the University of Missouri-Columbia's Department of Biology studying pollination biology. He is a much sought-after speaker who shares his passions for plants in an engaging manner.

The talk is free and refreshments will be served. For more information contact Pam Camp, Chapter Co-Chair at 663-5491.

October Wild Phlox

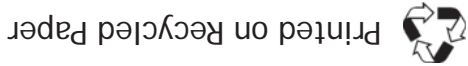
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North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

October 22	Chelan Douglas Land Trust Annual Dinner	Celebrate! See www.cdlandtrust.org for details
October 22	Methow Bird Walk	Meet at MVSTA lot, 8:30 am. Call 997-0995 for details
October 23	Make a Difference Day	See www.cdlandtrust.org for details
November 2	How Rivers Work	The Methow Conservancy First Tuesday Program. www.methowconservancy.org/
November 4 & 6	Learn to Bird!	CDLT and NCW Audubon. See page 1 for details
December 7	Emperor Penguins	NCW Audubon and the Methow Conservancy. See page 3 for details
December 14th through January 5th	Christmas Bird Counts	Watch the Washington Ornithological Society website for dates and locations in Washington. www.wos.org/WACBCs.htm Or if you are traveling out of state, check with local Audubon Societies.



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