



Visiting with Raptors: Fourth Annual Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival

Volume 46 # Summer 2013

Join the Methow Valley Ranger District, North Central Washington Audubon Society, and HawkWatch International this fall for the fourth annual Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival! This free family event combines activities in Pateros with trips to the Chelan Ridge HawkWatch site to learn about and celebrate raptors as they journey to winter territories. This all happens at Memorial Park in Pateros on September 14, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

You will get to visit vendors, see raptor demonstrations, and take a field trip to the spectacular Chelan Ridge Raptor Migration Site. During the day, shuttles will run from Pateros to Chelan Ridge where visitors will be able to see raptors such as Cooper's Hawk up close when they are banded and then released. A participant from last year commented: "Seeing a Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawk together up close and learning about their behavior in catching prey was an awesome experience."

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 is an amazing experience with environmental education and interpretation conducted by on-site educators, US Forest Service



Rough-legged Hawk - one of the many species that might show up in migration at Chelan Ridge
photo by Gregg Thompson

personnel, and volunteers.

In Pateros, there will be fun for all ages. One booth features: NCW Audubon's 'What's that Bird?' which is a fun analog birding simulation game where children and adults find and name bird models in trees. There will be an owl pellet station featuring hands-on science and plenty of bird education material. North Cascades Base Camp will be back featuring face painting for kids and information on their birding trails featured on the Cascade Loop of

by Richard Scranton, Wenatchee

the Great Washington Birding Trails and their beautiful lodgings.

The festival is also a great place to check out cutting edge optics from Wild Birds Unlimited and the latest birding guides and books from Trails

End Bookstore. Daniel Anderman will be back with his wonderful nest boxes for sale. Attendees can also go on a guided birding trip with experts to identify waterfowl and migrating songbirds.

This 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 delighted

people to see hawks up close, try new optics, and spend a day learning all about raptors. So please join us for the 2013 festival!

Information and registration for field trips and the shuttle to Chelan Ridge can be found on NCW Audubon's website, ncwaudubon.org, or by searching North Central Washington Audubon Society on Facebook. Shuttle rides fill quickly! We encourage early registration. Children must be 11 or older to ride the shuttle.

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.

Evening Color

by Caryl Campbell, upper upper
Rendezvous, near Winthrop

In the evening our small bird bath/fountain
attracts our local birds.

Tonight a male Williamson glowed in the
low sunlight. He was perched on the edge
of the bath and his yellow belly and red
throat were prominent.

A male blue bird joined him and in line to
bathe was a female Western Tanager and a
chipping sparrow.

Sometimes they drink and bathe together at
other times they wait their turn.

The hummingbirds fly in and out of the
stream of water.

Birding Buddies Walks

Watch our Facebook page and website for
announcements about upcoming Birding
Buddies walks this summer!

North Central Washington Audubon Society Wild Phlox Subscription Form

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

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. Please Print Clearly.

Name _____ Address _____

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

Yesterday I got to guide a field trip for the Washington Ornithological Society's annual conference. These conferences consist of intense birding field trips – many beginning at 5:15 am and going all day and then there are owling trips at night – and a couple of talks about birds and/or bird habitat. At first, it seemed a bit of a time-consuming burden to take on this volunteer task (who hasn't said yes to a volunteer opportunity and then instantly regretted it?) but now that it's done I have to say it was a good thing. This spring I have not had time for serious birding or anyone around that really wanted to do any serious birding so I've enjoyed the birds I have seen on my numerous walks and that has been about it. I have not been learning any new bird songs or stretching my abilities at all. For this trip, which covered the upper Methow Valley from Winthrop to Klipchuck campground, I spent parts of two days scouting to find out which stops would be best and also to see if there was any interesting or rare birds around. Standing on the Big Valley trail, I was enthralled with sounds of multiple Veeries and Swainson's Thrushes singing in the cathedral of cottonwood trees while other warblers, vireos and other species provided the accompaniment. The seven folks on my tour varied between advanced birders with excellent listening skills to folks who had good visual id skills but are still working on the songs and calls (like myself). What I brought to the group was knowledge of the area and what birds we might expect to see and for the most part we were not disappointed. I was able to brush up on my birding by ear skills (I am most challenged by the warblers and vireos – those small birds that spend time in the tree canopy or in the brush) and very much enjoyed the company of fellow birders. This was yet another example of a rewarding volunteer experience!



NCW Audubon has many volunteer opportunities that you may find equally fulfilling. The Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival will need a few folks to help September 13 and 14. Let Richard Scranton know if you are interested. Our Analog Birds are frequently seen around our region and they can always use another hand to help them on their migratory paths and in their native habitats. Let Mark Oswood know if you would like to help. Maybe you'd like to lead a Birding Buddies field trip? Tell Jenny. Or you have a great program idea? Let Penny know. Our board has some empty spots that need to be filled. Contact any one of the board members shown on page two for more information.

Female Red-naped Sapsucker observed at North Cascades Basecamp during the WOS field trip photo by Teri J Pieper

Donations 2012-2013

The Second Movement

by Mark Oswood, Wenatchee

Our once-a-year donation appeal happens every September. We acknowledge donations received through mid-November in the December Phlox. Below we list, with equal gratitude, donations received since mid-November.

Donated dollars have, I think, more grace than regular dollars, carrying some essence of the donor with them. We are, still, all-volunteer. Your donation is matched with time, freely given. So, to all you givers — of money and of time and of yourselves — thank you. So much of the best of life depends on you.

Ellen Aagaard and Matt Corwin ++
 Rita Anderson and Kent Hitch
 Marylynne Barber
 Bird Watcher's Digest
 Janet Crouse +
 Thea Fager
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 Rebecca Frank
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 Richard J Murphy

Lana Narramore
 North Cascades Basecamp +
 George & Lila Putnam +
 Gail Roberts
 Harry & Donna Sanford
 David Shelton & Frauke Rynd
 Wild Birds Unlimited (Jim Ullrich) +
 and 5 donors who chose to remain anonymous (but are just as appreciated)

The symbols denote donations of special generosity:
 + = \$100 ("Great Blue Heron")
 ++ = \$200 ("Greater White-fronted Goose")
 +++ = \$500 ("Magnificent Frigatebird")

Pixels VS Print

I like print. I like newspapers, books, magazines and newsletters in print and on paper. I like to read them sitting in my rocking chair in the living room. Now I know in this digital world that many of those things are going to go away – well, not my rocking chair. There are good reasons for this – conservation of trees being right up there on top of my list. Another reason is to save money. Pixels are cheaper than print.

With these things in mind, North Central Washington Audubon Society is taking the big step to distribute *The Wild Phlox*, this printed newsletter that you are now holding in your hands, electronically. I admit, I shudder at the thought but then I remember saving trees and saving money. Money that comes from donations – donations from you, our members. Printing and mailing *The Wild Phlox* is our biggest continuing expense. This is money we could be spending on education and outreach – more analog birds, an online birding guide to our four-county region, birding classes, festivals like the Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival coming up in September, and countless other things that benefit birds and their habitats and the people who care for them.

In order to implement this new delivery system, we will need your email address. Keep in mind that we will never share your address with any other organizations or

by Teri J Pieper, Methow Valley

individuals. It will only be used to send you the Phlox. In the event that something important comes up between Phlox issues, we may send you a notice. For instance – Christmas Bird Count updates that don't make the Phlox deadline. You may tell us your preferences via email or US Postal Mail using the form below

Please send us an email to **ncwaudubon@gmail.com** indicating your preferred email address for *The Wild Phlox*. Write 'phlox email' in the subject line.

When the next issue is ready you will receive an email that will say something like this: 'A new issue of the North Central Washington Audubon Society's newsletter, *The Wild Phlox*, is now available on our website. To read it, visit www.ncwaudubon.org and click on the newsletter tab on the left side of the page. *The Wild Phlox* is an Adobe Acrobat PDF file. You will need the free software, Acrobat Reader, to open it.' If you go to our website now, you will find past issues of the Phlox already there.

You do have the opportunity to continue to receive the Phlox via US Postal Service mail. Please fill out the form on this page and mail it to NCW Audubon at PO Box 2934, Wenatchee, WA 98807 or send us an email with your preference. Our goal is to start electronic delivery to those who want it with the September issue of *The Wild Phlox*.

Delivery Options for *The Wild Phlox*

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OR

Email the information to ncwaudubon@gmail.com

Thank you.

Madeline's Field Journal

by Madeline Ashmore, Okanogan Highlands

I saw a Dusky Grouse (used to be known as Blue Grouse) out of my window. The Grouse was eating. We don't know if it was eating for itself or if it was bringing insects to its babies. We saw it eating grass, pecking at the ground, eating yellow flowers called Graceful Cinquefoil, and sweet clover. It arched its neck when it ate, and you could actually see it swallow! This Dusky Grouse was a female, we think, because her tail feathers were light and she was mottled brown. Her neck was arched and she was preening herself. It was an interesting preening because her throat moved. She seemed proud because she was stout and seemed to be smiling!!

* * *

The other day I was biking when I almost hit a male Dusky Grouse. He didn't even think about budging when I rang my bike bell, but he was displaying! His tail feathers were up and eyebrows red. After the third time I rang my bell, he ran while displaying. I came back after watching him awhile.



Madeline lives in Okanogan County near the Canadian border, in the hills leading to the Okanogan Highlands, at 3,000 ft elevation. She is seven years old and enrolled in a school program that allows her to do a large portion of her school work from home, with regular time in a classroom. Her time at home allows Madeline to keep a close watch on the plant and animal life around her, learning firsthand through observation. She is also passionate about supporting the highland loon population and can be seen each year at the Barter Faire, pulling her red wagon full of handcrafted items for sale to support loon banding, research, and fish stocking. Madeline is seven years old.

Baby Owls

NCW Audubon board member Art Campbell and Michelle Dewey were birding northwest of Oroville just west of Spectacle Lake toward Loomis recently when Michelle yelled, "Baby owls! Gotta go back!" Art pulled a handbrake u-turn (not really), and they returned to see three young Great Horned Owls sitting in a tree right by the road as a parent hooted from its hiding place nearby.



Young Great Horned Owls. Photo by Art Campbell

Swallows

by Ken Bevis, Methow Valley

Sky slicing
sweeping turning
blue rockets
chase feathers
and bugs

Bright blue
brilliance
flying genius
chortling in the air

Jewels by
the nest box
Bring joy
to our eyes -

Swallows.

May 27, 2013
part of the "Poem (nearly)
Every Day" project

Audubon Help Needed

NCW Audubon has welcomed two new board members in recent months – Richard Scranton and Art Campbell. They, along with the other board members are busy with all sorts of Audubon projects and events. Richard kindly stepped forward to guide the Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival this year! Art is chairing the efforts to create an online guide to birding in our four-county region. Other items keeping board members busy include a major update to our website, implementation of electronic newsletter delivery, planning for field trips and programs for the rest of the year and ongoing education activities. Whew. When I start thinking about all that our all-volunteer organization does, it makes my head spin.

That being said, we do have some gaping holes and holes that are on the horizon on our board that need to be filled. We have been without a vice president and secretary

by Teri J Pieper, Methow Valley

for quite some time now. Without these two important positions, we are always on the edge of missing something or losing something important and trying to figure out what will happen if our president, Jeff is unavailable. Additionally, our treasurer (me) and web master (Torre) would like to shed these responsibilities due to our other commitments. The new website will feature a content management system (CMS) that will be user-friendly and easy to update. The treasurer keeps track of our checkbook and any grants we might receive and pays bills and makes reports to the board. Neither of these jobs is very time-consuming but they are important. And last but not least by any means, we need an education chair in training. Mark will be moving on in the future and he holds a wealth of knowledge that he will happily share with anyone else that would like to be involved.

Co-evolution of the Red-naped and Red-breasted Sapsuckers

by Kim Romain-Bondi, Mazama

The Red-breasted *Sphyrapicus ruber* and Red-naped *Sphyrapicus nuchalis* Sapsuckers are two woodpecker species that overlap in their range near the crest of the Cascades. These two species are sympatric, meaning that during the evolution process, they became two new species while inhabiting the same geographic region. Generally speaking in Washington, the Red-breasted live on the west side, the Red-naped on the east side of the Cascades. At the North Cascades Basecamp in Mazama, we have had the opportunity to observe both species in a cedar and birch grove that is unique to the upper Methow watershed.

This year, a male Red-breasted Sapsucker was observed late in the winter along the Basecamp trail. He drummed his broken drum on local snags, showed off his beautiful red head, called his quiet “mewing” call, and even excavated a perfectly round cavity in a birch snag. A female Red-naped Sapsucker was often seen in the same area, licking (not drinking) up sap with her barbed tongue, making frequent visits to his territory, and exploring the newly constructed cavity with trepidation (poking her head into

the entrance but not entering). Finally in mid-June, after many hours of observation, we saw the Red-breasted male and the Red-naped female both enter and exit the nesting cavity with food in their beaks for hungry nestlings.

These two species of sapsuckers are known to hybridize in south-central Oregon, northeastern California, along the California-Nevada border, and in southern Nevada. Genetic studies by Johnson et al (1983, 1985) showed that Red-naped and Red-breasted Sapsuckers have the highest avian genetic relatedness ever reported, similar to that found between avian subspecies. They also found the hybrid F1 (first) generation to produce viable offspring, although it seems that certain F2 back crossings may have partial sterility issues. These studies and others confirm that although these two species are nearly genetically identical, there is a low degree of hybridization while encountering each other regularly, and therefore they are still considered as separate biological species.

It will be interesting to see what

our new fledgling hybrid sapsuckers look like, and who they choose as mates into the future.

Ned K. Johnson and Robert M. Zink. 1983. Speciation in Sapsuckers (*Sphyrapicus*): I. Genetic Differentiation. *The Auk*: 871-884.

Ned K. Johnson and Carla Bowman Johnson. 1985. Speciation in Sapsuckers (*Sphyrapicus*): II. Sympatry, Hybridization, and Mate Preference in *S. ruber daggetti* and *S. nuchalis*. *The Auk*: 1-15.



Male Red-breasted Sapsucker observed at the North Cascades Basecamp.

photo by Teri J Pieper

Notes from Mazama

Aside from uncharacteristic daily big winds, it has been pretty quiet for the past month. What has been notable is the small number of American Robins. Maybe this is due to the late and more limited irrigation program. One momma began building a nest in the same place she or another had built three years ago - on a piece of board that is part of a wooden moose head that hangs on the wall of the golf repair shop. It is adjacent to a heavily used path and while our passing did not deter the former builder, this gal did not like us and abandoned the site.

Our primary entertainment comes from the ducks. For the first time we have seen Wood Duck hen(s) flying into the deep woods adjacent to the pond each evening. We hear that it takes nine weeks

for the ducklings to fly and it is cause for concern that they'll be easy pickings for predators, of which we have no shortage. This year, a pair of bully Mallards showed up with their lady friend. They continually harass the Wood Ducks, who are smaller in stature. The latter are now tame enough to come up on the deck when the assaults are too much.

The other notable birds are a pair of Common Ravens who have become conditioned to fly over and seek yesterday's dog food remains or if really lucky a dead mouse we have flung into the parking area from one of the cars. I wonder if the birds can discern that some of these rodents taste like automotive wiring insulation - a preferred treat for Methow mice.

photo and article Bob Spiwak, Mazama

We went to Bonaparte Lake for an overnight campout last week. The Common Loons were calling, but a woman who was leaving her camp site insisted it was a Pied-billed grebe. She wanted to put it on her life list, so certain was she but her companion cautioned her that it had to be seen to be added to a list, and she had no definite proof. I always thought it was a loon call that pervades the lake.

Our camping companions, Curtis and Sheela had smart phones or some sort of techie device that photographs, telephones and is a palm sized computer. My wife and I are definitely 20th century. Anyhow, they located the bird on their devices, showed us what they looked like, and for gosh sake, proceeded to play the call. Amazing. It was the grebe.

NCW Recent Bird Sightings

compiled by Teri J Pieper
from ncwabird email list and other birding lists

Here are a few reports from Ferry County: Near Sherman Pass, birders observed Boreal Chickadees, Pine Grosbeaks, a Black-backed Woodpecker and a Northern Goshawk early in June. Just recently a birder found a low elevation Spruce Grouse along the Silver Creek Road. Common Loons are nesting at Swan Lake as well as at Lost Lake in Okanogan County.

In the Wenatchee area, an Ovenbird was reported in East Wenatchee and an Ash-throated Flycatcher was seen in Confluence Park! One birder found SEVEN species of empidonax flycatchers at Camas Meadows, near Blewett Pass!

Okanogan County has seen an overabundance of birders this month. The Washington Ornithological Society held its annual conference (a series of serious birding field trips) in Omak and birders came from far and wide to learn more about birds and increase their life and county lists. Some of the interesting sightings include numerous (to me anyway) reports of Gray Flycatchers, lots of Lewis' Woodpeckers, three Northern Waterthrushes near Chesaw, Clay-colored Sparrows, Bobolinks, Black Terns and many others. I led a field trip to the upper Methow Valley and our group identified seventy species including all three vireos and nuthatches; and American Redstarts. We saw nests of Western Wood-pewee, Red-eyed Vireo and also the Red-breasted/Red-naped Sapsucker nest at the Basecamp.

Summer Learning Opportunities

The Okanogan Highlands Alliance has three interesting programs planned this summer. Priority registration is provided to OHA members. Contact julie@okanoganhighlands.org or 433-7893 for more info, or visit okanoganhighlands.org/education/hw.

July 20: **Watershed Functioning, Plant Ecology & Stream Processes**, with Gina and Tom McCoy

August 17: **Geology of the Okanogan Highlands** field trip, with Steve Box, Karl Lillquist, and Ralph and Cheryl Dawes

September 13-14: **Grassland Ecology & Grass Identification**, with Don Gayton

At the North Cascades Basecamp you can learn about butterflies and also have a detailed experience on the Methow Valley Ranger District

Robert Michael Pyle's **Butterflies of the Cascades Workshop** is August 16-18. Register by calling 996-2334.

Also, Pyle will be presenting "Monarchs of the PNW" to the public on August 16 at the North Cascades Basecamp in Mazama. 7 pm. \$5 per person.

Treasured Landscapes of the Methow Valley: A Hands-on Conservation/Education Experience. July 28-August 2.

This is in partnership with the National Forest Foundation, USFS Methow Valley Ranger District, and the Basecamp. Enjoy a week-long expedition with daily outings exploring the Methow Beaver Restoration, Wolverines of the Cascades, Wildflower and Birds of the Eastern Cascades, and Native Plant Restoration. For more info online see <http://www.nationalforests.org/offices/wa/methowouting> or call 996-2334.

**Survey Inside!
Please respond!
Thank you.**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

Summer Wild Phlox

North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

July 20	Watershed Functioning, Plant Ecology & Stream Processes	With the Okanogan Highlands Alliance. See page 7
July 28-August 2	Treasured Landscapes of the Methow Valley	The National Forest Foundation, USFS Methow Valley Ranger District, and the Basecamp. See page 7
August 16-18	Robert Michael Pyle Butterflies of the Cascades	At the North Cascades Basecamp. See page 7
August 17	Geology of the Okanogan Highlands	With the Okanogan Highlands Alliance. See page 7
September 13-14	Grassland Ecology & Grass Identification	With the Okanogan Highlands Alliance. See page 7
September 14	Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival	Celebrate Raptors as they journey south to their winter territories. See page 1



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www.ncwaudubon.org

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