



Volume 50 #1 September 2016

by Richard Scranton, Wenatchee
and Kent Woodruff, Twisp

Celebrate Raptors on Chelan Ridge

The Chelan Ridge Raptor Migration Project partnership will commence its twentieth year of operation in late August high above Lake Chelan and the Methow Valley as the annual departure of millions of birds begins once again. Please join the US Forest Service, North Central Washington Audubon Society and HawkWatch International for a field trip that celebrates this annual migration of raptors traveling south for the winter. We will gather and head to Chelan Ridge on Saturday September 17th at 9:00 am in Pateros. Any interested participants can sign up and participate for free by contacting Richard Scranton at rscran4350@yahoo.com.

We will meet at Memorial Park next to the Columbia River and behind the Sweet River Bakery in Pateros. Carpools will leave from the park for the day-long exploration of this fascinating annual spectacle. Kent Woodruff, Forest Service biologist and long-time coordinator of the Chelan Ridge Raptor Migration project will lead the trip.

Up on the ridge, trained raptor

What is the Chelan Ridge Hawk Watch Project?

After exploratory surveys at Chelan Ridge in 1997, Hawk Watch International, in partnership with the USFS, began annual standardized counts at the site in 1998 to monitor and learn more about raptors migrating through the east Cascades within the Pacific Coast Flyway. Counts typically range between 2,000-3,000 migrants of up to seventeen species per season. The most commonly seen species are the Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Harrier, Golden Eagle, and American Kestrel. HWI has also been banding raptors at Chelan Ridge since 2001 and has used the site to conduct satellite tracking research.

Chelan Ridge HawkWatch is located on USFS public land, and people are welcome to visit and learn about raptor migration and local ecology. The site operates daily from 9 am - 5 pm, August 23 - October 27. All activities are weather dependent and counts are not conducted in inclement weather (heavy rain or snow). In partnership with the North Central Washington Audubon Society, USFS, and the City of Pateros, Hawk Watch has helped host the Chelan Ridge Raptor Migration Festival during September each fall. For more information and a brochure, please see www.hawkwatch.org/migration/item/74-chelan-ridge-hawkwatch.



Ospreys
photo by Peter Bauer, Winthrop

biologists will help us learn more about raptors and the extraordinary journey as the birds head south. As in years past, this will be an amazing educational experience involving environmental education and interpretation conducted by on-site educators, US Forest Service personnel, and project volunteers. We plan to be back to Pateros by 3 pm.

We need drivers for the carpool who understand that the road requires sturdy, high clearance vehicles. Please indicate your willingness to drive when you sign up. Participants should arrive at the park by 8:45 am so we can organize and get on the road. Bring binoculars, hiking shoes or boots, warm clothes (warmer than you think you might need), food, and water. The Sweet River Bakery will be open in case your pantry is empty Saturday morning.

The Hawk Migration Festival that has been an annual event for the last six years had to be scaled down to this field trip this year without shuttle service to the ridge or exhibition booths in the park in Pateros. We plan to reinstate those activities next year.

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.

Field Trip Planning

by Mark Johnston, Leavenworth

With summer comes a quiet period for birds and typically birding. The singing season has passed, young have fledged, territories have broken down, and our Neotropical migrant species have either left our state or are preparing to do so. So the region's birds are now in a transition stage as species that breed here move out while those that winter with us move in. The NCWAS Field Trips Committee is planning a wide range of field trip offerings spanning the November to February time frame to take full advantage of the numerous species that spend the winter in our region. Watch the Wild Phlox or check our website to learn of trips as they are advertized. We look forward to seeing you in the field!

In the meantime, there will be a trip to the Chelan Ridge Hawk Watch site on September 17 (see page 1 for details and the ACOW conference features a Fire ecology field trip on October 9 (see page 4 for details).

North Central Washington Audubon Society Wild Phlox Subscription Form

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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.

September signals the end of summer. If this was an email, I'd probably insert a sad face right there. Summer has gone by pretty quickly with cooler and wetter weather than normal. Most folks in NCW are not complaining after two consecutive horrific years of smoke and wildfires. However if you like water-based activities – paddle sports, swimming, boating, etc, you may feel a little bit left out this year. I think the birds have enjoyed the weather. All of our nest boxes hosted one or two or even three broods of Tree or Violet-green Swallows, House Wrens, Western and Mountain Bluebirds. On our hillside, I've seen many Vesper and Brewer's Sparrows, Western Meadowlarks and our neighbor's big nest box produced an American Kestrel family.

Migration is gearing up quickly now. Two weeks ago I saw two yellowlegs on a vernal pond at the end of our road. This brings to mind the term – vernal. According to the dictionary (google), vernal pertains to spring and yet this pond has stuck around for the entire summer. Some years it has no water at all so this is a real treat. Killdeer nested there and possibly Mallards too. Certainly I've seen Mallards most every time I've visited it and now there are about ten of them up there. There have been Eastern and Western Kingbirds, lots of swallows and other insect eaters hawking bugs around it too. Back in the spring, I saw spadefoot toads and a tiger salamander in the pond. Surprisingly, the deer have not been frequenting it. They must prefer the river.

Other migrating birds of note include a Baird's and Solitary Sandpiper observed yesterday near Sun Mountain Lodge. Many thanks to Kent Woodruff and Dave Rudholm for sharing these finds! Yesterday after starting the article on Hawk Watch, I looked outside and saw four big birds flying steadily down-valley – making a beeline for somewhere. Looking with the binoculars, I saw that they were Great Blue Herons. There are some that nest in the valley but they are not common and these seemed to be on their way south.

Swallows are ganging up in big flocks. They usually leave our place during the first week of September. Numbers of Common Nighthawks are down after the big summertime evening displays. And Turkey Vultures are soaring on thermals in big groups every day. These birds are all preparing to leave.

As I was starting this issue of the Wild Phlox, I updated the date and number of the issue on the front page like always and noticed that this is the beginning of Volume 50 of the newsletter! That means our little Chapter has been in existence for FIFTY years! Wow! What a milestone! Are there any readers out there with memories of our humble beginnings? Perhaps your parents were members back in the day? Would you like to share your early stories of NCW Audubon with our membership? This may even be cause for a celebration!



Western Kingbird displaying
photo by Peter Bauer, Winthrop

NCW Recent Bird Sightings

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

In Ferry County a single Bushtit was reported, north of Republic. It may have been a county first. American Redstarts were seen on 30 mile Road. A Great Egret was seen at the mouth of the Sanpoil River.

In Okanogan County an Ovenbird was found on the Colville Reservation. A Northern Waterthrush was spotted near Chesaw along Maryann Creek. A family of Loggerhead Shrikes was seen near Soap Lake in southeastern Okanogan County. Great Gray Owls were seen near Chesaw. American Redstarts were seen and heard along the Big Valley trail near Winthrop.

In Douglas County, a Common Poorwill was heard at Jameson Lake. A Gray Flycatcher was reported near Jameson Lake. American White Pelicans were seen from the Chief Joseph Bridge near Bridgeport.

In Chelan County, a Bonaparte's Gull was reported at Fish Lake. A Flammulated Owl was reported on Road 7200 near Chelan. A Gray Flycatcher was reported at Camas Meadow. A Forester's Tern was seen at Beebe Springs. A California Scrub Jay was reported and photographed at the Horse Lake Preserve. A Black-throated Gray Warbler was seen at Tumwater Mountain. Lesser Yellowlegs were spotted at Fish Lake. A Pacific-slope Flycatcher was found in the Entiat Valley. A Black-backed Woodpecker was seen at Mission Ridge.

Saying Thanks Out Loud

by Mark Oswood, Wenatchee

When donations arrive in the mail, “thanks” thoughts chase around in our heads, like dogs playing in a field. But it isn’t enough to have thoughts of thanks.

“Silent gratitude isn’t very much to anyone.” Gertrude Stein

So, twice each year, we say thanks out loud, here in the Phlox. As you read your name, we hope that you can hear us.

Below, we list donors making donations from mid-November to early August, in response to our 2015-16 donation request. Donations made before mid-November were acknowledged in the December 2015 issue of the Phlox.

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Audubon Council of Washington

by Jen Syrowitz, Audubon WA

Register now for the 2016 annual meeting of the Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW), hosted by North Central Washington Audubon Society and the Eastern Washington Chapters. ACOW is our annual state-wide meeting where members from all Audubon Chapters in Washington gather together for a weekend of information sharing, action opportunities, and fellowship. The theme of this year’s meeting is the management of public lands and how the Audubon network can successfully engage in planning and management decisions to build resilient ecosystems that benefit birds and other wildlife.

ACOW highlights include:

- The candidates for Commissioner of Public Lands – Dave Upthegrove and Hilary Franz – will speak about their vision for the management and care of Washington State public lands and waterways, and how they intend to engage Washington citizens with their plans.
- An update from Seattle Audubon on the Department of Natural Resource’s Long Term Conservation Strategy for the Marbled Murrelet, and ways in which the network can take action during the upcoming decision making process.
- Agency experts from the US Forest Service, WA Department of Fish & Wildlife, WA Department of Natural Resources, and the Bureau of Land Management will partake in a panel discussion regarding fire ecology and management plans

for Eastern Washington, followed by Q&A and potential ways in which the Audubon network can support sound fire management policies and programs in Washington State.

- A visit from David Ringer – National Audubon’s first Chief Network Officer. David oversees the health, vitality, capacity, diversity and strength of Audubon’s vast distributed network. It’s a tall order, but David is up for the challenge and excited to meet the effective Audubon network in Washington State!

Date: October 7 - 9
Location: Confluence Technology Center
285 Technology Center Way, #102, Wenatchee
Agenda and Information:
<http://wa.audubon.org/events/audubon-council-washington>
Registration: \$35 at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2564495

Additional weekend activities include an Education Workshop and Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee meeting on Friday. Friday evening

Paul Bannick, noted wildlife photographer and author will speak and show photos from his new book, *Owl*. Sunday will feature a Fire Ecology field trip.

Lodging: Until October 7 a block of rooms is being held at the Comfort Suites at the Park, within walking distance of the Confluence Technology Center. Hotel reservations may be made by calling 662-1818. AUDUBON is the group name. Until September 17 a second block of rooms is being held at the Super 8 Wenatchee. Hotel reservations may be made by calling 662-3443. AUDUBON SOCIETY is the group name. Confluence State Park is also within walking distance of the Confluence Technology Center. See <http://parks.state.wa.us/286/Wenatchee-Confluence> for reservations.

Conservation Issues in NCW

by Mark Johnston, Leavenworth

Over the last few months, the chapter's conservation work has progressed on several fronts. The following is a brief description of three key issues.

Upper Wenatchee Community Lands Plan: In a nutshell, this is a process spearheaded by Chelan Douglas Lands Trust (CDLT), The Trust for Public Lands, The Nature Conservancy, and Chelan County to consider for acquisition numerous parcels of Weyerhaeuser lands sprinkled about from Lake Wenatchee to Blewett Pass. NCWAS has been researching them to determine which offer the most value to birds. We submitted our recommendations to CDLT on June 30 and remain involved in the overall process as it moves forward.

I-732: Initiative 732 will appear on the ballot this November. It is designed to tackle global warming by imposing a tax on carbon pollution while reducing the state sales tax by 1%. Audubon Washington has endorsed the

initiative and the NCWAS board has voted to support the initiative as well.

Icicle Creek Water Resource Management Strategy: This is a multifaceted plan designed to solve several water rights and supply issues in the Wenatchee to Leavenworth area. Some of the central ones are in regard to the provision of water for irrigation and development over the next few decades. It also seeks to enhance instream flows to benefit fish stocks and in support of tribal treaty fishing rights. One of the main pieces of the strategy is to tap several lakes in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, essentially converting them to reservoirs. NCWAS joined 39 other organizations on May 11 in signing a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) scoping letter raising several concerns about this aspect of the strategy and suggesting several alternatives we believe should be considered.

Another Conservation Issue

This dead Osprey was observed entangled in baling twine and hanging from a nest near Winthrop. As you can see there is quite a bit of twine that the birds used in the nest construction. Apparently this is not uncommon. There are some programs in other regions to encourage collection of the twine and NCWAS is exploring the possibility of starting a similar program here. Watch for more on this issue in the October Wild Phlox.
photo by Janet Bauer, Winthrop



Celebrate the Return of the Salmon

Thousands of people of all ages and cultures come to the Wenatchee River Salmon Festival each year to celebrate the return of the salmon to our northwest rivers. The rivers that are home to the salmon also provide sustenance for birds, frogs, salamanders, foxes, deer, bugs, bears and countless trees, bushes, and flowers. We depend on these same waters to provide electricity for our homes, irrigation for our crops, livelihoods for our fishermen, and a place for our families to play, picnic, camp and hike.

The theme this year is "Super Salmon". An exciting menu of hands-on activities and "edutainment" gives visitors a unique opportunity to discover and appreciate the complexities of the natural world and the significance of salmon to people of the northwest. Students from schools

throughout north central Washington visit the Festival during the two special school days. On Saturday the event attracts thousands of visitors from the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

The Festival brings people, natural resources, education, entertainment and science together in a non-commercial, non-political package that benefits many. Since its 1991 inception, the Festival has remained true to its natural resource education mission while updating and augmenting activities to keep the messages fresh, timely and engaging. In response, the event has become nationally recognized for its educational excellence.

The Wenatchee River Salmon Festival is September 17 from 10 am – 5 pm at the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery. For more information please see www.salmonfest.org/

Volunteer at Salmon Fest!

NCW Audubon has participated in the Wenatchee River Salmon Festival since, well, since a long time ago. This year we will have our "What's that Bird?" exhibit and also lots of Audubon and bird-related materials to share with the Leavenworth festival visitors. So if you're not planning to attend the Hawk Migration field trip at Pateros, perhaps you'd like to help out at Salmon Fest instead. Please contact Mark Oswood at moswood@nwi.net or 662-9087 for more information on the NCW Audubon booth at the Wenatchee River Salmon Festival.

Fodder From the Feeder

It has been a whirlwind summer and very different from the past two. The bouts of rain have been most welcome (the hail, not so much). We have been gone often these past few months attending family events. Still, we were able to watch many different birds nesting in the bird houses around the garden. The ever-present House Wrens commandeered a couple of them and had two clutches in each. A family of Tree Swallows was successful in raising a brood - we hope. We didn't witness their fledging. The Tree Swallows were the most anxious about their brood - swooping and clicking their disapproval anytime I was working in the garden close to their house! Another swallow family, this one the Violet-green variety, raised a brood in the lobster pot-shaped house we brought back from New Brunswick. This is their third year in a row!

And our beloved Western Bluebirds were back in the new house we placed on the same post where they nested the first year we moved to the valley. We noted two separate clutches this year and were lucky to be home to watch, sort of, one of the second brood fledge. His/her first foray out of the house was comical. The bird stretched its head out, then one wing, then the whole body was out, and it clung fiercely to the entrance hole. Before we knew it, the youngster slipped back inside. The next morning, we were up rather late and all the young were gone.

We saw many juvenile bluebirds around this house during the second clutch rearing. The first brood fledged while we were away. At one point we saw three or four juveniles on the roof of the house. But we had also seen a mature female bring insects inside to a new clutch and remove a fecal sac. She liked to fly up to a nearby branch and drop the white sac from there. Some days later, I am sure I saw a juvenile with a grub of some sort in its mouth, at the entrance to the house, seemingly feeding it to a youngster inside. Is it normal for juveniles to feed other babies? The Cornell Lab website has a great article about cooperative breeding among Western Bluebirds. It identified sons that had not found a mate



article and photo by Karen Mulcahy, Winthrop

helping feed their parents' next brood. There was a genetic advantage as the offspring shared his genes and would live to spread these genes around. But this article described a son helping raise the following year's brood, not the same year's second clutch, as I observed. In any case, it was lovely to watch a lot of juveniles swoop around our garden keeping the grub population down. A win/win situation! Not long now, and we will have to clean the houses to prevent the spread of disease. Remember - do this when you see an absence of activity for at least a week or longer. Wear rubber gloves and a mask, use a 10% bleach solution after removing the organic material, and scrub well, using a toothbrush to access those hard to get spots. Rinse well if you want (actually not necessary as bleach dissipates in 24 hours), and air dry for a day or two to prevent mold. I do this in the fall, as some birds will use the houses over the winter for roosting on cold days. I hope my female Downy Woodpecker comes back this year to her favorite roosting house. It used to be the Western Bluebirds' favorite nesting house. Such is the circle of bird life!

(The article on cooperative Western Bluebird rearing is found on the Cornell Lab site, titled "The Importance of Family for Western Bluebirds", by Caitlin A. Stern, James L. Dickinson, and Elise D. Feree, Jan 15, 2010)

Birds on the Radio

Northwest Public Radio (NWPR) is putting together a series of stories about birds in North Central Washington. They are hoping the stories will help educate listeners about birds in our region and maybe help them learn about how personal conservation practices can help protect bird habitat. Courtney Flatt, reporter with NWPR is researching possible stories to share with the radio listeners. She is also concerned with issues for birds that might need more attention such as wildfire or drought impacts. Please contact Courtney with your ideas at 372-7404 or courtney.flatt@wsu.edu.

Consider Becoming a Wenatchee Naturalist

by Susan Ballinger, Wenatchee

If you are looking for a way to deepen your connection to both the natural and human aspects of our collective home, consider becoming a Wenatchee Naturalist! Registration is now open for the next 50-hour Wenatchee Naturalist course offered by Wenatchee Valley College (WVC) Continuing Education, Sept. 21-Dec.14. The course is designed to allow participants to meet new friends, discover lovely local places to visit again, and to gain new eyes for the natural wonders of NCW. To date, 150 people, ages 12-81, have completed the course.

Susan Ballinger teaches the Wednesday evening course and four Saturday field trips. Field trips explore habitats along the White, Entitat, 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 min-library and hand lens.

The course is offered annually in the fall. If you have questions, contact the course instructor, Susan Ballinger (skylinebal@gmail.com; 669-7820). Visit the newly launched Wenatchee Naturalist website at www.wenatcheenaturalist.com/. Register for the WVC Continuing Education course at www.wvc.edu/directory/departments/conted/

Swallows in Line

Swallows
in slender battalion
of vivid blue, sky rockets
lined up on the wire
resting in the breeze
on the perfect
linear perch
long, smooth, open
high on the hill
easy launch
Then
everyone!
All together, go!
Ride the glorious sky
Swallows

by Ken Bevis, Methow Valley



Tree and Violet-green Swallows
photo by Teri J Pieper, Methow Valley

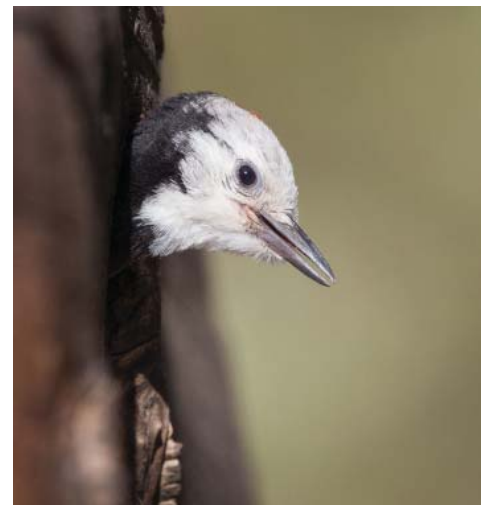
True Nature: The Art and Craft of Field Journaling

by Mary Kiesau, Winthrop

Do you get inspired by the natural world? Are you interested in learning how to jot, draw, and write, exploring nature as the subject? Join professional artist and teacher Perri Howard along with Mary Kiesau, naturalist and educator at the Methow Conservancy, in this hands-on class to explore the natural world of the Methow and learn the fundamental aspects of field sketching, note-taking, and journaling to creatively engage your surroundings. During the first half of each day, we will master drawing with pencils and pen, and loosen up with some fun writing exercises. We will then apply our new skills in the field, working at a beautiful location in the Methow Valley. This class is designed to grow your thoughts, feelings, and observations of the natural world, while providing easy-to-learn techniques for drawing, journaling, and composition.

This workshop is held in Perri's studio in the Tree Cooler (Building 6) on the TwispWorks campus and at conservation easement properties near Twisp October 22 and 23. Class fee is \$135. Materials cost is \$30 including a sketchbook, colored pencils, pens, erasers, sharpener and a carrying case for you to keep. Space is limited to 8 people. Contact Mary at 996-2870 or mary@methowconservancy.org to register.

No experience is necessary, though Perri's "How to Draw A Leaf" class on September 20 or October 4 is recommended as a preparatory course (see her website for details about this separate class www.vmgworks.com/summer-art-classes/).



White-headed Woodpecker youngster
photo by Peter Bauer, Winthrop

September Wild Phlox

North Central Washington Audubon Society
Post Office Box 2934
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

Items in bold text are sponsored or co-sponsored by NCWAS

September 17	Hawk Migration Festival Field Trip	Meet at the Sweet River Bakery to travel to Chelan Ridge. Details on page 1.
September 17	Wenatchee Valley Salmon Festival	Volunteer for NCWAS. Details on page 5.
September 21 - December 19	Wenatchee Naturalist Class	Must be pre-registered. Details on page 7
October 7 - 9	Audubon Council of Washington	A great way to learn about Audubon around the state. Meet Paul Bannick. Fun Field Trip too! Details on page 4.
October 22 & 23	Learn Field Journaling Skills	In Twisp. Details on page 7.



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www.ncwaudubon.org

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