



Volume 48 #6 March 2015

## Shrub-Steppe Songbird Training

by Christy Norman, NAS  
and Mark Oswood, NCWAS

Have fun while contributing to avian science. Audubon Washington and seven eastern Washington chapters, in collaboration with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), are developing a new community science conservation program on the Columbia Plateau: a long-term shrub-steppe avian census. Exploring sites you can't normally visit, we are targeting three sage obligate species: Sagebrush Sparrow, Sage Thrasher, and Brewer's Sparrow, which will function as "umbrella" species for other birds with similar habitat associations.

The breeding songbird presence data we collect will be housed in eBird, used to validate current distribution models, and to update the WDFW Priority Habitat Species database. Our on-the-ground efforts to improve our understanding of the distribution of these songbirds will help us track and respond to climate change in the shrub-steppe avian community.

How do you get involved? Join volunteers from North Central Washington, Kittitas, and Yakima Valley Audubon for a jam-packed day of learning, fun and camaraderie!



Brewer's Sparrow  
photo by Denny Granstrand,  
Yakima Valley Audubon Society

The one-day training consists of both classroom and field instruction.

- Songbird identification class by Dan Stephens, NCWAS
- Free Larkwire software to practice learning birdsongs
- Field training at Moses Coulee with WDFW scientist Matt Vander Haegen to practice our protocol and record observations
- Learn to navigate to the survey sites with GPS units with Yakima Valley Audubon's Michelle Gilbert and Teresa Lorenz
- Practice entering your field data into eBird

- Form teams to sign up for survey sites and dates. Volunteers will choose one morning per month to perform a field survey in April, May and June.

The North Central Washington Audubon training will be held March 21, 9:30 am-3:30 pm at Wenatchee Valley College, 1300 Fifth Street, Wenatchee, Wenatchi Hall Rm 2217.

Additional workshops held in Richland, March 7 and Spokane, April 4.

RSVP to [cnorman@audubon.org](mailto:cnorman@audubon.org) or call 360-789-7282

"One of the best parts of my spring birding! I can tell you that because of this project, I now have a much improved ear for shrub-steppe sparrows." said Cynthia Easterson, PSBO

Come look and listen with us! For more information, schedules, and RSVP: Christi Norman, Audubon Washington, [cnorman@audubon.org](mailto:cnorman@audubon.org) or 360-789-7282. NCWAS contact (but Christi best contact by far): Mark Oswood [moswood@nwi.net](mailto:moswood@nwi.net) 662-9087 Watch for Sagebrush Songbird Survey updates at [wa.audubon.org](http://wa.audubon.org).

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."

## March and April Birding Buddies Walks

Join Meredith Spencer on March 28 for a Birding Buddies bird walk on Washburn Island. This 250 acre parcel is the largest wetland system in the Wells Wildlife Area. Hawks, owls, waterfowl, sandhill cranes, and many songbirds have been found there. This field trip is limited to twelve participants. Please call Jenny at 886-4518 to register. A Discover Pass is required. Please note - there are no restroom facilities on the island. However, there are facilities in Bridgeport or Brewster, both located about five miles away.

Come explore the birdlife at Beebe Springs Natural Area on a trip led by Virginia Palumbo on April 18. This area hosts an increasingly diverse array of birds as the area matures after renovation a decade ago. A new beaver pond is bringing in Virginia Rail and Wilson's Snipe. A pair of resident Golden Eagles lives nearby and are frequently seen. An American Dipper makes occasional appearances, along with a wealth of ducks, shorebirds, passerines and other raptors. This guided bird walk is limited to the first ten NCWAS members to register. Please RSVP to Virginia Palumbo at 682-5969 or palumbov@nwi.net to reserve a spot on this trip.

### North Central Washington Audubon Society

Officers, Chairs, Board Members

President - OPEN

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

Past President | Mark Oswood | 662-9087 | moswood@nwi.net

Treasurer | Larry Tobiska | ltobiska@nwi.net

Secretary | Penny Tobiska | ptobiska@nwi.net

Conservation - OPEN

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

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

Field Trips | Jenny Graevell - 679-3531 | avijenee@yahoo.com

Mark Johnston | 548-5766 | s697striata@frontier.com

Membership | Heather Findlay | 429-8167 | heather@eaglesun.net

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

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

Communications | Treesa Hertzell | webmaster@ncwaudubon.org

Festival Coordinator | Richard Scranton | rscan4350@yahoo.com

At Large: Virginia Palumbo | 682-5969 | palumbov@nwi.net

Ruth Daugherty | 779-4380 | ruthdaugherty@rocketmail.com

Dan Stephens | dstephens@wvc.edu

Debbie Sutherland | shadowfax4jctm@gmail.com

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

Email - [info@ncwaudubon.org](mailto:info@ncwaudubon.org)

Mailing address - PO Box 2934 Wenatchee, WA 98807

North Central Washington Audubon Society is on Facebook too

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

## North Central Washington Audubon Society Wild Phlox Subscription Form

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

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

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

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

Please do NOT acknowledge my donation in the Wild Phlox

Memorial in the name of \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Spring. Who doesn't love Spring? Anyone? I love all the seasons but maybe Spring is my favorite. Spring seems more like the start of a new year than does January 1. It's a time of renewal, new growth, longer days and the return of the songbirds. Instead of waiting til March, it seems like Spring is arriving in NCW in February this year. Some of our members report hardly having any winter weather at all. Here, in the Methow Valley, the snow is fast receding and spring birds are arriving - two weeks early. We are already enjoying the sweet notes of the Say's Phoebes and soft chirps of Western Bluebirds. There are plenty of tiny insects for them to eat. I expect swallows any day now and hope that the hummingbirds don't arrive til the end of March when I will be here to fill their feeders.

Another spring visitor has been a Northern Pygmy-owl. This fierce little bird has been hunting voles in our yard. With the snow melting, we can see lots of signs that the varmints have been busy over the course of the winter. I hope the owl sticks around long enough to put a real dent in the population!

We are especially looking forward to Spring and new growth following last summer's fires. While we know the trees won't be coming back to life, we are expecting hillsides of flowers and healthy bunchgrasses. Some of the shrubs like serviceberry, currant, chokecherry and bitterbrush will be soon sending up new sprouts. Now, if I can only find a way to prevent the deer from eating them all back down to the ground, I will be happy. One thing we are considering is piling the burned pine branches around the new shrub growth. One problem with that for us in particular, is that we have a young dog that thinks any sticks we pick up are for her! We will have to keep her entertained while we pile our sticks. If you have any ideas for repelling deer from new growth, do share them. Large scale fencing is not a practical alternative for us.

The avian flu outbreak in Okanogan County, western Washington and BC is a serious issue for all of us. There are many questions left unanswered at this point. One friend of mine who has chickens and also a couple of dogs wonders if she ought to keep her dogs from swimming in water where there might be wild waterfowl. Could the dogs carry the virus home and could her chickens then become infected if they walked on the same ground where the dogs walked?

This issue of the Phlox is full of opportunities to learn about birds, wildflowers, insects and other natural history topics. Hopefully there is a class or presentation close to your neighborhood to help prepare you to enjoy the wonders of the natural world around you.



Northern Pygmy-owl  
photo by Teri J Pieper

---

## NCW Recent Bird Sightings

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

In mid-January birders from Tahoma Audubon found a Long-tailed Duck on the Columbia at Confluence State Park. On that trip they also saw Snowy, Long-eared and Northern Pygmy Owls along with a variety of other winter specialties including a Gyrfalcon. The female Acorn Woodpecker is still being seen in Cashmere. The Sleeping Lady retreat center in Leavenworth continues to host White-headed Woodpeckers. Not an avian species but still of interest to most natural history buffs – a wolf was seen and photographed by a group of birders near Chesaw. Snowy Owls and Snow Buntings have attracted a lot of attention on the Waterville Plateau over the course of the winter. A Short-eared Owl was also seen at least once. A Red-necked Grebe has been spending the winter just upstream from Chief Jo Dam in the 'debris basin' area. A Harris' Sparrow was reported on Washburn Island – part of the Wells Wildlife Area. Along the Cameron Lake Road, east of the Okanogan River, there have been Snow Buntings and American Tree Sparrows. The first reported Say's Phoebe was seen at Beebe Springs on February 2. Western Bluebirds showed up at our house on Friday the 13th. Western Meadowlarks were singing near Pearrygin State Park on the 15th. Greater Sage-grouse are displaying on the Leahy lek near Bridgeport. One lone juvenile Trumpeter Swan has spent the winter in the Methow. It was here for the CBC and often seen just outside of Twisp on a beaver pond. Recently it was seen on Chewuch River about 1 ½ miles above Winthrop. On February 18 I saw and heard singing Sagebrush Sparrows in Moses Coulee near highway 2.

# Avian Influenza in Okanogan County

by Lisa Lindsay, LVT  
Okanogan Wildlife League

The presence of a highly pathogenic strain of avian influenza has been confirmed in poultry in two locations in Okanogan County. Under Washington State codes, “poultry” means chickens, turkeys, ratites, waterfowl, pigeons, doves and other domestic fowl. The phrase, “poultry” also means game birds such as pheasants, partridge, chukars, quail, and grouse that are raised in confinement. Poultry does not mean free ranging birds defined as wildlife in Title 77 RCW.

The H5N2 strain of the virus was found in pheasants in Riverside in late January and in domestic chickens in Oroville in early February. These positive tests led to the euthanasia of 3000 birds in Riverside and 100 in Oroville. A six-mile quarantine zone has been set up around each site where no eggs, meat or poultry can be moved. State and Federal officials canvassed the areas, asking residents to volunteer to test their flocks. A two and one-half mile quarantine zone was established in which residents with fowl had to test their flocks. A Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) veterinarian commented the sooner they can establish the extent or containment of the outbreak, the sooner they can lift the quarantine.

The influenza outbreak and quarantine has also impacted Okanogan Wildlife League (OWL), a wildlife rehabilitation facility located one and one-half miles north of the Oroville site, and in the quarantine zone. OWL is the only wildlife rehabilitation facility in Okanogan County. OWL is protecting the birds already on site by not accepting any new birds until the situation is resolved. The founder of OWL also owns domestic poultry and has had her flocks tested. Three of OWL’s educational raptors are housed on site and proper biosecurity measures have been implemented to protect these birds. Officials are currently not testing raptors in Okanogan County. In order to prevent additional spread of the virus, members of the public are advised to refrain from picking up or transporting any sick or injured birds at this time.

The three highly pathogenic avian influenza viruses currently circulating in wild birds in Washington are H5N2, H5N8, and H5N1. It is important to note that this strain of H5N1 is NOT the same H5N1 strain that was circulating in Asia several years ago. The new H5N1 virus is not expected to be a human-health risk, but rather to have the same or a lower risk than H5N8. Detailed analysis of the virus is underway in cooperation with CDC.

The virus is spread through the feces and respiratory secretions of waterfowl, which is the natural host. These birds do not usually become sick or exhibit symptoms when infected. The incubation period is believed to be relatively short, about one to two days. Avian influenza was first confirmed in a falconry bird in December 2014 that had been fed wild waterfowl. The captive falconry birds that succumbed to the disease were dead within one to two days of eating wild duck meat. Two others

became sick after ingestion of meat and died two days later. The virus is generally shed for a week, but may be shed for 21 days.

All viruses survive relatively well in cold weather. Viability depends on several factors and under appropriate conditions viruses can survive several weeks. They can survive for decades when conditions permit.

Clinical signs in wild birds may include: bluish skin or legs, nasal and eye discharge, blood-tinged nasal or eye discharge, tilting head, lack of coordination, depressed or ruffled feathers, and sudden death.

In domestic flocks, clinical signs include: sudden increase in deaths; sneezing, gasping for air, coughing and nasal discharge; watery and green diarrhea; lack of energy and poor appetite; drop in egg production or soft- or thin-shelled misshapen eggs; swelling around the eyes, neck, and head; purple discoloration of the wattles, combs, and legs.

Proper biosecurity measures include: limiting, monitoring, and recording movement of people, vehicles, or animals on or off your property; keep your flock away from wild or migratory birds, especially waterfowl; isolate ill animals and contact your veterinarian and WSDA. If contact with sick birds is necessary, wear protective clothing (disposable gloves, mask, coveralls, and boots); wash and disinfect items going on and off your farm, such as footwear, vehicles and equipment. A 10% chlorine bleach solution is an adequate disinfectant.

All bird owners, whether commercial producers or backyard enthusiasts, need to continue practicing good biosecurity measures, prevent contact between their birds and wild birds, and report sick birds or unusual bird deaths to State and/or Federal officials, either through your state veterinarian or through USDA’s toll-free number at 866-536-7593. Additional information on biosecurity for backyard flocks can be found at [healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov](http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov). If you see sickness in birds, please contact WSDA Avian Health Program at 800-606-3056. If you are concerned because you or your family member becomes sick, please contact Washington State Department of Health at 800-525-0127.

*Lisa is a licensed veterinary technician, local wildlife rehabilitator and the founder of OWL. For more information you may reach her at [okwild@hotmail.com](mailto:okwild@hotmail.com) or 560-3828.*

*Information compiled from:*

1. “Notice to Wildlife Rehabilitators” letter. WDFW. January 30, 2015
2. “Update on Avian Influenza Findings in the Pacific Flyway”, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service February 13, 2015
3. “Biosecurity for Poultry - Keeping Your Poultry Healthy” USDA APHIS, February 13, 2015.
4. “Protecting you and your farm from Avian Influenza”. WSDA Avian Health Program, February 13, 2015.

# NCWAS Birding By Ear Classes

by Mark Johnston, Leavenworth

Among the many tools in a birder's kit, good birding by ear skills may be the one that most enhances a day in the field. That said, getting a handle on it takes time, dedication, and a real desire to learn. It's not something that can be learned by taking one or two indoor classes and going on a field trip. Good birding by ear skills are developed over a period of years and with much time spent in the field.

With this in mind and spring near, NCWAS will be offering a series of birding by ear field classes to help members who want to improve their skills make the most of the approaching season. Given the nature of the learning process mentioned above, the series will be specifically designed to offer members multiple opportunities to improve skills in a field setting.

Our full schedule is not yet set but as a heads up, we're currently looking at offering classes on May 24, June 6 and 20, and July 4 and 18 at a minimum. Other dates will likely be added and all will be announced well ahead of time in The Wild Phlox, on our website and also our Facebook page.

Birding can be great any time of year, but the breeding season and its associated bird song make spring really special. And because of the relative shortness of this "singing season", those who want to improve their birding by ear skills need to make the most of it. We'll provide more details soon and look forward to seeing you in the field.

---

## Fodder from the Feeder

by Karen Mulcahy, Winthrop

*fod-der (foder) n. new material, as for artistic creation.*

Winter mornings are my favorite time to watch the feeders. One has to get the fire going, make the coffee, think about breakfast, and watch who will go for the suet or seeds first. Frequently, it's the Clark's Nutcracker, one of the most entertaining visitors at my feeders this winter.

Generally, they display pretty typical bird behavior. They will sit in the branches above me as I'm refilling the suet feeder, and call to their buddies when I am finished so the feast can begin. One day, I noticed a Clark's swoop over to the woodpile and re-emerge mere seconds later with a lovely cone in its beak. It flew up to a nearby tree, and started prying the seeds out of the cone, holding it between its feet

or in a branch crook, enjoying it's second breakfast entree. The "camp robber" had now become the "red squirrel stash robber". All through the fall and throughout the winter we had watched the squirrels store their cones in our woodpile (and make a few nests). Obviously, this activity had not been lost on the nutcrackers! They plundered the squirrels' cones at will. These birds have sublingual (situated under the tongue) pouches that hold 50-150 seeds. Usually, they carry them off and cache them in the ground for later consumption, relying on their excellent long-term spatial memory. They can find seeds they have stashed - as many as 98,000 seeds a season - up to nine months later and sometimes buried under three feet of snow. My cheeky

birds were taking advantage of a readymade, easily found, stash. Our woodpile was too easy to pass up. I thought it was brilliant behavior!

Still, it's important to remember these birds are a crucial piece of our mountain wilderness - a key species. They have co-evolved with the high alpine whitebark pine trees. These pines are the only tree that can survive at altitude; they help capture and trap snow to engender a slow melt over spring and summer and keep a steady flow of water into the valleys. The Clark's Nutcrackers are the only animal that can open the whitebark pine cones and disperse the seeds effectively. With climate change and a longer

growing season pine beetles and their larva are surviving in greater numbers, destroying the whitebark pine at an alarming rate. The Clark's are so critical to the trees' survival that one researcher is capturing birds and fitting them with small Teflon backpacks that she has hand-sewn to hold tiny radio transmitters. The information gained from this study will help scientists determine preferred habitat characteristics and design management strategies to promote the health of the Clark's Nutcracker and the Whitebark pine population, ultimately benefitting the entire alpine ecosystem.

So if the squirrels and I keep a few Clark's Nutcrackers happy this winter, we are doing a valuable service for our North Cascades wilderness!



Clark's Nutcracker at suet feeder  
photo by Rick Rottman

# Okanogan Highlands Alliance

## Spring Highlands Wonders

by Julie Ashmore  
Okanogan Highlands

On March 6th, OHA's Highland Wonders series welcomes back a knowledgeable and enthusiastic speaker from last summer's outdoor events. Freshwater ecologist and emeritus professor, Dr. Mark Oswood, will cover the basics of stream ecology, with perspective on the inner workings of streams, including functional feeding groups, sources of energy, and riparian ecology. This event aims to increase our community's understanding of stream ecology, and how riparian zones and streams interact to support and affect populations of aquatic insects. Mark will explain how freshwater macroinvertebrates can be part of a person's natural history tool kit, with high quality field guides for community members to peruse and a list of recommended resources. "Many of you are bird watchers," he said at last summer's event. "But these small things are the nuts and bolts, and the cogs in the machinery, that make life on earth happen... You could do this as a hobby, as an avocation, just like bird watching."

Mark lives in the Wenatchee area, is retired from the department of Biology and Wildlife and the Institute of Arctic Biology at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, with a research specialty in freshwater ecology. Mark focused mainly on running waters (streams and rivers), with an emphasis on aquatic entomology (the scientific study of insects) and trophic structure of stream ecosystems. He has taught limnology (freshwater science), ecology of streams and rivers, aquatic entomology, as well as introductory biology. Most of his research was on ecology of stream insects, especially biogeography, and decomposition of organic matter. Mark has applied experience studying the effects of heavy metals from mining on streams, and has a side specialty in statistical analysis.

Throughout his career, Mark has taught a wide variety of "introduction to stream ecology" events in classrooms, Elder Hostels, and for government agencies, fly-fishing

groups, and conservation organizations. "Seeing the diversity of invertebrates that live in streams can be analogous to a first experience looking at tide pool

organisms," he says. "Plus, aquatic insects are a stream's way of turning green algae and brown leaves into fish food. No bugs, no fish!" Mark is also a former long-time president of North Central Washington Audubon Society.

On April 3, Dennis Paulson, one of the most knowledgeable naturalists in the Northwest, will open a window into the lives of dragonflies and damselflies in our region, sharing his interest in their biodiversity and biology. In a profusely

illustrated lecture, "Dragonflies: Rainbows on the Wing," Dennis will tell us all about the lives of these interesting creatures and how they fit into their environment. Dragonflies and damselflies are often called birdwatchers' insects. Active and brilliantly colored, these four-winged predators fly everywhere over unspoiled wetlands. Their very different-looking larvae are dominant predators in the water below. They have the best vision and the most versatile flight of any insects, and their sex life is similarly superlative.

Researching the biology and systematics of dragonflies all over the world, he is particularly interested in their coloration. Because Dennis recognizes the importance of our natural ecosystems, as well as the importance of the general public being informed about them, he has long held the view that natural history is our most important science. Don't miss this incredible learning opportunity.

OHA's educational events take place at the Community Cultural Center (CCC) of Tonasket, beginning at 6:30 pm, with a dinner benefiting the CCC at 5:15 pm. The

dinner will be \$7.50 for CCC members and \$8.50 for non-members (no charge for the presentation). For more information see [www.okanoganhighlands.org/education/hw](http://www.okanoganhighlands.org/education/hw) or call 476-2432

Stream Ecology  
with Dr. Mark Oswood  
on March 6

Dragonflies:  
Rainbows on the Wing  
with Dennis Paulson  
on April 3



Mark Oswood shares a macroinvertebrate with a group at Myers Creek in the Okanogan Highlands last summer.  
photo by Julie Ashmore

## Birding 101 at WVC

Even though you may be a birder already, you may have friends or family members who would like to join you in America's fastest growing avocation. Please let them know about this upcoming opportunity. North Central Washington Audubon Society's Jenny Graevell and Wenatchee Naturalist Susan Ballinger have co-designed this course to introduce beginners to the fundamentals of birding in a collaborative setting. The class focus is hands-on practice, using a variety of field guides, web-based tools, bird models, and several types of optics. Loaner binoculars will be available, courtesy of NCWAS. We will practice ID skills on the all-day field

by Penny Tobiska and Susan Ballinger, Wenatchee

trip to several local birding hotspots. The instructors' goal is to prepare you to attend and enjoy upcoming spring birding festivals including the Othello Sandhill Crane Festival, Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival, and Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest. Classes will be held on March 16, 18 and 22.

Scholarships are available through the North Central Washington Audubon website [www.ncwaudubon.org/events.html](http://www.ncwaudubon.org/events.html)

You may register in person at Wenatchi Hall on the Wenatchee Valley College campus or register on-line through the Continuing Education Department at [www.ced.wvc.edu](http://www.ced.wvc.edu).

---

## Get Ready for Wildflower Season!

by Linda Sarratt,  
Wenatchee Chapter of the Native Plant Society

Wildflowers of the Wild Horse Wind Farm  
Presenter: Andrea Nesbitt, Environmental Education  
Coordinator, Wild Horse Wind and Solar Facility  
March 29, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm  
Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center  
127 South Mission Street

Maybe you aren't surprised to find that the Wild Horse Wind Farm's wind turbines have the capacity to produce up to 273 megawatts of electricity. But did you know that Wild Horse also boasts one of the region's best examples of native shrub-steppe vegetation? Wild Horse, located 17 miles east of Ellensburg, is also home to Washington's only native *Pediocactus*, Hedgehog (or Snowball) Cactus. Andrea Nesbitt will tell us about the Wind Farm's unique flora including the Hedgehog Cactus, grazing and weed management, and on-going restoration projects. And she will have lots of photos of her favorite native plants found at Wild Horse! Get ready for Wild Horse's spring Wind and Wildflower Walks at this presentation.

An Introduction to Local Botany, A workshop in partnership with Wenatchee Valley College.

Starting March 26 (ten sessions), Cost: \$129

Instructors: Susan Ballinger, Jennifer Hadersburger, Connie McCauley, and Emily Orling

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Wenatchee Valley College

Learn about plant life in our beautiful backyard! Learn to identify 20 common plant families and the characteristics needed to identify wildflowers within each family. We will learn about the structure of flowers and the use of flower characteristics to recognize our common flowering plant families. The class will begin by introducing the vocabulary used to describe plant parts and characteristics. We will use live samples, microscopes and hand magnifiers, pressed plants, technical and photo field guides. This course is designed for a newcomer to botany and each class will include guided identification practice using freshly collected plants. Several times the class will meet at a nearby field site and one class will be held at Leavenworth Ski Hill for field identification practice. For information and to register visit [www.ced.wvc.edu](http://www.ced.wvc.edu)

---

## Methow Conservancy Spring Events

by Mary Kiesau, Winthrop

March 3: First Tuesday "Spring Flowers to Know & Love", 7:00 – 8:30 pm, Twisp River Pub. The wildflowers are coming! Learn all about the private lives of our spring wildflowers that are soon to appear in the days ahead. Local botanist Dana Visalli will share flower photos and secrets to get us in the mood for spring. The local Native Plant Society Chapter will outline some upcoming plant walks too! This program is presented by the local Okanogan Chapter of the WA Native Plant Society and the Methow Conservancy.

May 14-17: Spring Naturalists' Retreat. Spend three days enjoying the beautiful and wild Methow Valley and engage in presentations and group dinners in the evenings. Under the friendly and expert tutelage of ornithologist Libby Mills and botanist Dana Visalli, both all around great naturalists

to boot, you will be amazed by all that you learn and see in this fantastic nature and educational experience! Participants should be willing and able to take part in the entire retreat including evenings. Participants should be in good physical condition, able to complete moderate hikes and spend 6+ hours in the field. Free tent camping is available at Dana's property along the Methow River near Twisp, or you can make your own lodging arrangements. The class is limited to 20 people and costs \$170 per person, including one dinner. For more information see [http://methowconservancy.org/naturalist\\_retreat.html](http://methowconservancy.org/naturalist_retreat.html)

For more information about The Methow Conservancy please contact Mary at 996-2870 or [mary@methowconservancy.org](mailto:mary@methowconservancy.org)

**March Wild Phlox**

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

**North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar**  
 Items in bold text are sponsored or co-sponsored by NCWAS

March 6	Stream Ecology with the Okanogan Highlands Alliance	Our own Mark Oswald at the Highland Wonders in Tonasket. See page 6.
March 16, 18 & 22	<b>Birding 101</b>	<b>Learn to bird! See page 7.</b>
March 21	<b>Training for Shrub-steppe Bird Surveys</b>	<b>Get ready for Spring Citizen Science Opportunities. See page 1.</b>
March 26	Intro to Botany	At WVC with the Native Plant Society. See page 7.
March 28	<b>Birding Buddies Walk</b>	<b>At Washburn Island with Meredith Spencer. See page 2.</b>
March 29	Wildflowers of Wild Horse	With the Native Plant Society. See page 7.
April 3	Dragonflies with Dennis Paulson	With OHA in Tonasket. See page 6.
April 18	<b>Birding Buddies Walk</b>	<b>Visit Beebe Springs with Virginia. See page 2</b>
May 24 and more	<b>Birding by Ear</b>	<b>Learn to Bird by Ear with Mark Johnston. See page 5.</b>



Printed on Recycled Paper

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