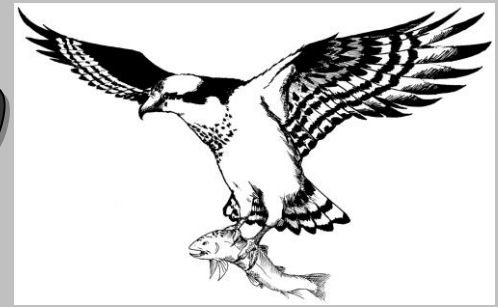


THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society

February 2002

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 6

Visit our website: www.cdaaudubon.org

COMING EVENTS

BOARD MEETING

DATE: February 7, Tuesday (Regular meeting) February 21, Tuesday (Special meeting regarding the new chapter policy)

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

PLACE: Mountain West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

DATE: February 18, Monday

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: First Presbyterian Church,
521 Lakeside

PROGRAM: Kootenai County Big Year: A Birding Obsession presented by Dr. Stephen Lindsay..

Did Dr. Lindsay reach his goal of 200 species in Kootenai County? What were the most exciting surprises in the year 2001 and which birds proved elusive? Find out the strategies used, successes and mistakes of planning a Big Year.

NESTS AND HABITAT - LIBRARY DISPLAY

Fuertes' Eastern Bird Collection

Kris Buchler



The Post Falls Library invited our chapter to do a display for the beautiful case in the entry way of the library. Pat Silvers contacted us and a very hardworking group completed the project Thursday, Jan. 17th.

"Nests and Habitat" depicts three typical habitats found locally: coniferous forest, shrublands and wetlands. Included in the display are some aberrant nests showing creative use of man-made materials, nest parasitism by insects and nest predation by small mammals. Taxidermic mounts of many birds were provided by the U.S. Forest Service.

Audubon members contributing time, talent and materials were: Susan Weller,

Judy Waring, Shirley Sturts, Lynn Sheridan, Jan Severtson, Theresa Potts, Antje Cripe, Janet Callen and Kris Buchler.

Stop by and visit! Many people have enjoyed it already. The display will run through February, Post Falls Library, Spokane Street.

ANNUAL GARAGE SALE!

Due to the overwhelming success of our past two sales, we will plan to have a third one in June. Soon it will be spring and time to clean our closets, garages, shelves, and drawers. Yes! We can use it all! More information will be coming in future newsletters.

BIRD QUOTATIONS OF THE MONTH

So doth the swan her downy cygnets save, Keeping them prisoner underneath her wings.

- Henry VI, Part 1 -

For all the water in the ocean, Can never turn the swan's black legs to white....

- Titus Andronicus -

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE GREEN SPACE DESIGN WORKSHOP

Susan Weller



Photo by Wayne Tree

What vision do you have for the Rathdrum Prairie? Do you see a place in the future for

Rough-legged Hawk, Snowy Owl, Western Meadowlark and other birds? Will Horned Lark go the way of the Upland Sandpiper and simply disappear on the prairie?

Kootenai County, Panhandle Health District, and the cities of Coeur d'Alene, Hauser, Hayden, Post Falls and Rathdrum are working on a Green Space Plan for the Rathdrum Prairie and need your help. Ken Lustig with Panhandle Health said this is our chance to tell them what the Prairie should look like in the future.

Developers, realtors, and industrial interests will all be represented at a planning session. Those with a hope of preserving green space, and what Lustig called "enough space for a coyote to make a living," need to attend this meeting and let their voices be heard.

The workshop will be held Wednesday, February 27, 2002, at 6:00 p.m. at Lake City High School, located at 6106 Ramsey Road, Coeur d'Alene. If you know for certain that you are going to attend, please RSVP at 769-4414. Even if you did not RSPV, your attendance is still encouraged.

If you cannot attend, you can also provide your input by using the interactive mapping exercise at www.swanerdesign.com. Click on "For customers," click "Rathdrum Prairie," and then click "Mapping Exercise."

Please take advantage of this opportunity to provide your input on planning the future of the Rathdrum Prairie. Those who bird on the prairie have watched with alarm, as development and industry eat up more and more grassland habitat. A large chunk of the prairie on the Idaho side is still intact. Do we really want to see our prairie disappear as it has in Washington?

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS SLATED FOR DESTRUCTION

Susan Weller

This spring, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is slated to begin poisoning Red-winged Blackbird in North and South Dakota. The program proposes to kill 2 million blackbirds a year for three years starting in 2002. The poisoning effort is to help reduce sunflower crop depredation in the Northern Plains. A cruel irony exists in this situation for birders who buy tons of sunflower seeds annually to feed seed-eating songbirds—including the Red-winged Blackbird!

The impact of poisoning campaigns rarely affects only the target species, and in this case threatens to kill many other birds, including populations of grassland songbirds already suffering from sharp population declines. A number of grassland birds categorized as "high priority" species by Partners in Flight in Idaho include the Long-billed Curlew, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Western Meadowlark. Other birds that use grassland habitat are the Northern Harrier, Prairie Falcon, Short-eared Owl, Mountain Bluebird, Vesper and Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, and others.

Audubon opposes the blackbird-poisoning program because "it cannot be justified on economic or scientific grounds." The annual income of sunflower crop production is about \$300 million dollars, with blackbird damage amounting to one or two percent of that total. (About four and a half million dollars).

Please help by contacting Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman and urging her to stop the poisoning of blackbirds in the Dakotas. Only a massive effort

between now and March might stop this program, which turns grasslands into killing fields. Contact Ms. Veneman through National Audubon by going to www.audubon.org. Click on Conservation/Action and then on Take Action. If a flood of emails to MS. Veneman's office doesn't stop the poisoning program, birders and wildlife watchers may need to protest more directly by boycotting the sunflower seed industry. Tens of thousands of people feed birds in the U.S., and even more people consume sunflower seeds. While we wouldn't want to punish sunflower growers in other states there is nothing like a little pressure exerted by agricultural peers. Birders could supplement with suet, millet, peanuts, and other foods so bird feeders and bird bellies need not go empty. I would forego a sprinkling of raw sunflower seeds on my salads to save even one Red-winged Blackbird, let alone six million over three years—how about you? Again, please call or write Ann Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture and lodge a complaint against the poisoning program. Also, comments may be directly mailed to Phil Mastrangelo, USDA Wildlife Services, 2110 Miriam Circle Suite A, Bismark North Dakota, 58501. (See *Audubon Magazine Nov.2000 page 22*)

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIPS

N
 e leader ahead of time.
 an the trip.
 d if the trip time or location is changed or if the trip is canceled.
 river of the car) \$5.00 - all day trips \$3.00 - 1/2 day trips.
 ios to communicate between cars. If the radios are used we are
 contribute \$1.00 toward batteries.

MICA BAY SURVEY

d 25 Mondays / 9:00 a.m.
 nt Loop) and Highway 95
 64-5318 - Kris Buchler, 664-4739
 3 hours twice a month counting birds in the Mica Bay area. Beginner birders

BROWN BAG BIRDING TRIP

esday, 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.
 an 609 N. 16th
 ve messages for Lynn with Kris Buchler 664-4739)
 for a walk from her house around Ponderosa Golf Course and back.
 e of our first spring birds, the Red-winged Blackbirds.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE

ay
 t - Behind Fast Burger
 4804
 ends on what is being seen on the Rathdrum Prairie. Snowy Owl, Snow
 Short-eared Owl and Long-eared Owl are all possibilities.

SANDPOINT AND PEND OREILLE LAKE

ay
 ip
 t - Behind Fast Burger
 4808
 n City Beach to Clark Fork. Bring a sack lunch and water and some money
 top.

TH GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT February 15-18, 2002

o participate either as an individual or with youth or school groups go

BOOK REVIEW

Faye Wright

*Audubon: Life and Art in the
American Wilderness.*

Shirley Streshinsky. QL31.A9 S77
1993 (NIC library)

Over the holidays I spent many happy hours in my overstuffed chair in front of my "bird window," drinking coffee, smiling at Pygmy Nuthatches just inches from my nose, and reading about the strenuous life

of John J. Audubon. This 400+ page text is well researched, with a five page bibliography, copious end notes, photographs of portraits and homes of the Audubon family, and a twelve page index. I had never heard of the journalist/novelist, Ms. Streshinsky, before this reading, but I would recommend her as a skilled reporter and weaver of a complex narrative.

Prior to reading this book, I knew of Audubon only what I recalled from a children's biography read of him when I was about twelve, and as one would expect, I had many revelations ahead of me. To begin, I was surprised to learn that John J. Audubon was French (see how little I knew), born to Jean Audubon and Jeanne Rabin (a young, French chamber maid, not his wife). Audubon senior was married to Anne Moynet, the widowed daughter of a wine merchant in France, but he did much business in the Caribbean, and it was there that he kept a second home with a Creole woman (Sanitte Boufford) with whom he had, over the course of years, three daughters. On one of his trips to Saint Domingue, he began a relationship with Ms. Rabin, and some months later she arrived on the doorstep of Sanitte Boufford's home in a "family way." Sanitte, being much more understanding than I, invited her in, and the three continued until shortly after the birth of Jean Audubon's only son, our J.J. Audubon (except that he was not named that at the time). His first listed name was Jean Rabin, after his mother's family. He would later be called Fougere—fern—then Jean Jacques Audubon, and finally his Americanized John James Audubon.

Shortly after his birth, the frail Jeanne died of fever (what

everyone seemed to die of prior to the twentieth century), and the care of little Jean fell to Sanitte. When uprisings in Saint Domingue threatened the lives of foreigners there, Jean Audubon was able to extricate his son and one of his daughters (who was light skinned) out of the area and sent them to France, where his wife, Anne (remember her?), welcomed them both with a loving heart. Audubon recalled of his early childhood that it was wonderful and allowed him almost complete freedom to roam about in the woodlands of his family's estate in Coueron, France. When he was seventeen, his father again saved him from harm by shipping him to his estate in America in order that he might avoid being enlisted into Napoleon's army. (Jean sent Audubon with forged documents that stated his son was really American, having been born in the Louisiana Territories, which had fortuitously just been purchased by the U.S.) Thus begins the life of Audubon, the American.

Like Dave Barry, I find myself wanting to say, "Really, I didn't make this up!" So, who reading this cares about the *begettings* of our hero? Well, maybe no one but myself, but I wanted to offer a sample of the sort of research and detail in *Audubon: Life and Art*, and perhaps also set the stage for a life tossed by the incredible turbulence of the late eighteenth century, yet circled with familial support: first his father and stepmother's, then that of his long suffering wife, Lucy Bakewell, whom he met early in his time in America and whose family befriended him. (Later they would turn on Audubon, but Lucy would remain faithful to him and his wacky dream of becoming The American Ornithologist/Naturalist of all time.) The life of

genius it seems is always one of singular purpose and drive, full of pain and suffering, yet in some sense so blissfully obsessed that there can be no regrets.

As I traveled with Audubon, his wife Lucy, and their two sons through their early American experiences of short-lived successes followed by utter catastrophes, followed by final lifetime achievement, I felt exhaustion, frustration, physical anguish, and finally awe—awe not just for the man and his art, but for the family and sponsors who made his life possible. Who in his right mind could believe that he could go out into the wild, kill, pose, draw, paint, and write about ALL of the birds (and even quadrupeds) in America while trying to support a family? Who could then travel to France and England (because America was not interested in him) in hopes of finding a company of engravers who would then render his life size paintings into life-size engravings, which could then be pressed onto the largest of folios (*double elephant* they were called) and sold as a serialized book for \$700 or more, at a time when most books cost \$2 or less? And what madness was it to do all of this with no money of one's own? Ah, well, perhaps "much madness is divinest sense," though I think Audubon's hard-pressed wife might have said otherwise.

I love a good biography, and this is a good one that takes the reader from Audubon's earliest stirrings of fascination with nature (his first tying of colored thread to a pair of phoebe's legs as markers) to his final vindication late in life with the success of his serialized *Birds of America* that we still enjoy today. I hope you will try it, and until my next reading/writing opportunity, I remain your armchair birder who

hopes you are all loving your lives during what have always been these strange, amazing times.

DEFENDERS LAUNCHES "HABITAT & HIGHWAYS" CAMPAIGN

*From Partners in Flight
email*

Nearly 4 million miles of roadways and 200 million vehicles keep Americans moving, but stop many wildlife species dead in their tracks, according to Defenders of Wildlife which today unveiled its "Habitats and Highways" campaign and Web site to make roads and auto transportation less dangerous and disruptive to wildlife. The campaign will raise public awareness of these issues and work with state and local authorities to incorporate conservation into transportation planning. "Roadkill can really hurt our nation's efforts to restore threatened and endangered species. For example, vehicles have killed six endangered Florida panthers in just the past three months; with only 50 of these magnificent animals remaining, that just can't go on," said Rodger Schlickeisen, president of Defenders of Wildlife.

"The Habitat and Highways campaign will work with transportation planners, biologists, and everyday drivers to make our roadways safer for wildlife."

Research indicates that roadkill is the biggest direct source of human-caused wildlife mortality throughout the United States. For species facing extinction, roadkill can have a very significant effect on prospects for recovery. In addition to the Florida panther, species like the ocelot (less than 200 individuals in south Texas), Florida black bear (approx. 2,000 individuals, with an average of 80

lost to roadkill each year), and the grizzly bear face uphill battles for recovery due to high roadkill mortality.

Defenders' Habitat and Highways campaign has two primary objectives. First, the campaign will work to reduce the impact of roads and driving on wildlife and habitat by modifying existing road to accommodate wildlife passage and habitat. Second, it will help state and local officials incorporate wildlife conservation into transportation planning, so that future road development avoids ecologically significant areas and wildlife movement corridors.

"Our goal is to bring our grey infrastructure into harmony with our green infrastructure," said Trisha White, Defenders' Transportation Associate. "We now have the science and technology to protect wildlife without sacrificing mobility or progress."

Central to Defenders' campaign will be a new Habitat and Highways Web site at <http://www.defenders.org/habitat/highways> which is the Web's most comprehensive resource on wildlife and transportation. Visitors to the site can learn more about species most affected by roads and what they can do to help. By clicking on "State Info," they can find out what is happening in their home states. The site offers a library for books, full-length articles, bibliographies and more wildlife and transportation links.

Defenders of Wildlife is a leading nonprofit conservation organization recognized as one of the nation's most progressive advocates for wildlife and its habitat. With more than 430,000 members and supporters, Defenders of Wildlife is an effective leader on environmental issues.

BIRDING WITH A BROWN BAG

Lynn Sheridan

Jan Severtson and I met before noon, shared a cup of tea, then went down to Independence Point. We waited awhile, then set off down the beach. The weather was cold, with a light snow blowing, creating a white haze over the lake. The best bird find was 2 Double-crested Cormorant on the nearest double piling. All 100+ gulls appeared to be Ring-billed. Other species were Canada Goose 60+, Mallard 40+, Rock Dove 2, American Robin 4, House Finch 8, Bufflehead 4 and 15 American Crow flying overhead. Thanks for the the company Jan.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The Enders Elliott Family, Donald Springer, Robert H. Williams, and Janet Witulski and one transfer, Elke Braunlich.

We look forward to meeting you and welcome you to our activities!

SPIRIT LAKE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Shirley
Sturts,
Compiler



*Photo by
Wayne Tree*

The Spirit Lake CBC, established by John Shipley in 1997, is in its sixth year. We broke our record of 50 species ('97/'99/'00) by coming up with 57 species. However, we only added three new species to the list (Gadwall, American Kestrel

and Black-backed Woodpecker). The 319 Common Redpoll beat out the 313 Black-capped Chickadee for having the highest number of individuals. The total of 1555 individual birds fell short of the record set in 1998 (1686 individuals)

One thing unique about our Spirit Lake count is the method of transportation used by some of our observers. Bill Gundlach spent 4 hours birding by Kayak. He was able to access Idlewilde and Buttonhook Bays which otherwise would have been missed due to snow-covered roads. He also picked up some birds along the shore including our first-time Black-backed Woodpecker. Cindy Langlitz and Kaitlin Henderson covered 4 miles of their area with x-country skis.

Other Participants (covering 272 miles by car and 2.5 miles by foot) were Kris Buchler, Janet Callen, Dick and Elaine Coddling, Roland Craft, Marie Dymkoski, Lisa Hardy, Nancy Mertz, George and Katie Sayler, Herb and Jan Severtson, Donna Sopetto and Shirley Sturts. Thank you for helping. Also, a big thank you to Cindi Langlitz from all of us for hosting the compiling and Pizza Party after the count.

2001 YARDLIST CHALLENGE

Lisa Hardy

The results are in! This year's yardlist challenge turned up 117 species from 13 yards, down from 134 species last year from the same number of yards. The reduced species count is probably a result of having less diverse habitat represented this year. But of the eight participants for whom this is their second year of reporting, all showed an increase in observed species. All, that is, except Shirley Sturts, who appears to be spending too much time on her computer. Actually, Shirley is only down by one this

year, and she did have four species that no one else reported.

Three species were seen by all participants: Northern Flicker, American Robin and House Finch. An additional seven species were seen by all participants but one. Thirty-three species (28%) were noted by only a single participant.

There is really no good way to divide the yards into categories, but there seems to be a natural distinction between yards with American Crows and those without. The crowless yards also happen to be the ones that report some water feature, whether river, lake or pond.

The yards with crows turned in some interesting water birds, despite their lack of water. Lynn Sheridan and Patricia Sweet saw Great Blue Heron, while Theresa Potts had a Mallard fly over. Osprey were seen by Janet Callen, Dick Cripe and the Warings.

Birds of prey were well represented by Stephen Lindsay's Prairie Falcon, Noel Giddings' Cooper's Hawk, and Sharpies seen by Janet Callen and Lynn Sheridan. Several of us saw Bald Eagles, but the Warings had one fly over their suburban estate. At least, I am assuming it was a fly-over, and not perched on a TV antenna in the neighborhood.

Other interesting birds from yards with crows were Brewer's Blackbird (Janet Callen), Townsend's Solitaire (Dick Cripe) and Eastern Kingbird (Theresa Potts). And Nancy Mertz saw an apparent family of jays in her front yard tree - a Steller's Jay, a Blue Jay, and hybridized Junior.

The crowless yards with water views yielded a lot of, well, water birds. Kris Buchler had Common Loon and Western Grebe, plus a surprise Hermit Thrush. Ron &

Maryann Giddings also turned in an impressive list, with Barred Owl, Fox Sparrow and White-winged Crossbill among the highlights. Finally, Shirley Sturts' list gave us Red-necked Grebe, Bufflehead and Dusky Flycatcher.

A big thanks to the 2001 listers. It was all-in-all a very good yardlist year. When we have determined the amount of the cash prizes, we will put your checks in the mail. And of course, all of you are, I am sure, well into your 2002 yard lists by now!

Please see the website for the complete 2001 Yardlist results: www.cdaaudubon.org



BIRD SEED FOR SALE

**Black Oil Sunflower
50 LB. \$15.00**

**Available at Meetings
or call Janet Callen at
664-1085**

**Price includes sales tax
All proceeds benefit
Coeur d' Alene Audubon**

OBSERVATION POST

OBSERVERS:) *Kris Buchler (KBUC) Barbara Durrell (BDUR) Janet Callen (JCAL), Pat Cole (PCOL), Dick Cripe (DCRI), Jerry Hanson (JHAN) Lisa Hardy (LHAR,) Buell Hollister (BHOL), George Sayler, Jan Severtson (HSEV) Lynn Sheridan (LSHE), Shirley Sturts (SSTU), John Weber (JWEB), Susan Weller (SWEL). Faye Wright (FWRI)*

Tundra Swan 127 Pend Orielle Lake and 2 Pend Orielle River Fish and Game Aerial Survey Jan. 9 (PCOL)

Redhead 31,025 Pend Oreille Lake 4900 Pend Oreille River Idaho Fish and Game Aerial Survey Jan. 9 (PCOL)

Ducks 49,552 (Mallard, American Wigeon, Gadwall, Goldeneye, Ring-necked, Bufflehead, Scaup, Redhead, Cava-back, Hooded and Common Merganser) Pend Oreille Lake and River Idaho Fish and Game Aerial Survey (PCOL) (most ducks he has seen in several years)

Sharp-shinned Hawk 1 Stanley Hill Jan. 20 (DCRI)

Cooper's Hawk 1 Higgins Point Dec. 25 (LSHE); 1 at her feeder Coeur d'Alene Jan. 13 (FWRI)

Bald Eagle 1 Between Pinehurst and Kingston Jan. 24 (SWEL) 1-32 Wolf Lodge Bay Survey between Nov. 13 - Jan 21 (32 on Dec. 24) (CCAM)

Merlin 1 Armstrong Hill, CDA Jan. 15 (KBUC)

American Coot 22,950 Pend Oreille Lake 4900 Pend Oreille River Idaho Fish and Game Aerial Survey (PCOL)

Downy Woodpecker 1 Fairmont Loop Jan. 19 (JSEV); 1 Mica Bay Survey Jan. 28 (JHAN)

Blue Jay 1 at his feeder 11th and Ash CDA Jan. 5 (GSAY)

Steller's Jay 1 (tearing feathers off of a black and white bird) north 16th street CDA (LSHE); 7 Mica Bay Survey Jan. 28 (BGUN, KBUC, SSTU)

White-breasted Nuthatch 1 Mineral Ridge Jan. 12 (BGUN)

Northern Shrike 1 Mica Bay Survey Jan. 28 (BGUN, KBUC, SSTU)

Townsend's Solitaire 1 11th and Ash CDA Dec. 26 (GSAY); 1 Mica Bay Survey (BGUN, KBUC, SSTU)

Varied Thrush 1 Mica Bay Survey Jan. 28 (JHAN)

Cassin's Finch 8 Armstrong Hill CDA Jan. 15 (KBUC); 3 at her feeder for the 1st time in about 3 yrs. Jan. 27 (LSHE)

THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Common Redpoll 1-5 at area feeders (KBUC, SWEL, BHOL, JWEB, LSHE, BDUR, JCAL)

Hoary Redpoll 1 at his feeder Jan. 27 (JWEB)

WINTER BIRD SEARCH

Four of us spent the morning of January 27 looking for rare gull visitors. We found only the usual Ring-billed, California and Herring Gulls. However we were treated with good views of the three Double-crested Cormorant that have been frequenting the pilings and log booms off the shores of the North Idaho College Beach. Our best bird of the day was the Pacific Loon swimming and diving in this same area. Other birds included: Pied-billed and Red-necked Grebe, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Mallard, Canada Goose, and Great Blue Heron.

We also drove around Rathdrum Prairie hoping to find the Snowy Owl that was seen there January 1st. About this time the sun came out giving us beautiful views of 5 Red-tailed and 3 Rough-legged Hawk but not our hoped for Snowy.

Participants were: Janet Callen, Lisa Hardy, Thresea Potts and Shirley Sturts

CHECK IT OUT

Top Ten Tips for Bird-Friendly Living

American Bird Conservancy

www.abcbirds.org

Continued from January Newsletter

8. Allow the "Back 40" to Become a Little Scruffy. Environmental Defense calls it "Creating a Mower-Free-Zone". Birds need overgrown grass weeds, brush piles, and dead wood. When you realize the benefit to birds and other wildlife, you too can learn to appreciate a little wildness. If you're looking to make your back yard a haven for birds, talk to your local Native Plant society for tips on what species will work for you. Go to:

www.idahonativeplants.org