

THE FISH HAWK HERALD



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

December 2022 / Volume 32 Number 4

Upcoming Events

Chapter Meeting/Cookie Exchange Dec. 13,
Birding Trip to Skagit Valley Feb. 17-20

The regular monthly chapter meeting will be held at 7 p.m. **Tuesday, December 13**, at the Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 Ramsey Road in Coeur d'Alene. The program for December's meeting, presented by Ron Oriti, will be on raptors. This meeting also includes a Christmas cookie exchange. Members are asked to bring a dozen cookies to trade.

Ted Smith reports that a birding trip to the Skagit Valley in Washington is being planned for the President's Day Weekend next year. Participants will drive there on Friday, Feb. 17, bird on Feb. 18-19 and return Feb. 20. A sign-up sheet for participants will be available at the Dec. 13 Chapter meeting.

Chapter Christmas Bird Count Set for Dec. 17

The annual chapter Christmas Bird Count will be held December 17 with Doug Ward handling logistics for this event. Anyone who is interested in participating in the CBC, please contact Doug at dougward@frontier.com or call him at 208-699-9327 as soon as possible. He will organize the event, assigning teams to various locations, and provide email updates on CBC events.

Ward says that if there are enough observers, count areas can be spit up so that teams of birders can count in smaller ones, then compile their results at the end of the day.

The CDA Chapter count circle has traditionally been split up into six areas. After the count has been totaled, the results are sent to a web portal for the national CBC database. This information is organized and published by the National Audubon Society.

The 2021 CBC for the Chapter counted a total of 83 species—a new record number, three more than in 2014. Counters reported three species that had never been reported in prior CBC counts here—a Northern Shoveler, Eurasian Wigeon, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. (See Page 4 for photos of these birds.)

Participants also reported historic high counts for the Belted Kingfisher (11) and Townsend's Solitaire.

Last year's participants did not report one Trumpeter Swan, Anna's Hummingbird, or Ringneck pheasant. Hopefully these will be found in the 2022 count.

A kick-off breakfast is being planned at a place and time TBD. Doug will provide details on this event as they become available.

Birders can also participate by doing a feeder watch on the 17th and emailing the tallies to Doug.

In the past the Chapter has held a post-count potluck dinner, also an event TBD. Attendees discuss the day's sightings and group leaders then email their final tallies to Doug for submission to the National Audubon Society.

Inside This Issue

President's Message	P. 2
Avian (Related) Awareness Quiz	P. 2
A Brief History of the CBC	P. 4
Idaho Website for Birders	P. 4
Best Birding Spots in N. Idaho	P. 5

President's Message

By Ralph Kerr

Greetings Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society birders.

Can you believe it is December "already?" What do you think of when the calendar, a conversation, an advertisement, Christmas decorations in the stores and elsewhere, or any other reminder tells you "tis the season?" I can guess a few responses. What gift to buy for family members or friends? Where will we celebrate Christmas Day, and with whom? What will the menu include this year? HOW MANY SHOPPING DAYS UNTIL CHRISTMAS?

There goes the credit card balance again. Whatever your emotional response, there is excitement in the air.

For me it was a phone call with a child's voice asking "are you coming for Christmas this year." My response was something like "well, I would like too," to which the voice responded "what does that mean, are you coming or aren't you?" At that point I made an instant decision and responded with "I'm coming, I'm coming!" So, there is excitement in the air along with anticipation of fun times with family and friends with lots of laughter, entertaining individual stories and, dare I say it, a football game. Let's not miss skiing or snowmobiling either as the mountains will probably have plenty of snow.

As a wildlife photographer living in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, for me the mention of December says yet another opportunity to photograph Bald Eagles as they swoop down to snag a fish. Yes, I already have hundreds of Bald Eagle photos but there is always the challenge to get that "perfect" flight shot that has eluded me all these years. It is amazing how many people I meet who have traveled long distances to see the Bald Eagles.

President's Message Continued on Page 3

Test Your Avian (Related)

Awareness: Birdy Bands/Singers

Quite a few famous rock bands/singers have bird-related names. Below are lists of three of their hits. Can you identify the band or artist? Answers on Page 3.

1. Eight Miles High, Turn! Turn! Turn!, I'll Feel a Whole Lot Better
A. Atomic Rooster B. The Penguins C. The Byrds D. The Yardbirds
2. For Your Love, Shapes of Things, I'm a Man
A. Flock of Seagulls B. Yardbirds C. Dixie Chicks D. Jayhawks
3. American Girls, You Can't Count on Me, Einstein on the Beach
A. Counting Crows B. The Fabulous Thunderbirds C. The Eagles, D. Sheryl Crow
4. Already Gone, Hotel California, Lyrin' Eyes
A. The Eagles B. Flock of Seagulls C. The O'Jays D. The Yardbirds
5. Earth Angel, In the Still of the Night, Since I Don't Have You
A. The O'Jays B. The Penguins C. Counting Crows D. The Byrds
6. Rock with Me, Tuff Enuff, Twist of the Knife
A. Atomic Rooster B. The Yardbirds C. The Fabulous Thunderbirds D. Dixie Chicks
7. The First Cut is the Deepest, Tell Me When It's Over, Every Day is a Winding Road
A. Dixie Chicks B. Yardbirds C. Eagles D. Sheryl Crow
8. I Ran, Wishing, The More You Live the More You Love
A. The Penguins B. Flock of Seagulls C. Counting Crows D. The O'Jays
9. Cowboy Take Me Away, Not Ready to Make Nice, Good-bye Earl
A. Sheryl Crow B. Dixie Chicks C. Jay Hawks D. The Yardbirds
10. Tomorrow Night, Breakthrough, Sleeping for Years
A. The Byrds B. The Eagles C. The Penguins D. Atomic Rooster

Answers to Quiz: 1-C, 2-B, 3-A, 4-A, 5-B, 6-C, 7-D, 8-B, 9-B, 10-D.

President's Message Continued. . .

As an Audubon member, how will you enjoy our avian friends during December? Participation in the Christmas Bird Count is one way. I won't go into detail here because Alice, our editor, has covered it well elsewhere in this newsletter. I hope you will thoroughly enjoy some winter birding activity.

Carl Barrentine (who presented a Zoom program to our club about moths) posted a note from Great Big Nature on social media. The note of excitement was that a new world record Godwit flight has been recorded this year. According to the article, a 5-month-old juvenile Bar-tailed Godwit touched down in Ansons Bay in northeast Tasmania after having left from Alaska on October 13, 2022, and looks to have flown non-stop 13,560 km (8,425 mi) in 11 days 1 hour. This flight broke the previous record which had been accomplished by an adult Godwit. (You might want to google Great Big Nature if you are interested.) What an amazing flight.

Our December meeting program is as follows:

December: Raptors by Ron Oriti, one of our members

Ron Oriti is a retired astronomer and Planetarium Director. He took up outdoor photography when he lived in the Eastern Sierra of California. He has wonderful pictures of birds, butterflies, dragonflies, lizards, wildflowers, mammals and landscapes, including many photos of nearly all raptors of the west showing them up close and their many morphs.

I look forward to seeing you at the December meeting. In the meantime, Good Birding.

Ralph

Birds Rarely Seen Here Spotted In 2021 CBC—Will They Be Back? Northern Shoveler



Eurasian Wigeon



Ruby-Crowned Kinglet



IdahoBirds.Net—A Great Online Resource for Local Birders—Including Info Compiled By Shirley Sturts

Idaho Birders have a great information resource about birds in our state. IdahoBirds.net contains a wide variety of data and articles that would be of interest to birders in the Gem State. Our own Shirley Sturts is noted as a contributor to the distribution maps linked to the site.

This website contains links to latest bird sightings, state birding listservs, Facebook birding groups, and upcoming birding events.

The Distribution section of Idaho Birds is an on-line extension of the 1998 book *Idaho Bird Distribution, Mapping by Latitude* by Dan A. Stephens and Shirley Sturts, published by the Idaho Museum of Natural History and the Non-game and Endangered Wildlife Program of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. The book includes distribution maps for all bird species that were known to have occurred in the state, divided into geographical sections called Latilongs.

Mica Bay Platform Refurbished

Refurbishing of the Chapter's Mica Bay Observation Platform has been completed, thanks to the work of Ted Smith and Ralph Kerr. The structure is dedicated to Gertrude Hanson (1936-1998), a long-time and dedicated Chapter member.



Mica Bay Platform (Photo courtesy of Ted Smith)

A Brief History of the "Christmas Bird Count"

The Christmas Bird Count is an annual census of bird species in the Western Hemisphere, performed by volunteer birders and administered by the National Audubon Society. According to information compiled by Wikipedia, the event began in 1900 by ornithologist Frank Chapman, who "proposed counting birds on Christmas rather than killing them."

That first bird count was performed by 27 observers located in 25 places in the US and Canada. These participants reported 90 species and 18,500 individual birds. For the 113th count, held in 2012-2013, more than 71,000 people in 2,369 locations participated in the CBC.

The greatest number of bird species ever reported by any U.S. location in a single count is 250, observed on December 19, 2005, in the Matagorda County-Mad Island Marsh count circle in Texas. The greatest number of bird species ever reported by a CBC circle in the world is 531, observed on December 21, 2013, on the eastern slope of the Andes in Ecuador.

This year's count--the 123rd--is being held from December 14 through January 5.

The Audubon Society's website indicates that, the 121st annual US Christmas Bird Count reported 664 species, eight Count Week species, 69 infraspecific forms—lower than a taxonomic species--and 40 exotics. "Count Week Species" are those not seen or heard on a specific count day, but can be listed if seen or heard on the three days immediately before or after that count day. New species reported included the Cuban Pewee and Black-faced Grassquit and the Red-legged Thrush in Florida, and the Siberian Accentor in Homer, Alaska. The Count Week Spotted Rail at Choke Canyon in Texas was new, and seven CW species (Spectacled Eider, Red-throated Pipit, Masked Booby, Sooty Tern, Rose-throated Becard, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Streak-backed Oriole) had been reported in previous years.

Best North Idaho Birding Spots

(Compiled from information at visitidaho.org and the Idaho Fish and Game website)

Idaho is a great state for birdwatching, from the Canadian border to its southeast corner. There are dozens of birding destinations within easy driving distance of Coeur d'Alene. Here are a few examples:

The Boundary-Smith Creek Wildlife Management Area, north of Bonners Ferry. Here you're likely to see Ruffed Grouse, Downy and Pileated Woodpeckers, Bald Eagles and Great Horned Owls as well as migratory species such as Tundra and Trumpeter Swans, Canada and White-fronted Geese, Wigeons and Ducks.

The Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge, also north of Bonners Ferry. The Idaho Fish and Game reports that approximately 220 species of birds can be seen here, with waterfowl numbers peaking about 40,000 during their migratory season.

The Pend Oreille Wildlife Management Area-Hawkins Point and Sunnyside Access, east of Sandpoint. This site is habitat for tens of thousands of waterfowl, huge numbers of coots, Red-necked Grebes, Eurasian Wigeons, and Lewis's Woodpeckers. Bald Eagles breed on nearby islands.

Fernan Lake, Coeur d'Alene is home to a Great Blue Heron rookery on its west end, as well as a Bald Eagle nesting site the east side.

Tubbs Hill Park, Coeur d'Alene, is a great spot to see Osprey (April through September), Pygmy Nuthatch and MacGillivray's and Nashville Warblers (arriving by April).

Wolf Lodge Bay east of Coeur d'Alene is famous for its scores of Bald Eagles, arriving in November and December, to fish for kokanee. This site is a "must see" for eagle enthusiasts.

Heyburn State Park, east of Plummer, contains nesting areas for Great Blue Heron and Osprey—more than 50 pairs of Osprey nest there. It's also well-known for abundant songbirds, most likely to be seen from the trails that lead to a stand of ancient Ponderosa Pine.

Sandhill Cranes Visit Idaho Spring and Fall, from Weippe to Grays Lake

Sandhill Cranes, magnificent birds that stand as much as four feet tall and boast six-foot wingspans, can be viewed in numerous places in Idaho during the spring and fall. Their northernmost nesting area in the state is the Chapman Wetland, east of Orofino on the Pierce-Weippe-Grangemont Subloop.

In the Teton Valley in eastern Idaho, Sandhill Cranes congregate along the Teton River each fall. They can be seen along the Teton Valley Subloop Idaho Birding Trail and by the river.

The most reliable site for seeing literally thousands of these birds is the Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge about 30 miles outside Soda Springs. It's a very long one-day or a more manageable two-day drive from Coeur d'Alene, but well worth it. Grays Lake hosts the world's largest nesting population of Sandhill Cranes, with more than 200 nesting pairs counted in the spring. In fall, birders have seen as many as 3,000 cranes at one time. It's not too early to plan a 2023 visit to Grays Lake!

A Confab of Sandhill Cranes



CDA Audubon Chapter Officers

President: Ralph Kerr
208 660-3220
Vice President: open
Recording Secretary: Pamela
Gomes
Treasurer: Elli Emm
Board Members: All officers and
George Saylor, Ted Smith, Patricia
Beyer

Committee Chairs:

Publicity:
Field Trips: Ted Smith
Education: Barbara

Christofferson

208 667-3931.
Conservation:
Membership: Peggy Albertson
208 664-1616
Hospitality: Elli Emm
Newsletter: Alice Koskela
Mailing: Peggy Albertson
208 664-1616
Webmaster: Patricia Beyer
Historian:

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 \$ _____

NAME _____

EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

Mail this form and your check payable
to: Coeur d'Alene Audubon Chapter c/o
Membership
P.O. Box 361
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816

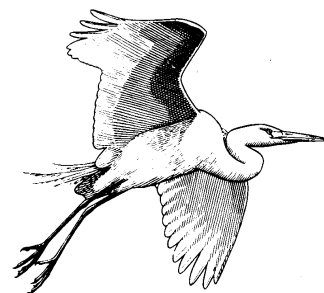
**National Audubon
New Member Application**

Join Online at:
<http://www.audubon.org>

or

Join by Phone:
1-844-428-3826

Reference our Chapter
Code G06



Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society
PO Box 361
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816