#### NORTH CENTRAL WASHINGTON AUDUBON SOCIETY

# THE WILD PHLOX



# Ninth Annual Hawk Migration Festival September 15 in Pateros

Volume 52 #1 September 2018 by Richard Scranton, Wenatchee

Join the US Forest Service, North Central Washington Audubon Society and HawkWatch International this fall for the ninth annual HawkFest! This free family event combines fun activities in Pateros with a field trip to the Wells Wildlife Area, and morning and afternoon carpool trips to the Chelan Ridge Hawkwatch site. The events get underway at Memorial Park in Pateros Saturday, September 15 at 8 am and go til 3 pm.

Chelan Ridge sits 5675 feet above sea level along the flyway of migrating raptors. Biologists who live at the Ridge during the migration season will offer insight into what it is like to live and breathe raptors and show how the birds are banded and tracked. This amazing experience includes environmental education and interpretation conducted by onsite educators, Forest Service personnel, and volunteers.

During the day, there will be four carpool trips from Pateros to Chelan Ridge. From there you can hike <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> mile to the observation rock, watching the sky for migrating raptors overhead while experienced raptor spotters find and identify the birds in flight. Visitors will also get an opportunity to have a close encounter with raptors such as a Cooper's Hawk or Merlin as they are banded and released.

In Pateros at Memorial Park, there will be fun for all ages. We will have a number of booths featuring live birds, optics, nest boxes, and interactive games for children.

Earlier in the week there will be two workshops on raptor natural history: Thursday, September 13, in Chelan; and Friday, September 14, in Pateros. Both will take place between 7 and 9 pm.

More information and on-line registration for the carpool trips to Chelan Ridge, the Wells Wildlife field trip, and the two workshops are available at www.ncwaudubon.org or you can contact Richard at rscran4350@ yahoo.com.

The Hawk Migration Festival is scheduled to coincide with the peak of southbound migration of raptors at Chelan Ridge — the best place in Washington to view fall migrating raptors. Past festivals have brought several hundred people to see hawks up close, enjoy Memorial Park, and spend the day learning all about raptors. So please join us for the 2018 festival!

#### Carpooling to Chelan Ridge:

The carpools will leave Memorial Park at 8 am, 10 am, noon and 2 pm. Each trip is limited to fifteen participants. When registering for a trip, please specify which trip you prefer. We need volunteer drivers. Please let us know if you can drive and how many total people you can take in your vehicle. The road is bumpy and all-wheeldrive is recommended. You must pre-register for these trips.

#### Wells Wildlife Area Field Trip:

NCWAS board member, Virginia Palumbo and local birder, Meredith Spencer will lead this trip. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has developed extensive riparian habitat that provides dense cover for birds and other wildlife. You can expect to see waterfowl and many migrating songbirds. This trip will leave Memorial Park at 8 am and return at 11:30. You must pre-register for this free trip.

HawkWatch International Raptor Workshops: Dave Oleyar went to HawkWatch International after teaching upper level undergraduate courses in population ecology and conservation biology in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Science at the University of Idaho. He loves sharing his passion for ecology and conservation with others whether it is in the classroom, at a public talk or on a walk in the field or over a pint at the local watering hole. His workshop will be about all things raptors but may drift to other topics including bats and owls. You must preregister for these workshops and specify which one you want to attend - Chelan or Pateros.

To pre-register for any of these trips or workshops, contact Richard at rscran4350@ yahoo.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

> Merry Roy | 881-1083 | merry8roy@gmail.com Janet Bauer | jsrbauer@gmail.com Bruce McCammon | bruce.mccammon@gmail.com Julie Hovis | jahovis711@gmail.com Facebook admin | Jenny Graevell Website - www.ncwaudubon.org Subscribe to our email list at www.ncwaudubon.org

At Large:

North Central Washington Audubon Society is on Facebook too All phone numbers in the Wild Phlox are area code 509 unless otherwise indicated.

Mailing address - PO Box 2934 Wenatchee, WA 98807

# NCWAS Annual Meeting

The 2018 annual meeting of the North Central Washington Audubon Society Board of Directors to elect board members and transact routine business will take place on Friday, September 28 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at Fire Station 71, 232 East Wapato Avenue, Chelan.

## Horan Area Field Trip

Joe Veverka will lead a birding trip through the Horan Natural Area in Wenatchee on Thursday, September 13. The trip will meet at the parking lot near the playground at Walla Walla Point Park at 9:00 am and then do a thorough birding around Horan until 11:00, come rain, shine or smoke. This should be an exciting time to pick up migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, such as the Semipalmated Sandpiper and plover seen recently by Joe. The total walking distance is two to three miles on level paths. No Discover Pass is needed. Please contact Joe to sign up at joe\_veverka@yahoo.com.

North Central Washington Audubon Society Wild Phlox Subscription Form				
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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

Here's hoping that by the time you have this issue of the Wild Phlox in your hands that the smoke has relented, and we are all breathing a little easier. Everyone in NCW has been **Editor's Notes** 

affected by this fire season's smoky air. What about the birds and the other wildlife and even domestic animals that can't go inside? How are they faring? A National Science Foundation graduate research fellow at the University of Washington is studying how air pollution affects birds. She is even asking for anecdotal information. Spokane Public Radio did a story on her and you can read it or hear it at www.spokanepublicradio.org/post/birds-studied-reaction-wildfire-smoke. I have noticed that Turkey Vultures are spending more time at roost and less time flying. I wonder if they are unable to find carrion due to the poor air quality?

A few moments after I wrote that, my husband came running up the stairs saying there was a bear in the yard! Sure enough. I got to see it go down the hill and cross our road and then up our draw. It was a black bear, not fat and it was panting as it moved uphill. It wasn't moving overly fast, just at a steady pace. I wonder if the smoke was making the animal short of breath. Does it get headaches or dizzy like we sometimes do? No doubt it was displaced by the fire. We



American Goldfinch photo by Peter Bauer, Winthrop

don't see bears moving around this hill in the daylight and they usually don't come down to the valley floor til apples and other fruit are ripe.

There are lots of good activities coming up in September. One that really caught my eye is the film about Mardy Murie (see page 5). Just this past spring I came upon one of her memoirs in a second-hand store. It is called *Two in the Far North*. The book is a first edition signed by the author and originally sold at a book store in Fairbanks. It is a very enjoyable read about her young life before and after she married Aldus Murie and their adventures in the remote back country of Alaska. She made it sound pretty easy. I think she probably glossed over the hardships they faced, especially when she was traveling with her newborn son. She emphasized the beauty of the landscape and the wildlife they observed and she downplayed the dangers they faced and the interminable rains. Murie was dubbed the "Grandmother of the Conservation Movement" by both the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society, she helped in the passage of the Wilderness Act, and was instrumental in creating the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. She was the recipient of the Audubon Medal, the

John Muir Award, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom — the highest civilian honor awarded by the United States. I do hope to get down to Wenatchee to see this film on September 25.

I am happy to report that American Kestrels raised four young in our kestrel nest box this summer! Here's hoping for fewer voles and deer mice around our place in the coming months.

## **NCW Recent Bird Sightings**

Chelan: A group of fifteen possibly leucistic Mallards were seen at the Riverwalk Park in Chelan. An American Redstart was seen on Sears Creek Road. A Bonaparte's Gull was seen near Entiat. A Wilson's Phalarope and a Peregrine Falcon were seen on Fish Lake. A Red-breasted Merganser and a Sabine's Gull were seen at Walla Walla Park. An American Three-toed Woodpecker was seen on the Maple Pass trail.

Douglas: Both Short-eared and Long-eared Owls were seen in Pine Canyon. A Sagebrush Sparrow was reported on the Rock Island Grade. A Pectoral Sandpiper was seen on the Waterville Plateau. A Grasshopper Sparrow was seen and heard at the Mansfield Sewage Treatment Plant (STP). A Sora and a Virginia Rail and a Red-necked Phalarope were seen at the Waterville STP. A Gray Flycatcher was seen in Mansfield.

Ferry: At Swan Lake, Common Loon chicks were taken by

compiled from the newabird email list and eBird and Tweeters by Teri J Pieper

a Golden Eagle and a Bald Eagle. Also at Swan Lake, there were adult and young Northern Waterthrush. A Bewick's Wren was seen on Bridge Creek Road. A Loggerhead Shrike was seen at Swawilla Basin. A Northern Goshawk was seen at the Kettle River Campground.

Okanogan: A banded Harlequin Duck was seen on the Chewuch River. The left leg had a blue band with large letters "JP." The right leg had an aluminum band with the first two numbers being "71." A Great Gray Owl was seen from the Thompson Ridge Road near Winthrop. A group of eight American White Pelicans was seen on Big Twin Lake near Winthrop and later circling overhead before drifting south. A Pine Grosbeak was seen at Washington Pass. A Peregrine Falcon was seen between Winthrop and Twisp. A Red-tailed Hawk took a Common Nighthawk on the wing along the Old Twisp Highway. A Clay-colored Sparrow and a Red-necked Grebe were seen at Pearrygin Lake State Park. A Band-tailed Pigeon was seen at Chelan Ridge.

#### The Giving Economy

by Mark Oswood, Wenatchee

The Giving Economy isn't easily measured but is essential to any notion of societal wealth and well-being. People give their irreplaceable time, share their possessions, open their homes, and donate their money. Our world would be impoverished without givers.

NCWAS members are givers, not just to NCWAS (as volunteers and donors) but to other causes and institutions and needs as well. We are grateful to be part of your giving.

Below, we list donors making donations from mid-January 2018 to mid-August 2018, in response to our 2017-18 donation request. Donations made before mid-January were acknowledged in the February 2018 issue of the Phlox. Larry and Penny Tobiska are "first responders" for donations received. The list of donors is derived from their records.

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Plus 4 anonymous donors, just as appreciated as those above.

The symbols designate gifts of special generosity: \* = \$100 (Great Blue Heron), \*\* = \$200 (Greater White-fronted Goose \*\*\* = \$500 (Magnificent Frigatebird)

## **NCWAS Chapter Social**

by Merry Roy, Wenatchee

Our long awaited North Central Washington Audubon Society Chapter Social is coming up soon. Wednesday evening, September 26, we will gather at the Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center, 127 South Mission Street in Wenatchee from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.

Audubon members and non-members, beginner and expert birders of all ages, and anyone interested in birds are invited to come together, share what is going on in our valley bird-wise, enjoy Bruce McCammon's bird photo presentation, munch on refreshments and have a good time.

Bruce has fifteen years' experience in bird photography and many years in the field as a hydrologist. With tens of thousands of pictures, he wondered what he could do with them. They are of little value sitting on a computer hard drive, so he has looked for ways to use his collection of images for educational purposes. You probably have seen the NCWAS bird poster he developed. Now he has created an immersive media app to teach bird identification with field marks and birdsong. Bruce will share his interactive app and how it grew.

Winning photographs from our first local Bird Photography Contest will be on display and information regarding NCW Audubon's regional work and opportunities for volunteering will be available. Come enjoy like-minded people and celebrate birds!

# Prize-Winning Book from Local Poet

by Susan Sampson, Wenatchee

Book of Birds by NCWAS member Susan Sampson has been named the winner of its first chapbook contest by the Wild Leek press of Sugar Grove, VA. The book is a collection of short, simple poems on the subject of birds. The Press is using a hand-set letter press and hand binding to produce the book, which carries a cover price of \$85.00. The author is offering a cheaper edition: she will email a copy of its text for free to any interested reader who sends her an email. She can be reached at susanraesampson@hotmail.com.

Susan Rae Sampson

 ${\mathcal B}$ ook of  ${\mathcal B}$ irds

To a Golden Eagle

Your bird-book picture paints you the color of dirt, as nondescript as winter finches before their breeding colors show.

You aren't the only wide-winged sailor soaring though our western scabland sky—cranes and ravens ride here, too.

The fact of your flight—like that of any bird,—amazes—but only you, tipped toward sunshine, turn to burnished gold.

by Susan Sampson

## Arctic Dance: The Mardy Murie Story

#### Wenatchee Valley Environmental Film Series

The definitive film biography of an exceptional woman, *Arctic Dance: The Mardy Murie Story*, will be featured on September 25 as part of the Wenatchee Valley Environmental Film Series. Following the film, a short voter registration training will be offered by Vania Winters of FUSE Washington. Women of all ages are especially invited to attend and celebrate the longlasting impact of Mardy Murie's life, in combining the world of both work and home, as a wife and mother of four children.

Almost a decade in the making, the film is a collaborative effort by a group of filmmakers, writers, musicians, and biologists, directed by Bonnie Kreps and written by Charlie Craighead. It is both an intimate portrait of a well-loved national figure and a poignant historical document. It weaves together stories from her diaries and journals, hundreds of photographs from Mardy's years in Alaska, along with film footage from her years spent lobbying for wilderness conservation.

As a naturalist, author, and conservationist, Mardy Murie was an ordinary American who was an exceptional advocate for wilderness and is now known as the mother of the American Conservation movement. Beginning with her marriage to Olaus in 1927, they worked side-by-side as advocates for wilderness conservation. Together they were instrumental in

the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Act in 1960 and the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964. After Olaus' death in 1963, Mardy continued advocacy, helping pass the Alaska Lands Act in 1980. Mardy was awarded every major environmental award and in 1998, President Carter bestowed the Medal of Freedom, our nation's highest civilian honor.

by Susan Ballinger, Wenatchee

We enjoy our public lands today because of the hard work of people like Mardy Murie who dedicated their lives to serving their communities and protecting our planet. Now it's up to us to honor Murie's work by standing together and making our voices heard to protect our environment for future generations. Vania Winters from Fuse Washington will be on hand after the screening to provide information about registering to vote for anyone who is interested.

Event Sponsors: Jill Sheets, WVMCC, Environmental Film Series Coordinator, Susan Ballinger, Wenatchee Naturalist Program Coordinator, Karen Rutherford, STEM Educator and Advocate, Vania Winters, FUSE Washington Organizer.

This film will be shown September 25 at 7:00 pm at the Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center. Suggested donation \$5.00.

# Chelan Douglas Land Trust Community Science Projects

by Susan Ballinger, Wenatchee

Would you like to spend a weekday morning hiking, viewing wildlife, wildflowers, and snow-capped mountains, while being part of a small team collecting bird species data? Community Science Projects are collaborations between scientists and volunteers that expand opportunities for scientific data collection and help answer real-world questions. CDLT has two ongoing community science projects. Learn more about becoming a Chelan Douglas Land Trust (CDLT) community scientist volunteer by contacting Conservation Fellow, Susan Ballinger at susan@cdlandtrust.org or call 667-9708.

- 1. Mountain Home Preserve eBird Monitoring Project: This is prior to the thinning project that will restore a pre-settlement open ponderosa-pine forest. Meet at 6 am at the Safeway store in Leavenworth, or Susan will pick up carpoolers in Wenatchee at 5:30 am at the Penny Road Park and Ride. We will walk a 2.2-mile route, stopping at five points to conduct ten-minute counts. Upcoming Dates: September 27, October 18, November 15.
- 2. Horse Lake Reserve eBird Monitoring Project: Meet at 6 am at the end of the pavement on Horse Lake Road to carpool up the gravel road. We will walk a five-mile route, stopping at seven points to conduct ten-minute counts. All data is entered into eBird. Our goal is to learn about bird use within the variety of habitats that include areas burned in 2015 wildfire. Upcoming Dates: September 20, October 11, November 8.

# Audubon Council of Washington

by Gail Gatton, Audubon Wa The annual Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW) meeting will be hosted by the King County Chapters at the Brightwater Center in Woodinville on October 13. These annual events bring together Chapter members from all over the state.

We are still in the process of finalizing the agenda, but you can expect sessions to focus on the importance of public lands for birds, implementation of the Plants for Birds program at the local level, efforts to promote equity, diversity and inclusion, and how we are advancing policy campaigns in Washington state to address climate change. We will provide a deep dive on our legislative efforts to set Washington on a path toward 100 percent clean electricity, as well as our advocacy for a price on carbon and our support for I-1631. We'll reserve plenty of time to answer your questions, share tips, resources and best practices from across our chapter network, and of course to have fun getting to know one another and deepen old friendships. For more information please contact Gail Gatton, VP & Executive Director, Audubon Washington at (206) 652-2444 x101 or ggatton@audubon.org

#### Fodder from the Feeder

by Karen Mulcahy, Winthrop

Once again, we are having a smoky summer. Is this the new normal? I can't imagine how the birds manage to breathe and fly in this. What is so astounding is how widespread the smoke and haze is. Right now, I am at the Vancouver airport in Canada, gazing out at low-lying smoky fog. We have been in the area for several days and the haze has not left the skies.

Yesterday, we ventured down to Granville Island, which is not really an island at all but a brilliant idea by the federal government to build a permanent farmers market with artwork, crafts, local produce and meats to attract tourists. It certainly did that, in droves. It also attracted a very large number of birds, mostly pigeons and gulls. And apparently, the gulls have become a problem. Everywhere you see signs - do not feed the birds - beside pictures of very aggressive looking gulls.

As we exited one of the buildings we spotted a woman with a large hawk tethered to a leather glove on her hand. Of course, we made a beeline over there. What we discovered was fascinating. This young woman works for a company that has two divisions - one that rehabs injured raptors, and another that raises them for specialized work such as the task she was doing that morning. Granville Island hires them to walk about with a hawk on their arm. Turns out, this wonderful Harris Hawk was the perfect deterrent for the gulls. They didn't have to fly him at all. She would just walk about, chat with folks, and in the process, the gulls would leave the area. Harris Hawks are not native to this area of Canada. They are found in the southwest US. He was a marvelous specimen to see up close and personal!

Naturally, this woman was quite knowledgeable about raptors in general and the information about the company is interesting. It fills a special niche. One of their key functions is working with various industries to help mitigate undesirable bird populations by scaring them away. For instance, they are employed by the Vancouver Airport to disperse unwanted birds - saving the birds from injury or death on the runways and in the air and protecting the planes and passengers as well. She told us they had an educational program on Grouse Mountain where the raptors show their flying prowess. In addition to these flying demonstrations, they also do hawk walks where you can meander through the forest while a hawk flies overhead and will land on your gloved fist. They do hands-on encounters where you get to spend time with several species of raptors on your glove and finish with a hawk walk. There are school programs they can adapt to classroom curriculum and they will do specially-tailored group experiences, weddings, birthdays. "The sky's the limit," they say, pun intended. All of this is premised on the belief that birds of prey are threatened in many parts of the world and if people experience them up-close, they will learn that raptors are an essential part of the eco-balance of our planet and will strive to protect them as well.

As the young woman walked away from us, her hawk worked his magic - the gulls scattered.

You can find more information at www.pnwraptors.com. The visitor center is open March to October in Duncan, B.C., Canada on Vancouver Island and can be reached at 250-746-0372.

#### **Upcoming Wenatchee Naturalist Course**

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, September 26-December 19. 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 North Central Washington. To date, 188 people, ages 12-81, have completed the course.

Instructor Susan Ballinger teaches the twelve-week Wednesday evening course and four Saturday field trips held on September 29, October 13, November 17, and December 1. Field trips explore habitats along the White, Entiat, 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 \$365 and includes supplies, a field journal, and a loaned mini-library and hand lens. Clock-hours for teachers are available.

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 Wenatchee Naturalist website at http://www.wenatcheenaturalist.com/. Register for the WVC Continuing Education course at https://wv.augusoft.net/index.cfm?fuseaction=1010

#### Possible Fake News - Harlequin Ducks

by Paul Anderman, Leavenworth

I've been imagining this Harlequin Duck in the dressing room, and videos of it later where someone shouts "That's not real! I can see the zipper!" in the same way someone does about the Bigfoot video, in which a female Bigfoot tries its best to disappear, walking steadily away. It's hard to believe something like this. This looks real. Except for the zipper. There isn't one.

A costumer accepts the award for best duck costume 2018 and he quacks his gushing reply, which I can't repeat because it is untranslatable and gushing and full of duck swearing, mostly in words ending in "uck". He's a gay effeminate duck, also decked out in careful colors, which we have seen now and then. Feathers, I mean, really. The trophy he's holding is a rubber ducky, which he is thrilled to finally have. This award is called the Donald. Also called the Avarice.

The Harlequin duck is a plain CG green, but its spectacular colors were put there in post-production, all digital, and that's what we saw. After *The Matrix* movies, I might be

willing to believe this idea, too, and because of Plato long ago. How real is what's beyond that cave wall? How real is today?

This is a very hard subject to verify.

They were amazing ducks, ducks that whistled, and have been called "sea mice" for that. I had to laugh. How anybody knows they mate for life is beyond me, but it means someone had to watch them and be sure the same two ducks were together until one of them died. Maybe they were tagged and captured and released several times, data kept.

What happens to the remaining duck, when one dies? I'm old enough now to wonder that about my own wife. Do you suppose either duck starts to wonder after many years together, which one will survive the other? That growing old together is lovely, that migration over the Cascades is getting harder, that the river seems faster this year, until one day they finally look at each other, and look at each other?

# Bird Watching Up Close and Personal

This Townsend's Solitaire nest was in a cut bank just ten feet from the back door of a small cabin in a forested neighborhood outside of Winthrop. I was able to observe the nest off and on for 48 hours July 1-2. Both parents took turns bringing food items to the three nestlings, leaving them alone as long as thirty minutes throughout the day. The temperature ranged between 68 and 72 degrees F. One parent brought back a large insect larva and tried repeatedly but unsuccessfully to jam it down the throat of one of the young. After five or six tries, the parent bird squeezed the

photos and article by Susan Ballinger, Wenatchee

exoskeleton off and the smaller diameter grub was then successfully pushed down the throat. The adjacent bird was next fed the exoskelton with a single successful push. I watched as scat was being squeezed out by one of the youngsters and an attentive adult pulled it into its beak, swallowed, and then flew away.

Despite having wide open mouths and appearing to be begging for food, these young birds were silent.





#### September Wild Phlox

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#### North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

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

1st and 3rd Wednesdays	Beebe Springs Bird Counts	NCWAS and WDFW Community Science. See www.ncwaudubon.org/events.html
September 13	Horan Field Trip	In Wenatchee with Joe Veverka. See page 2
September 13, 14, 15	Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival	Get signed up now! See page 1.
September 22	Wenatchee River Salmon Festival	Fun for the whole family! See www.salmonfest.org/
September 25	Arctic Dance - a film	The Mardy Murie Story at the museum. See page 5
September 26	NCW Audubon Social	Getting to know each other. See page 4
September 28	NCWAS Annual Meeting	In Chelan. See page 2
Fall Quarter	Wenatchee Naturalist Course	Sign up now. See page 6
Ongoing	CDLT Community Science projects	see page 5
November 15	North on the Wing	Travels with Songbird Migration by Bruce Beehler

You can find the Wild Phlox online at our website - www.ncwaudubon.org
The beautiful photos are even nicer in color.



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