THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society
www.cdaaudubon.org

April 2014 **Volume 23 Number 8**

APRIL PROGRAM

DATE: April 8, Tuesday
PLACE: Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 N. Ramsey, CDA
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
SPEAKER: Kate Davis, Executive Director of the "Raptor Ranch" in the Bitterroot Valley of Montana
PROGRAM: **"Raptors of the Rockies"**
Kate is winner of both the 2011 National Outdoor Book and 2011 National Book Award. The Raptor Ranch cares for15 different species of orphaned and injured raptors. These fascinating birds are part of an educational team that reaches more than 5000 people each year. Her program will include live raptors.

For more information see our Website: www.cdaaudubon

BOARD MEETING
DATE: April 1, Tuesday
PLACE: Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 N. Ramsey, CDA
TIME: 4:30 p.m.

Coeur d' Alene Audubon Presents:

"Audubon's Big Birthday Bash"

Join us for an evening of fun as we celebrate John James Audubon's 229th birthday!

- Food-fellowship-silent auction-raffle….
- Sunday April 27th, beginning at 5:30 pm
- The Greenbriar Inn, 315 Wallace, CDA
- Tickets ($36.00) includes your choice from
- Three full course dinners(beef, chicken, or vegetarian)

For tickets contact George Sayler at: gsaylercda@aol.com or mail your check (payable to Coeur d' Alene Audubon Society) to: Coeur d' Alene Audubon Society, P.O.Box 361, Coeur d' Alene, ID. 8316

Your contribution supports the CDA Audubon Society and the "Reel In and Recycle" program (to protect birds from fishing line left behind.)

Mountain Bluebird

Idaho State Bird

Shirley Sturts

Photograph by Darlene Carlton along our Bluebird trail in in the Hoo Doo Valley June 2011

The Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) was designated as Idaho's State Bird by the passing of House Bill 173 on February 18, 1931. It became law on February 28. On that same date, House Bill 172 passed making the syringa the Idaho State Flower. House Bill 172 was approved on March 2. The Library Committee introduced both bills.

Why and how was the Mountain Bluebird chosen? I wrote for information from the Idaho State Library to find out. The following story is gleaned from the *Idaho Daily Statesman* May 6, 1929, August 31, 1929, September 22, 1930, February 18, 1931 and February 20, 1931

In the fall of 1928, Loraine Selby Barton, the newly elected Idaho state chairman of conservation for the Idaho Federation of Women's Clubs, found out that nothing had been done to select a state bird for Idaho. The Bald Eagle had been suggested but she found out that public sentiment was against this choice because it was already a national emblem, symbolic of the greatness and power of the United States. Mrs. Barton then sent out questionnaires to all the women's clubs in the state asking them to study the birds found in Idaho and to nominate birds that would best represent the state. The dove, symbol of peace, was a choice of several clubs. Some clubs chose game birds such as the Sage Hen (Sage Grouse), but by far the majority favored the bluebird.

The interest created by the Idaho State Federation of Women's Clubs in choosing a state bird came to the attention of Mrs. Davis, State Superintendent of Public Instruction for Idaho, who was instrumental in giving the children of Idaho an opportunity to vote on a state bird. The school children of Bingham County cast more than 2000 votes with the bluebird receiving 875. Children gave the following reasons for their vote: "It is one of the last birds to leave in the autumn. It is blue like our summer sky and would advertise the state as well as any other bird. It is beautiful. It is a native bird of Idaho. It is a great help to farmers and will destroy our insects. It stands for happiness. Blue is in our flag. The bluebird is lucky. It is a harbinger of spring. Blue would look pretty with white syringa, the state flower. It is gentle and graceful."

The Western Meadowlark received 539 votes. The reasons the students gave for this choice are "It tells the truth when it says, Idaho's a pretty big state. It arrives early in the spring. It helps farmers. It is beautiful. It destroys bugs and worms. It has a joyful song. It is one of our first spring songsters".

The Chinese (Ring-necked) Pheasant received 303 votes. Some of the reasons given were: "It is here all year round. It is a beautiful bird. It is the strongest and largest of our birds. It doesn't go south in winter and that shows it likes Idaho. Its beautiful colors typify colorings in the west".

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Mountain Bluebird

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The Sage Hen received 236 votes. Students voting for this bird thought "it was truly a western bird. It is not a common bird among all states therefore it would be more unique."

The Canary received 113 votes. (Canary is the obsolete name of either Yellow Warbler or American Goldfinch). Students who voted for it said: "it was a pretty bird and a good songster. It can be kept in the house (this student, no doubt, was thinking of a pet canary) and is a beautiful color".

Western Tanager
June 1982 – Riggins, ID

While this was going on, Mrs. Barton, in her own study of Idaho birds, came across the Western Tanager. She became enthralled with this beautiful bird as it came through the valley in great flocks in the spring. She considered it "truly Idaho's" after reading in a Geographic Bird Book that this tanager had been first discovered in Idaho in 1806 by Lewis and Clark.

A campaign to make the Western Tanager the Idaho State Bird followed her discovery. Letters with a description and history of the bird were sent out to women's clubs. In the fall of 1929 at a state meeting of the Federation of Women's Clubs in Weiser, Idaho, Mrs. Barton gave a report on the outcome of the school votes which had come up with three choices: The meadowlark, bluebird and robin. She indicated that these three birds had already been chosen by other states and presented the tanager as an alternative. A resolution was then passed recommending the Western Tanager be adopted as the state bird, provided the school children favored its adoption.

Conferences with the Governor of Idaho, the State Chamber of Commerce, the State Superintendent of Schools and many others were held. Mrs. Davis offered to present the Western Tanager to the county superintendents as an alternative since the birds originally chosen by the students were already taken by other states. During the summer of 1930, an effort was made to learn more about the Western Tanager. It was not a bird that was well known because it doesn't linger in the valleys. It moves through the valleys in the spring to nest in the more remote mountains. Mrs. Barton made an attempt to put colored pictures of the bird in all the school rooms in Idaho. She sent letters to the National Audubon Society, the National Geographic Bird Book and the American Nature Association. All answers came back: "No pictures or photographs for school purposes on hand." She sent out more correspondence but to no avail.

For two months the campaign was put on hold. Mrs. Barton had family health problems to worry about; scarlet fever. She offered to resign her position but she was asked to continue.

Back to work, she wrote for information and received a letter from the consulting naturalist for the American Nature Association. He ended his letter by saying: "The Mountain Bluebird has not been chosen by any other state. Evidently your school children had this blue bird in mind. It is friendly, nests in bird houses and is your best choice, I believe."

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Mountain Bluebird

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Mrs. Barton then met with the State Superintendent who confirmed this belief: "The County Superintendents and State Board of Education stand behind the children's vote! The governor has not recognized a tanager all summer and he favors a more common bird that the children know and love. We feel that is only right and fair to have the children's choice presented."

In September a meeting of the Idaho Federation of Women's Clubs was held at Hayden Lake. A resolution was passed favoring the adoption of the Mountain Bluebird as the Idaho State bird.

With everyone now in agreement, the Library Committee presented the bill making the Mountain Bluebird, symbol of happiness, to the next session of the Idaho legislature,

An article from the Idaho Daily Statesman, February 18, 1931 announced the Mountain Bluebird as the official choice stated "Though it was generally conceded that the turkey is the most important 'bird' in Idaho, the Mountain Bluebird, not blue jay, was voted the state bird"

Swan trip

Lisa Hardy

March 15, 2014 - Well, the swan trip was a bust - as far as swans go. We tallied 85 swans total from I-90 to Cave Lake. But the company was good, as usual, and we found our first Tree Swallows of the spring. Also, we heard Varied Thrush and Pacific Wren singing.

The swans began arriving in early March, and their numbers apparently peaked Tuesday-Wednesday, March 11-12. But the main body of the migration appears to have skipped over our area because of the high water levels limiting forage opportunities. This is not-so-much fun for birders, but actually good for the swans as it limits their potential exposure to harmful lead-bearing sediments derived from mine tailings. So, we wish the swans a safe trip on their way to their breeding grounds in Alaska.

Photograph by Bill Linn

On our route from Rose Lake to Cave Lake, we found overall waterfowl numbers to be very low, except for a few thousand Northern Pintail at Schlepp Ranch. The few swans we found were at Schlepp also. In past years, the swans appeared to ignore the Schlepp conservation area specially prepared to lure them away from the adjoining Lane Marsh, a heavily-contaminated area, but this year, swan decoys were used to pull the swans into the safe area. We saw five decoys, causing some confusion at first because they were too short-necked to be "good" swans. I guess that because swans are not hunted, there is no need to make realistic decoys. Other harbingers of spring were a few Wood Duck and Northern Shoveler.

We found a total 44 species. Thanks to all trip participants, especially Roland for tallying and Mary and Midge for great spotting: Ellie Argimbau, Jim Brennan, Roland Craft, Mary Deasey, Lisa Hardy, Sally Jones, Midge Marcy-Brennan

Swan Identification

Shirley Sturts

The large numbers of swans that come through our area in the spring are almost all Tundra Swan heading to their breeding ground in Alaska. But it is always fun to discover a Tundra "Bewick's" (Eurasian) Swan, a rare visitor to western North America. Lisa Hardy is a specialist in picking out the unusual in large flocks of waterfowl. In checking out swans coming through the Cataldo and Chain of Lakes area over the years, she has found a "Bewick's" four different times: 31 March 2008, 18 March 2010, 24 March 2012 and 8 March 2014. They are distinguished from the Tundra by a large patch of yellow on their bills. The larger Whooper Swan also has a patch of yellow but the yellow extends forward to a point. There are no accepted Whooper Swan records in Idaho

Tundra "Berwick's" Swan photographed by Lisa Hardy March 31, 2008

In the winter, we usually find one or two Trumpeter Swan. There are some March records but they can be easily overlooked in the large flocks of Tundra. They nest in Alaska as well but some nest in southeast Idaho. Identification is based on voice and bill shape.

Photograph by Wayne Tree from Montana showing the bill shape of the Trumpeter Swan

Trumpeter Swan photographed by Lisa Hardy on Hayden Lake – December 14, 2008

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Swan Identification

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Darlene Carlson and Karen Williams found this banded Tundra Swan on the Chain of Lakes March 8, 2014. It is a good photo to compare the bill of the Tundra with the bill of the Trumpeter from page 5. Most Tundra have a yellow spot in front of the eye which is missing in the Trumpeter. This spot if present identifies it as a Tundra. However, some Tundra Swan do not have the yellow spot so you can only use it for identification if it is present. Note the yellow spot on this swan.

Tundra Swan photographed by Darlene Carlton on March 8, 2014 – Chain of Lakes

Facts about Robin Migration

From "Making Sense of Robin Migration" Journey North America Robin – read more: http://www.learner.org/jnorth/robin/

All robins are not the same: The vast majority of robins *do* move south in the winter. However, some stick around — and move around — in northern locations.

Robins migrate more in response to *food* than to *temperature*. Fruit is the robin's winter food source. As the ground thaws in the spring, they switch to earthworms and insects. While the robins may arrive when temperatures reach 37 degrees, this is because their *food* becomes available .not because the robins themselves need warm temperatures.

Robins wander in the winter: Temperatures get colder as winter progresses. Robins need more food when it's cold and more and more of the fruit gets eaten. Robins move here and there in response to diminishing food supplies and harsh weather. If all robins wintered at their breeding latitude, there wouldn't be enough fruit for them all. So robins tend to spread out in the winter in search of fruit. Most hang out where fruit is abundant, but some take the risk of staying farther north where smaller amounts of fruit remain.

Robins sing when they arrive on territory: Robins sing when they arrive on their breeding territories. Sometimes robins even sing in winter flocks, due to surging hormones as the breeding season approaches. However, in the majority of cases, robins really do wait to sing until they have reached their territory.

Field Trips 2014

PLEASE REGISTER:

Watch the website for updates to our field trip schedule. Participants should contact the trip leader at least 24 hours in advance of the field trip to find out if the meeting place, time or destination has been changed. Participants will share in a mileage reimbursement for the driver

Mica Bay Survey

Date: April 8, Tuesday (held 2nd Tuesday of each month - times vary depending on month)
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Meet: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95
Leader: Shirley Sturts 664-5318
We spend about 3 hours once a month counting birds at Mica Bay. Beginner birders are welcome. We will help you with identification skills.

Riggins and Salmon River Area

Dates: April 21, 22, 23, 2014. Monday - Wednesday
Time: To be determined
Meet: To be determined
Leader: Judy Waring 765-5378
Assistant: Janet Callen 664-1085
While our target bird will be the elusive Mountain Quail, we will explore some of the areas listed in the Idaho Birding Trail guide including the Salmon River Road, Rapid River Fish Hatchery, Pollock and the Little Salmon River and various areas along the way if time permits. This area is a dry grassland eco-system and we may see birds not common to North Idaho such as Yellow-breasted Chat, Lazuli Bunting, Canyon Wren, Golden Eagle and Chukar. Because of the nature of the terrain and a narrow, curving highway with limited pullouts, the "birding" caravan will be limited to 3 vehicles. For lodging information contact Judy.

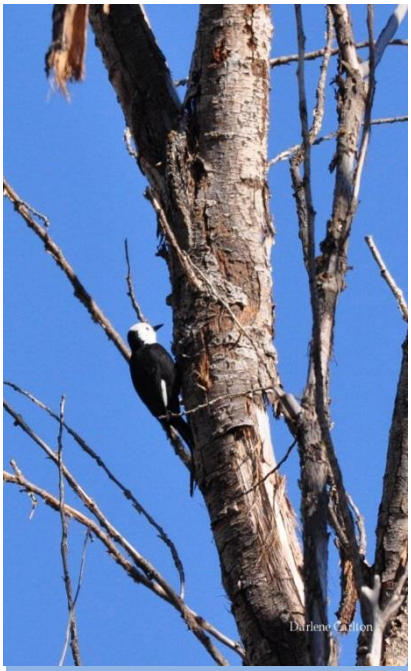
Montana and the Flathead Valley;

Date: May 23-25 Friday-Sunday
Leader: Kris Buchler 664-4739
click on http://www.cdaaudubon.org/fieldtrips details for details. Please let Kris know ASAP if you are interested in going. She needs to let the Ninepipes Lodge know how many rooms will be needed.

Notice of June trip for your summer plans

Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival

Date: June 19-22, 2014



White-headed Woodpecker

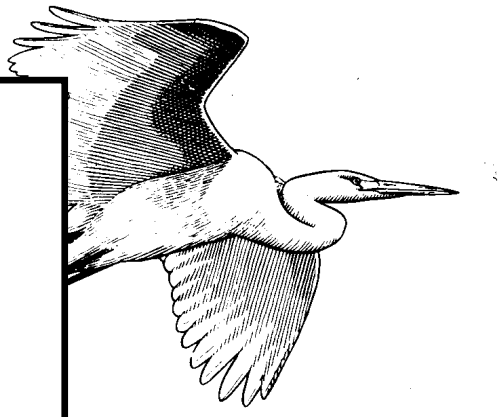
Leader: Valerie Zagar 819- 5115

Looking for a different kind of bird festival in 2014? Join me in Sisters, Oregon for the Dean Hale Wood-pecker Festival.

Check out the Woodpeckers, fly fish in the Metolius River, "shop til you drop" in all the great gift shops, or take a hike among the beautiful scenery of Central Oregon.

For more information go to:
http://ecaudubon.org/Default.aspx?alias=ecaudubon.org/woodpeckers

Stay tuned for further information



NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

Become a member of the National Audubon Society, Join online at www.audubon.org or use this form.

INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP

- ❑ **Regular $20.00**
- ❑ **Two Years $30.00**
- ❑ **Seniors and Students $15.00**

NAME_____

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STATE_____**Zip**_____

Send this application and your check payable to:

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 422248
Palm Coast, Florida\ 32142-6718

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CDA Audubon Chapter Officers

President:
George Sayler (208) 664-2787
Vice President:
Eula Hickam (208) 661-3228
Recording Secretary:
Valerie Zagar (208) 819-5115
Treasurer:
Jenny Taylor (208) 755-4216
Board Members: all officers + Peggy Albertson, Darlene Carlton, Carrie Hugo, Rob Kroese, Jan Severtson, Lynn Sheridan

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Publicity: Carrie Hugo
Field Trips: Roland Craft (208) 457- 8894
Janet Callen (208) 664-1085
Education: Valerie Zagar 819-5115
Conservation: Volunteer needed
Membership: Jan Severtson (208) 667-6209
Keith Sturts (208) 664-5318
Hospitality: Carrie Hugo (208) 689 -9600
Newsletter: Shirley Sturts (208) 664-5318
Mailing: Peggy Albertson 664-1616
Webmaster: Shirley Sturts 664-5318
Historian: Carrie Hugo (209) 689-9600

LOCAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

- ❑ ***Individual $10.00***
- ❑ ***Family $15.00***
- ❑ ***Individual $25.00 - with hard copy of the newsletter***
- ❑ ***Family $30.00 - with hard copy of the newsletter***
- ❑ ***Additional donation____***

Total $_____

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Mail this form and your check payable to: *Coeur d'Alene Audubon Chapter c/o Membership*
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