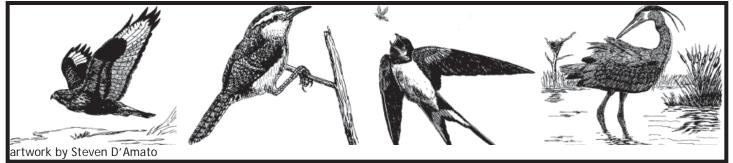
NORTH CENTRAL THE WILD PHLOX WASHINGTON AUDUBON SOCIETY



Volume 49 #1 September 2015 Hawk Migration Continues Despite the Fires Celebrate Raptors in Mazama September 11-13

by Richard Scranton

Please join the US Forest Service's Methow Valley Ranger District, North Central Washington Audubon Society, HawkWatch International, and the North Cascades Basecamp for the sixth annual Hawk Migration Festival in Mazama!

As the wildfires have wreaked havoc throughout North Central Washington, they have also burned in and around the Chelan Ridge HawkWatch site, rendering it unusable for this year's festival. This is a huge disappointment for a project that has been in place since 1997.

This year, HawkWatch will have a count station 400 yards south of the Slate Peak parking area where visitors can come and help count hawks every day now until at least September 13 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Drive past the Harts Pass campground one and one half miles to the parking area. This is about 45 minutes from Mazama.

The North Cascades Basecamp, an idyllic setting at the upper end of the Methow Valley has graciously allowed us to use their place as headquarters for Hawk Fest 2015. Due to the change of venue and the short time until the festival, we have had to revise the schedule.

On Friday September 11th at 7 pm, Dave Oleyar from Hawk Watch International (HWI) will offer a migration and

raptor workshop at the North Cascades Basecamp Classroom. Dave joined HWI as senior scientist in November 2013 after teaching upper level undergraduate courses in population ecology and conservation biology at the University of Idaho for the previous three years. He loves sharing his passion for ecology and conservation with others whether it is in the classroom, at a public talk, or a walk in the field. This workshop is free: snacks and coffee and tea will be provided.

On both the 12th and the 13th, there will be field trips to Slate Peak. Starting at 8:45 am, carpools will leave from the Basecamp to go to Slate Peak at 7,200 feet elevation. Local and trained raptor biologists will tell us what it is like to live and breathe raptors. This will be an amazing experience with environmental education and interpretation conducted by on-site educators, including US Forest Service personnel and volunteers. Dave Oleyar plans to participate both days. The North Cascades Basecamp has offered to provide snack boxes (\$7) or sack lunches (\$10) for field trip participants; please indicate if you want one of these when registering for your field trip.

Jim Ullrich from Wild Birds Unlimited will be set up at the Basecamp with optics and bird feeders for everyone to browse and try out.

We hope to bring HawkFest back to Pateros in 2016 so this may be your best chance to experience raptors in the gorgeous setting of the North Cascades on the border of the Pasayten Wilderness.

As fires could create ongoing uncertainty about accessibility, we suggest you check the NCW Audubon website or facebook page prior to your departure for Hawkfest.

To sign up for any of the activities or to learn more about the festival please see www.ncwaudubon.org/.

For more information about the HawkWatch International work at Chelan Ridge, please see http:// hawkwatch.org/migration/item/74chelan-ridge-hawkwatch.

The North Cascades Basecamp offers a European style lodge and cabin and is located at 255 Lost River Road Mazama, 2¹/₂ miles past the Mazama Store. To find out more about the Base Camp please see www.northcascadesbasecamp. com.

For alerts from the US Forest Service Methow Valley Ranger District please see www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/ alerts-notices.

For information on other food and lodging opportunities near Winthrop and Mazama, please see www. winthropwashington.com/

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."

North Central Washington Audubon Society

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North Central Washington Audubon Society is on Facebook too

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

Reardan

Living marsh, tall reeds all around Calling, squawking ruddys, yellow heads, goose babies

Swim about weaving in youthful try at being adults

Watchful for the predators with big glass eyes

peering from the roadside....

by Ken Bevis



Cedar Waxwing parent watches over its fledglings on the ground. photo by Teri J Pieper

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 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 			
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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 or drop us a note and we will send you a form for a special rate introductory membership.			

Like last summer, this summer's news is all about wildfire. All four counties in our NCW Audubon region have been and continue to be particularly hard hit. I imagine

Editor's Notes

most all of us have been or know someone who has been evacuated from their home. And many of us know people who have lost and maybe are still losing homes. The fires are not out and authorities say some will burn til the snow flies. My valley is smothered in a thick layer of smoke making it nearly impossible to do anything outside for more than a few minutes. We are all going stir crazy with this atmosphere.

How does this affect the birds? Earlier this week I saw a Belted Kingfisher in our forest of last year's burned pine trees, a long ways from any open water. Was it disoriented by the fires? Migrating and taking a short cut? A young bird that wasn't sure where it ought to be? Hard to say. We certainly have fewer birds. Maybe it's just that it is migration season and some have left and others are delaying their arrival. More deer have showed up on our hill – probably refugees from the Twisp River fire. Its eastern line is just a mile and a half away from here. Farther east, I just learned that skunks and bears are breaking into honeybee hives. Those beekeepers said this has never happened to them before. I sure hope they don't start breaking into hives around here. Beekeepers have enough challenges as it is.

A major loss from the fires is our Chelan Ridge HawkWatch site. The Chelan Reach and Black Canyon fires burned together and according to maps I've seen recently, they burned over the ridge. These fires are still active

so it won't be possible to set up the blinds and the yurt and other infrastructure. Counters will be up above Harts Pass to observe the raptors as they migrate. Hopefully the smoke won't be a hindrance to observing the hawks as they move south. I wonder how much the birds are able to change their routes due to the fires' influences.

Help us spread the word about the change in venue for the Sixth Annual Hawk Migration Festival. The dates remain the same – September 11 – 13. The headquarters for the event is the North Cascades Base Camp, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles above Mazama on the Lost River Road. Field trips will car pool to Harts Pass to observe and learn about raptor migration. The Base Camp is a nice birding destination itself and is featured on the Cascade Loop Birding Map. Other nearby birding sites featured on the map are Big Valley and Pearrygin Lake State Park.

A barely fledged Cedar Waxwing finds itself on the ground during a 100° July afternoon. A parent watched overhead. photo by Teri J Pieper

NCW Recent Bird Sightings

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

One person commented that birds were not singing and visible when he expected them. He thought that he was one or two weeks late, meaning that the birds had arrived and bred and nested a week or two early.

In mid-June, a Boreal Owl was heard at Rogers Lake in the mountains north of Winthrop. A Clay-colored Sparrow was reported at Sun Mountain Lodge. Near Loup Loup, a Williamson's Sapsucker was observed. A possible and unlikely Alder Flycatcher was reported at the Leavenworth Fish Hatchery. In July, a Northern Waterthrush, Red-eyed Vireos and Veeries were reported near Nespelem. Lincoln Sparrows and a Sora were seen at Rogers Lake. A least Flycatcher was seen at the Ellisforde Bridge. On the Nine Mile Road near Oroville birders observed Gray Partridges, Lewis' Woodpeckers, a Clay-colored Sparrow, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Sage Thrashers and Gray Flycatchers. A pair of Boreal Chickadees were seen near Iron Gate. In the Okanogan, Highlands Black Terns, Williamson's Sapsuckers and an American Three-toed Woodpecker were seen. In August, a Great Egret was seen on the Columbia, downstream from Pateros. Three Great Egrets and a small flock of Wild Turkeys were seen on Bridgeport Bar. And an American Golden Plover was seen up Bridgeport Hill.

Many of these locations have since been affected by wildfires and may not be accessible.

Loss of Forest Snags in the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest

Did you know that trees can be more important for wildlife dead than alive? When trees die, their wood softens and rots providing places for animals to create cavities that are used as nest and shelter sites. In the northwest, nearly 100 species of wildlife use snags including some of our favorite birds such as woodpeckers, bluebirds, owls, nuthatches, chickadees, wrens, ducks, swifts, swallows, and kestrels.

But did you also know that due to outdated policies, the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest allows the public to cut down snags? The Okanogan Wenatchee manages nearly 1.5 million acres and some of the most beautiful pine forests of the eastern Cascade Range. This forest is home to five at-risk woodpecker species in Washington State, including the blackbacked woodpecker, white-headed woodpecker, Pileated woodpecker, Lewis' woodpecker, and American three-toed woodpecker. Other cavity-



Feeding time for young Pileated Woodpeckers. photo by Paul Bannick

nesting birds threated by snag-habitat loss include the flammulated owl, mountain bluebird, and pygmy nuthatch. Yet every year, hundreds to thousands of snags in these birds' home territories are cut down by woodcutters, hunters, and campers.

Join us in a campaign to educate land managers with the Okanogan-Wenatchee to let them know the value of snags in our forests. Let them know that snags are vital components of our forests and snag felling should not be permitted for healthy forest management.

• Nearly every other land management agency in Washington prohibits snag felling because of the value of snags for wildlife. Agencies that prohibit snag felling include Washington Department of Natural Resources, Washington Department of

Fish and Wildlife, Olympic National Forest, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forest, Mount Saint Helens National Volcanic Monument, North Cascades National Park, Mount Rainier National Park, and Olympic National Park.

• The Okanogan-Wenatchee allows snag-felling under conditions of a woodcutting permit. However, snagfelling is not regulated leading to overharvest of snags each year.

• Illegal woodcutting is common, includes other illegal activities such as off-road driving, cutting within streams and water, cutting in areas marked 'closed to woodcutting', and cutting of snags with white-headed and black-backed woodpecker nests.

• Woodcutting is allowed during the sensitive nesting season for birds and woodcutters are allowed to cut snags immediately adjacent to active nest trees. The noise and disturbance

by Jen Syrowitz, Chapter Conservation Manager Audubon Washington

caused to nesting birds can be extreme and has led to nest abandonment in black-backed woodpecker, three-toed woodpecker, and bluebirds.



Feeding time for young Lewis' Woodpeckers photo by Ed Stockard

The collective power of the Audubon network in Washington can make a difference. Please consider contacting the local forest staff and let them know that the loss of snags means the loss of forest birds and the loss of overall forest biodiversity and resilience.

Mike Williams

Forest Supervisor Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest 215 Melody Lane Wenatchee, WA 98801 mrwilliams01@fs.fed.us 509-664-9323

Kelly Lawrence District Ranger Naches Ranger District 10237 US Highway 12 Naches, WA 98937 kellylawrence@fs.fed.us 509-653-1415

You can also sign the online petition at http://ow.ly/QSNfq

For more information please contact woodpecker biologist, Philip Fischer, at pcfischer@gmail.com or Jen Syrowitz at jsyrowitz@audubon.org

Register Now for Fall Audubon Council of Washington

Register now for the 2015 annual meeting of the Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW), hosted by Skagit Audubon Society and the NW Chapters! ACOW is our annual statewide meeting where members from all Audubon Chapters in Washington gather together for a weekend of information sharing, knowledge gathering, and fellowship. This year's meeting will focus on state and federal level policy actions around Audubon's climate initiative, as well as showcase chapter work being done to educate communities about the impact of climate change on birds.

Date: Saturday, October 24, 2015 Location: Best Western Plus, Skagit Valley Inn, 2300 Market Street, Mount Vernon. Agenda and Information: http://wa.audubon.org/chaptermeetings. Registration: \$40 at http:// ow.ly/QSS6w

In an effort to curb the impacts of climate change on birds and people, Audubon is working to increase the use of renewable energy while reducing carbon emissions output. Learn about multiple carbon reduction action plans being proposed in Washington State including the Governor's carbon cap, the Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy's capand-trade, and Carbon WA's carbon tax (learn more at http:// wa.audubon.org/carbon-and-cleanenergy). We will also host staff from National Audubon's Policy Office in Washington, DC who will provide the inside scoop regarding federal action on carbon emissions, and how Audubon's grassroots network can be effective advocates for change at the local, state, and national level.

Presentations from Kittitas Audubon Society and Black Hills Audubon Society will highlight just some of the exciting work being done by chapters on behalf of birds in Washington State. Take home tips and tricks on how to engage reluctant audiences in climate action, and how to transform your neighborhoods into a true bird-friendly community, one backyard at a time.

Expect a dynamic day of discussion and collaboration around meaningful

actions we can take together to augment our conservation impact, creating places where birds and people prosper. Additional weekend activities include:

WSACC Meeting – Friday, October 23rd at 4:30pm at the Port of Skagit County

Audubon Works Tutorial – Saturday, October 24th at 7:30am before ACOW begins

Field Trips – Sunday, October 25th at 8:30am, Deception Pass State Park or Washington Park and Ship Harbor

A block of rooms at \$79 per night is being held at the Best Western Plus, Skagit Valley Inn. Hotel reservations may be made by calling (360) 428-5678. AUDUBON SOCIETY is the group name.

All meeting information, including the agenda, accommodations, and weekend logistics may be found on the Audubon Washington website at http:// wa.audubon.org/chapter-meetings. See you there!

Consider Joining the Ranks of the Wenatchee Naturalists

If you are looking for a way to deepen your connection to both the natural and human aspects of our collective home, you ought to consider becoming a Wenatchee Naturalist! The next 50-hour Wenatchee Naturalist course is offered through Wenatchee Valley College Continuing Education, September 16 - December 9. The course is designed to allow participants to meet new friends, discover lovely local places to visit again and again, and to gain new eyes for the natural wonders of North Central Washington. To date, 140 people, ages 12-81, have completed the course.

Instructor Susan Ballinger is offering both a daytime and an evening course: Wednesday afternoons with four Thursday field trips and Wednesday evenings with four Saturday field trips. Field trips explore habitats along the White, Entiat, by Susan Ballinger, Wenatchee

Columbia, and Wenatchee River corridors, guided by expert, guest field scientists.

The interdisciplinary course includes readings, lectures, handouts, guest scientists, labs, and nature journaling. Field trips explore three ecosystems (shrub-steppe, riparian, & dry forest) focusing on 100 common species of the Wenatchee watershed. Every class includes hands-on activities and practice using a science field journal. Tuition is \$350 and includes supplies, a field journal, and a loaned mini-library and hand lens.

The course is offered once a year in the fall. If you have questions, contact the course instructor, Susan Ballinger (skylinebal@gmail.com or 669-7820). Learn more and register at www.ced.wve.edu.

A Wenatchee Naturalist Visits Iceland

by Penny Tobiska, Wenatchee

Stunning vistas of ocean and shoreline, snow covered glacial mountains, basalt cliffs, and rolling green fields. We met this overhwleming environment when we spent a week in Western Iceland this summer. The highlight was the Snaefellsnes Peninsula north of the capital Rekyavik. While exploring the shoreline, trails, and a small church in the middle of an enormous bed of moss and rock, we saw plovers, a Harlequin Duck (our Icelandic friend said she had never seen one before), Iceland Gulls, Great Cormorant, Black Guillemot, Grayland Goose, and the most memorable - swooping flocks of Arctic Terns. In order to reach our lunch spot, we walked on a path through grassy hillocks - a risky idea. Apparently this was their nesting spot. We fended off these dive-bombing birds with, arms, hats and dried weeds. The terns nailed my husband's bare head as he attempted a photo.

We stayed in the small sea village of Stykkisholmur (Stockholm in Icelandic - it means small island) where we took an excursion boat through the small, uninhabited basalt islands off the coast. For some people, the birds we saw are common, but for us, it was a thrill seeing them in the wild. As the boat slowly and respectfully approached the island's cliffs, we noted countless Iceland Gulls nesting in the lower grass filled-ledges of the rock face; many were feeding crying babies. On the upper, grass-covered plateau of the island sat numerous Atlantic Puffins clustered together or near their nests. So Beautiful. So cool. The boat did not seem to disturb the birds whatsoever. The Icelanders love their puffins. On other islands we saw the less common European Shag (a kind of cormorant) nesting and a White-tailed Eagle on its nest. As you would expect, there were no other birds on the islet where the eagle nested. We learned that the White-Tailed Eagle occupies the same niche as our Bald Eagle, and like the Bald, it was endangered 50 years ago. But through conservation efforts, it is making a strong comeback in Iceland.

Our trip also included visits to geysers, waterfalls, and the field of the world's first parliament where coincidentally, the European and North American tectonic plates separate. We saw thermal heated greenhouses with indoor fields of tomatoes growing and had a memorable ride on Icelandic Horses.

We would highly recommend Iceland as a destination or a stopover before Europe. There are lots of outdoor adventures, friendly folk, great, healthy food (note - lots of fish), and the cleanest air you can imagine. Heating and electricity is geothermal. Most hot water is piped directly out of the ground. Just be prepared for cool rainstorms that were a welcome break from our NCW baking summer.

Fall Retreat: The Art of Nature Journaling

by Heather Wallis Murphy, Leavenworth

Mixing science and art, we discover ecological concepts while observing the details of nature. Drawing, painting, writing and field records will unleash the intrigue of the out-of-doors in a fun and inspirational way. Experienced and beginners in art and science are all welcomed. The retreat provides time to hike and time for studio work. Supplies may be purchased at the workshop.

The six-day retreat includes five nights' lodging, fifteen meals, workshop tuition, field trips, journal and a free film screening. The three-day retreat option includes two nights lodging, six meals, workshop tuition, field trips, journal and free film screening.

Draft Curriculum

Day 1 Drawing Techniques Day 2 all day Field Trip, drawing birds & fish Day 3 Perspective, Shading, Field Studies Day 4 Watercolor Techniques and Yoga Walking Day 5 all day Field Trip, painting nature Day 6 Painting Techniques

To register, please contact Mike Caemmerer at Icicle Creek Center for the Arts - michael@icicle.org or phone 548-6347 x 46. For more information please see Icicle Creek Center for the Arts website www.icicle. org. For workshop course curriculum and supplies list please contact: Heather Murphy with Walleye Cards, LLC: heather@wildtales.com or (509) 548-7757 or www.wildtales.com



This Northern Saw-whet Owl spent about a day visiting Ed and Torre's house near Winthrop. photo by Ed Stockard.

News From Audubon Washington

Disposal of Monofilament Fishing Line

You may recall supporting legislation spurred by Eastside Audubon volunteers Diane Weinstein and Bonnie Anderson to have a Fishing Line Recovery and Recycling Program implemented in our state to encourage the proper disposal of monofilament fishing line. Although after two years the bill failed to pass the legislature, Senator Mullet (5-D) was able to get funding via the capitol budget to begin the program which will be administered by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. The fishing line bins will be constructed by Puget Sound Corps and installed at recreational fishing locations as determined by WDFW. These conservation heroes are continuing their efforts at the local level engaging the City of Sammamish, as well as King County, to implement fishing line recovery and recycling programs in their parks. Three cheers for all involved – it is gratifying to see such progress in our own backyards!

State Wildlife Action Plan Update

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has posted the draft Wildlife Action Plan on it website for public review and comment. See http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/ cwcs/#sgcn. Comments will be accepted until September 10th. For more information, contact Lynn Helbrecht at (360) 902-2238 or lynn.helbrecht@dfw.wa.gov.

A Game that helps Bird Memorization

Chris Duke, a PhD student at Washington State University, recently released a new, free app – Kea – that he's been developing for iPhone and iPad. Kea is designed to make the process of learning to recognize birds faster and more fun by turning it into a game. Chris would appreciate it if any chapter members would be interested in primary testing Kea. Beta testers would be asked to download and try out the app, and then provide feedback through a questionnaire. Beta testers for the initial release of Kea will be given access to all future updates of Kea before they become generally available, and will have a say in the future directions for the app, such as upcoming level-building expansion, or the

Fall Family Friendly Hikes in the Wenatchee Foothills

Join the Land Trust and the City of Wenatchee Parks and Recreation Department for fun morning walks for families in the Foothills. These scheduled hiking trips will familiarize participants with established trails in the areas surrounding Wenatchee. The leaders of each hike will guide the group along family-friendly trails while sharing fun and interesting information and answering questions about the environment. The theme of each Saturday will be a different element of our backyard wilderness. Hikes will be at 9:00am and Costa Rica and Australia versions. Anyone interested in primary testing Kea on their iPhone or iPad can email Chris at keabirdlearning.info@gmail.com.

A personal note from Director of Bird Conservation, Trina Bayard

This recent story in the Seattle Times, www.seattletimes. com/seattle-news/eastside/environmental-concerns-voidbothell-development-ordinance/, has special significance to me – I grew up in neighboring Woodinville and now live in the area of Bothell featured in the story. It seems like every week a new patch of forest in our neighborhood is slated for removal and within a month or so, up come more houses than you would ever dream could fit. Honestly, I feel sick every time I drive by these developments and have often wondered – isn't there a smarter, more sustainable way to develop this area? How are the birds going to survive? How can we possibly handle more cars on our crowded streets and freeways? Overall, I just felt powerless to do anything about any of it.

The storyline you'll find in this article is no doubt familiar territory for many of you – pro-development city leadership finding ways to diminish laws that were designed to protect critical habitat resources. In this case, a few local advocates stood up and challenged the City, and it turns out that the state Growth Management Hearings Board agreed with them. The Board rejected a city ordinance that reduced standards for environmental protection. "The Board finds the City's assertion that GMA (Growth Management Act) provisions for accommodating growth trump the GMA provisions for protecting critical areas is clearly erroneous," the board's decision read, in part.

I hope you find this story as inspiring as I did; that sometimes the actions of a few dedicated people really do make a difference. I know I'm already thinking about the potential ways I can work to change things for the better in my community.

by Hillary Schwirtlich, Wenatchee

11:00am each weekend. Visit Wenatcheewa.gov to rsvp! Dates and topics include:

September 26th – Insect Investigations at Saddle Rock October 3rd – Trails on Fire at Horse Lake Reserve October 10th – Animal Tracking and Signs at Jacobson Preserve.

Contact Hillary Schwirtlich, Membership Coordinator for the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust 667-9708 for more information or see www.cdlandtrust.org

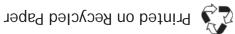
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North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar Items in bold text are sponsored or co-sponsored by NCWS

Celebrate migration at Mazama and Slate Peak! See page 1.	lavitea ToitargiM AwaH	September 12-13
At Leavenworth. NCWAS needs some volunteers! See www. salmonfest.org for more info	Wenatchee River Salmon Festival	September 19
Learn about insects in the foothills with CDLT. See page 7.	Family Friendly Hike in the Wenatchee Foothills	September 26
Learn about Trails on Fire in the foothills with CDLT. See page 7.	Family Friendly Hike in the Wenatchee Foothills	Octoper 3
Learn about animal tracks and signs in the foothill with CDLT. See page 7.	Family Friendly Hike in the Wenatchee Foothills	October 10
Learn to create your own beautiful journals with Heather Wallis Murphy at the Icicle Creek Center. See page 6.	gnilsmuol stute V to 11A sdT	October 13-19



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

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