

# The Fish Hawk Herald



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the Audubon Society

Pam Gontz, Editor  
 4301 N. Ramsey Rd., #A2-14  
 Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
 765-1115-h 773-4516-w

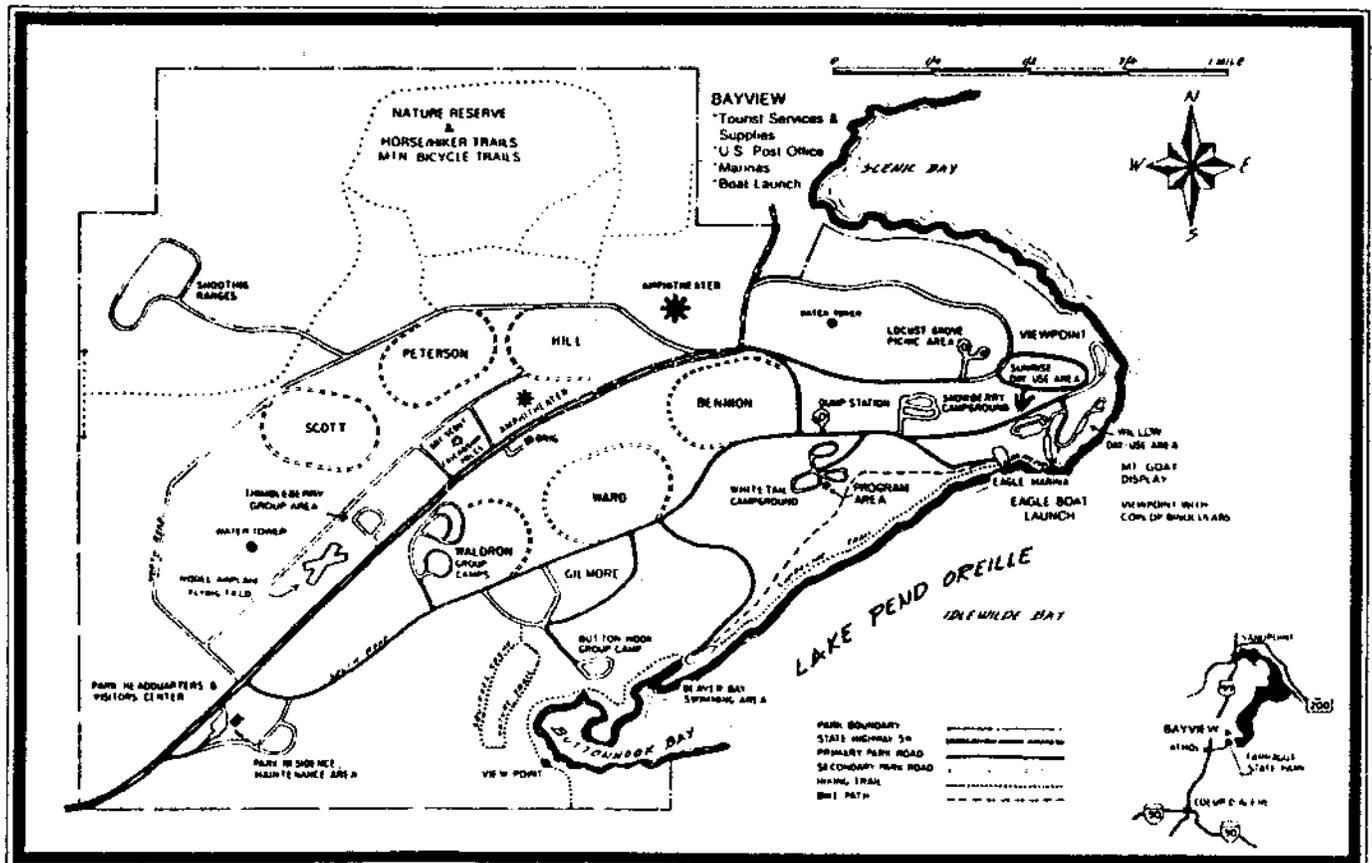
June 1991

Volume 1, No. 7

**CALENDAR CHECK! --** NOTE: There will be no meetings in July and August and therefore, there will not be a newsletter again until September. Any planned field trips will be set out below.

**June 14 - 16, 1991** 6th Annual Spring Meeting of the Idaho Audubon Council!  
 A fun-filled weekend with Auduboners from around the State to be held at the University of Idaho Clark Fork Field Station in Clark Fork, Idaho. The Registration form and Schedule of events has been mailed to Audubon members.

**June 17, 1991** Coeur d'Alene Audubon Potluck at Farragut State Park, Sunrise Picnic Area. Audubon will provide a main meat dish. Bring a side dish, your own plates and utensils and beverage. You will need to stop at the ranger station and pay a \$2.00 parking fee. A map of Farragut is set out below.  
 4 pm to Dark



CALENDAR CHECK! -- [cont.]

- June 29, Killarney Lake Field Trip. Roger Young will lead a boating trip on Killarney Lake. We  
1991 will meet at the Country Chef Restaurant at the Rose Lake exit at 8:00 am for breakfast, 9:00 am for the drive to Killarney. You will provide your canoe or small row boat. Be sure to have a life preserver for each person. Bring lunch if you like. Time you spend on the lake is up to you. This will be a fair weather trip — rain or snow no go!! Call Roger Young 664-4179 to register.
- July Audubon National Convention in Estes Park, Colorado. The theme will  
21 - 27, focus on wildlife, wetlands, and forests in the Americas. Neotropical bird migration will be a prime topic.  
1991 Outstanding speakers and panels have been lined up. For detailed information write the Audubon Convention Office, 4150 Darley Ave., Suite 5A, Boulder, CO 80303 or call (304)499-3622. The next Convention will be on the East Coast so here's a chance to attend one that's fairly close to Idaho!
- Sept. 1, NEWSLETTER DEADLINE for submitting articles, etc.  
1991
- Sept. 17, Coeur d'Alene Audubon Meeting. Details to be in September  
1991 newsletter.

WELCOME -- new members, Evelyn T. Kiesbuy and Herb and Jan Severtson!

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT --

It's hard to believe it has been one whole year since I first initiated proceedings to form the Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Many of you have been with me from the very beginning. Linda Daley, a member of the Rose Lake Bird Club, has waited one year--patiently--for our chapter to become officially chartered so that she would have some treasury funds with which to treasure. As of this writing, her patience has finally been rewarded.

Ellen Scriven, who seemed the obvious choice for Conservation Chair back in May of 1990, has proved throughout the last year that she is indeed the right woman for the job. Ellen continues to update us on the latest issues facing concerned Auduboner's and has been at the forefront of the Old Growth issue. Ellen, also a member of the Rose Lake Bird Club, contributes substantially to the Fish Hawk Herald as well.

Cathy Hurrell, who served as Secretary/Treasurer of the Rose Lake Bird Club was there even before the formation of our Audubon Chapter. Cathy has been very vocal on several important conservation issues, especially on the matter of wetlands preservation. After a well deserved maternity leave, Cathy is back on the job as our Membership Secretary.

Coming on board after the formation of our chapter were Bee Finne, our constant and cheerful Secretary, who, as far as I know has never missed a field trip, and Joan Sestak, who has been responsible for the delicious goodies at every meeting as our Hospitality Hostess.

Ronn Rich, also a member of the Rose Lake Bird Club, makes a valuable contribution to Audubon each month by providing us with a place to meet. His commitment to Audubon is much appreciated, as is his participation as a member of our Board of Directors.

Board member Joyce Cicco made an impact on our chapter with her enthusiasm and participation. Joyce has officially resigned her position because she and husband Lou have moved back to Wyoming. I thank Joyce for her presence, and contributions to both the Rose Lake Bird Club and the Audubon Society. Our loss is Wyoming's gain.

One of the last officers to join the Coeur d'Alene Audubon team was Newsletter Editor Pam Gontz. Needless to say, Pam has done an outstanding job of representing our Chapter each month with a newsletter of which we are exceedingly proud. In both form and content, our newsletter stands up to--and in some cases exceeds--publications distributed by many other conservation and environmental groups.

Last but not least, I need to mention an individual who seems very uncomfortable with public praise and recognition -- Scott Reed. To tell the truth, I'm not sure of all that Scott does in his capacity as a member of Audubon's National Board of Directors. But I can tell you that locally, Scott has provided us with many things: for six months he has provided the postage for our newsletter and various other mailings. He has acquired and passed on many Audubon videos and made them accessible to chapter members. He has performed untold hours of legal services which our chapter could otherwise have not afforded. And, even before I approached Scott about forming a local Audubon Chapter, he offered advice, sympathy, a shoulder to cry on, and an ear to bend concerning environmental issues.

Of course, all of these individuals would not have had the opportunity to excel as Officers, Committee Chairs and Board members if not for the Audubon Membership . . . THIS MEANS YOU! Thanks to all of you. Thanks to those of you who transferred from the Spokane Chapter, thanks to those of you who joined outright, and thanks to those of you who joined National Audubon and came into our fold through that process.

I don't need to tell you that we are all members of one of the most effective environmental organizations in the world -- but then I guess I just did. We are all important elements of Audubon's effectiveness -- globally as well as locally -- but I guess I don't need to tell you that either. What I do need to tell you is thanks for your support.

Here's to many more years of the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society!

Susan Weller, President

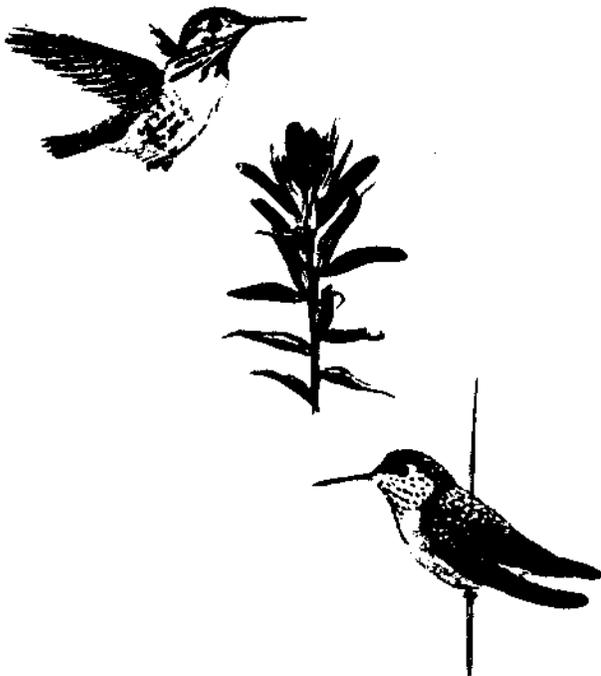
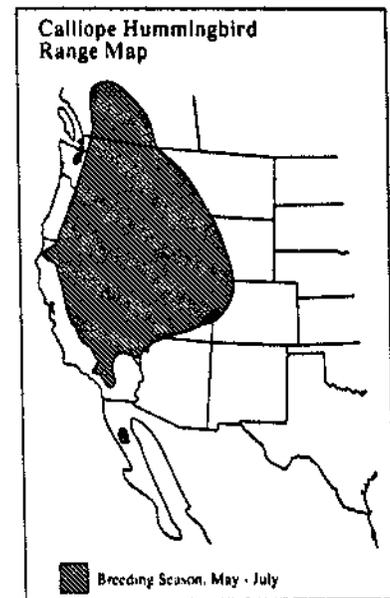
### AVIAN PROTECTION FROM CATS --

After three years of trying, our bird feeder has finally become popular with our avian neighbors. Unfortunately it has also become a popular hangout for our cats which are necessary for keeping the rodent population in check on the farm. We've come up with what appears to be a fairly good device for deterring the cats from dining on our avian guests. The area beneath the feeder is surrounded by a low fence and kept clear of any feline hiding places. The cats can no longer rush out and snag birds feeding on the ground and bird mortalities at the claws of cats have been significantly reduced.

[Ellen Scriven]

FEATHERED FACTS --Calliope Hummingbird [Stellula calliope]

Hummingbirds were given this name, in general, for the sound their wings make. The genus name Stellula means "little star" which might refer to the bird's small size and bright iridescence. It may also refer to the purple streaks on the throat of the male, comparing it with the shape of the tail of a comet. Calliope, the species and common name, probably refers to the Muse of heroic poetry. Since the Calliope Hummer is fairly quiet and does not have a musical song, this correlation does not really apply other than one might wax poetically at the birds' physical beauty.



## Characteristics of Calliope Hummingbirds --

- smallest North American bird with short tail and short bill
- male is green above, white below with greenish flanks; has purple-red feathers on throat which forms streaks on a V-shaped gorget
- female is green above; underparts tinged with pale cinnamon, especially flanks; throat is spotted or lightly streaked [never shows central spot often present on throat of adult female Rufous Hummingbird]
- common along streams in high meadows and canyons
- relatively silent, males courtship call is a high "see-ree"

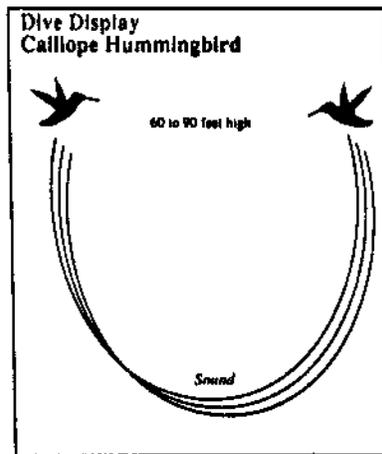
The Calliope Hummingbird is the smallest bird in North America. To put things in perspective, a typical first-class letter weighs about one ounce. A chickadee weighs about three tenths of an ounce and the Calliope is less than one tenth of an ounce. Looking at length, a chickadee is about 5 inches in length while the Calliope is only 3 inches long. Most of the other hummers are 3½ and 4 inches long.

The Calliope breeds in open montane forest mountain meadows or willow and alder thickets. It prefers to breed at high elevations. The Calliope is well known for camouflaging its tiny nest. Their nests generally can be found on a limb or well hidden among groups of pine cones anywhere from 2' to 70' off the ground. Nesting materials consist of moss, shredded bark and cones, plant down, covered with lichen, bound with cocoons and spider's silk, and lined with plant down. It is believed that Calliope commonly

situate their nests with an eastern exposure so as to take advantage of early morning rays of the sun after cold mountain nights. Old nests may be reused year after year. When this happens, the bird tends to build a new nest right on the old one. In some instances, up to four nests have been seen piled on top of one another. Eggs of the Calliope generally number 2, are white and unmarked, and are approximately 0.5" (12 mm) in size. Incubation takes place in 15-16 days and young fledge in 18-23 days.

The Calliope's diet, other than nectar, consists of spiders and tree sap.

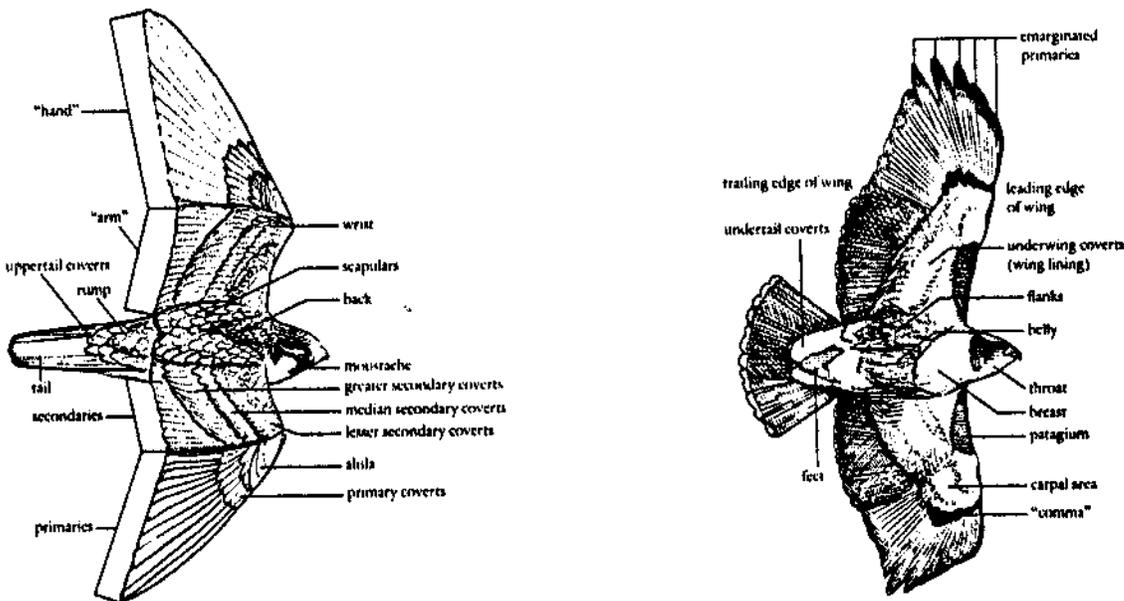
The male Calliope has a dive display that is in the shape of a deep, wide U. During the display it rises up 60 to 90 feet and then swoops down, making a loud whistle at the bottom of the dive; it then swoops up another 60 to 90 feet to the other side of the U. This display may be repeated 3 or more times in succession.



[The Hummingbird Book, Donald & Lillian Stokes; Field Guide to Birds of North America, National Geographic; The Birder's Handbook, Ehrlich, Dobkin & Wheye]

AVIAN ANATOMY --

One of the most difficult birds for me to identify are the Raptors! I have found that learning the topography of the raptor has put me one step closer to actually identifying the species. See the diagram below.



Knowing these features of the raptor can help when your glassing these birds. You can decide whether the bird in question has a light or dark "leading edge" or "trailing edge" as well as other diagnostic features. Looking at these key characteristics will enable you to go back to your field guide and compare notes.

[Hawks in Flight, Pete Dunne, David Sibley, & Clay Sutton]

DIAGNOSTIC DETAILS --

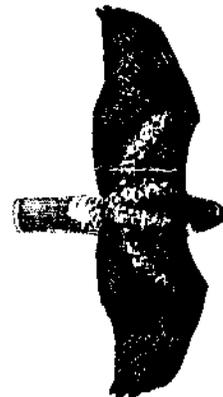
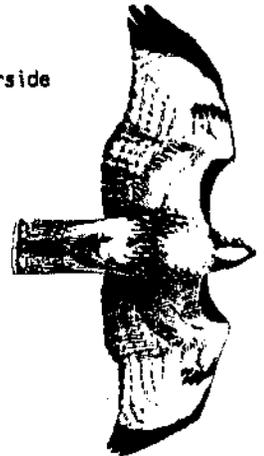
Since we've looked at the anatomy of raptors in the article above, let's consider the diagnostic differences of the Red-tailed Hawk and the Swainson's Hawk. Both the Red-tailed and Swainson's are buteos. A typical buteo is a medium-to-large raptor with a heavy body and broadly proportioned wings with a short tail. Wing tips are generally blunt but can appear at times to be tapered. Buteos use thermals extensively for lift and soar frequently. Wing beats are slow, heavy, and methodical and often occur in a series of three to five, followed by a glide.

Take a look at the illustrations of the Red-tailed Hawk and Swainson's Hawk. What characteristic features do you see on these two hawks?

The body of the Red-tailed Hawk is broad and heavy. Key features of the underside of the Red-tailed Hawk are the dark patagium, dark comma, with a light area in between that shows as white headlights on an approaching bird. They also have a heavily streaked belly band and white chest. The leading edge of the wing of the Red-tailed Hawk is dark and the trailing edge is lighter.

The upperside of the Red-tailed Hawk is a mottled dark brown with five distinct patches of white speckling on greater coverts, scapulars, and uppertail coverts. The adult shows the reddish tail with black subterminal band. [Note: Above are features of a typical adult Red-tailed Hawk. There are extensive variations in color phases of this hawk to consider as well as the immature plumages.]

Red-tailed Hawk, underside



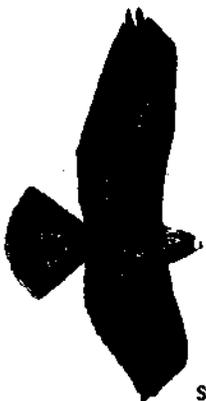
Red-tailed Hawk, upperside

Swainson's Hawk, underside



The Swainson's Hawk is slim, long-winged and long-tailed. The underside of the Swainson's has dark flight feathers (trailing edge of the wing) that are darker toward the tip of the wing, contrasting with paler coverts (leading edge of the wing) and body. They have a finely gray-brown tail and a pale spot at base of outer primaries adjacent to a dark comma.

On the Swainson's upperside, you will see that it is a smooth dark brown showing a faint pattern of light coverts and darker flight feathers. On some individuals this pattern is quite visible. [Again, note that these features refer to an adult Swainson's and vary with the different phases and immature plumages.]



Swainson's Hawk, upperside

Studying and familiarizing oneself with the Red-tailed Hawk will provide a reference point for the measuring and comparing of all other buteos.

[Hawks in Flight, Pete Dunne, David Sibley, & Clay Sutton]

On the 29th of May four Auduboners braved evening thundershowers to bird Tubb's Hill in Coeur d'Alene. Roger Young proved what an asset he is on an outing by regaling Tubb's Hills initiates Herb and Jan Severtson and I, with historical insights about the Hill and surrounding areas. He told us about finding wooden cannonballs and arrowheads, about the Fort flag pole, and about the fight to save Tubb's Hill from development many years ago. We owe the people who made that effort a great deal. Tubb's Hill is a special place.

The natural history of the Hill is also quite interesting - engrossing in fact. The vegetation is thick and lush, sometimes mossy, and smattered with exquisite species of wildflowers -- larkspur, Blue and Meadow Death Camas, Shooting Stars, Western False Solomon's Seal, Long-plumed Avens, and Leopard Lily - to name a few. All of this is perfectly, naturally landscaped with huge mossy boulders and wonderful old snags, some standing, some fallen.

Unfortunately, we also found a small stand of knapweed. If a few of us went back, we could pull it by hand and nip that noxious (obnoxious) weed in the bud.

But this was a bird outing. We even saw some birds, though we heard more. We saw:

We had a great evening and only got sprinkled on once. Let's take a morning outing sometime so we can enjoy another facet of the Hill. [-sw]

THE OBSERVATION POST ---

- \_\_\_\_\_ucks - Pr\_\_\_\_\_ers
- \_\_\_\_\_ope - \_\_\_\_\_gh, Bee Finne
- \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_riven



ANT PROBLEM? ---

If ants are a problem on your hummingbird feeder try hanging it from greased nylon thread or fish line. [-Ellen Scriven]

AUDUBON OLD GROWTH MAPPING PROJECT ---

As many of us are aware, Ancient Forest Protection is one of National Audubon's top national priorities. You can become involved in this important issue on a local level. Volunteers are needed to do field work gathering information on old growth stands on the Fernan District and helping with the Audubon Old Growth Mapping Project. We will be working closely with the Forest Service and several training sessions being offered by them will be very helpful to members of our team. It will be a good opportunity to become better acquainted with our surrounding National Forest and learn identification and data collection for its inhabitants. We are setting up a schedule for the field work which will begin immediately. If you are interested in volunteering some of your time this summer, please contact Ellen Scriven (message # 682-3478) or Don Bacon (# 664-0895).

[-Ellen Scriven]

Answers to Test Your Knowledge - Identifying Birds by Flight:

- |      |      |       |       |       |
|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. k | 5. l | 9. a  | 13. r | 17. o |
| 2. s | 6. b | 10. j | 14. h | 18. e |
| 3. m | 7. c | 11. d | 15. i | 19. q |
| 4. p | 8. f | 12. t | 16. g | 20. n |

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE - IDENTIFYING BIRDS BY FLIGHT --

Certain families or groups of birds have a characteristic flight. Being able to recognize this is a great help in narrowing down the field of possibilities for a strange bird and trying to identify it as to species. In this test of knowledge, match the family or group with the flight description by putting the correct letter in the space provided. Answers on are page 7 of this newsletter.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Family or Group</u>
1. Can fly backward. _____	a. Accipiters
2. Dive vertically into the water for bait fish. _____	b. Alcids
3. Flit close to the surface of the sea, as if walking on water. _____	c. Buteos
4. Flocks often fly compactly and wheel in unison. _____	d. Cranes
5. Fly on ultra-silent wings. _____	e. Diving Ducks
6. Have swift, buzzy, veering flight. _____	f. Falcons
7. Hawks with broad, fingered wings and fan-shaped tails. _____	g. Flycatchers
8. Hawks with long, pointed wings. _____	h. Geese
9. Hawks with short, rounded wings and long tails. _____	i. Gulls
10. Long-legged, long-necked birds that fly with legs extended but necks drawn in. _____	j. Herons
11. Long-legged, long-necked birds that fly with neck and legs fully extended. _____	k. Hummingbirds
12. Most have gently undulating flight. _____	l. Owls
13. Noted for their swift, graceful flight. _____	m. Petrels
14. Often fly high and in wedges. _____	n. Rails
15. Often follow ships, soaring over the stern. _____	o. Shearwaters
16. Perch on dead limbs from which they sally out to catch insects. _____	p. Shorebirds
17. Sail close to the surface of the waves on set wings. _____	q. Surface-feeding Ducks
18. Take off by first pattering along the surface of the water. _____	r. Swallows
19. Take off from water by jumping directly in the air. _____	s. Terns
20. Usually dangle their legs on their weak flights. _____	t. Woodpeckers

What Bird is This? The Birdwatchers Quiz Book, Henry Hill Collins, Jr.]

WATERFOWL GO DOWN THE PIKE --

Northern Pike (*Esox lucius* Linnaeus) were illegally introduced into the Spokane River Drainage sometime during the 1970's and have proliferated in the system both through migration and by human transport. The extent of their range includes various bays in Lake Coeur d'Alene, the Spokane River above the Post Falls Dam, the lateral lakes in the lower Coeur d'Alene River Waterway, and in the lower St. Joe River.

Northern Pike are well known for their voracious appetite. It is this characteristic that seriously disrupts the balance in the Spokane River ecosystem. At least 20 percent of pike's diet consists of native Westslope Cutthroat Trout (*Salmo clarki lewisi*), Idaho's State Fish. Conservative

growth estimates have it that pike convert four pounds of forage to one pound of body weight. Consider that just the four state record fish alone which were caught in Lake Coeur d'Alene this Spring total over 142 pounds. This means that at least 113.6 pounds of our State Fish was reduced to pike forage by these four fish alone! In an article appearing in the May 10, 1991 edition of "The Nickel's Worth" Jeff Smith, the author, boasts: "When you have fishermen releasing 20 pound plus fish with the hopes of something larger you know it has to be good." Certainly the impact on Westslope Cutthroat Trout, touted by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game as "An Idaho Legacy," is grave.

Pike do not stop at trout. Freshwater Fishes of Canada, Bulletin 184, by W. B. Scott and E. J. Crossman, states on page 361 that "The amount of food consumed (by pike) seems staggering . . . Lagler (1956) estimated that an average of 1.5 million waterfowl were eaten by Northern Pike on a single wildlife refuge in Michigan although fish were a main food item."

Notice how many broods of ducks and geese on Lake Coeur d'Alene and the lateral lakes include only one or two ducklings or goslings. Have you wondered where they are going?

Because the Idaho Department of Fish and Game has allowed a fishery to develop, pike are gaining a following. Pike fishers are exerting political pressure to gain additional protection for this illicit species.

I believe this approach is ill advised, both because of the serious negative impact pike already impose, let alone the impact increased numbers would have, and because further protecting pike likely will not give the pike fishers what they want, namely more and bigger pike. The idea is that if pike cannot be fished for during the time when they spawn more pike will be recruited through the spawn. This certainly seems reasonable enough until the fact that egg numbers for spawning female pike as high as 595,000 have been reported with egg numbers averaging 9000 per female pound (eg. a 20 pound pike would lay 180,000 eggs). Increased spawning recruitment would increase the risk that pike would overrun their forage base yielding a population of smaller, even hungrier fish capable of consuming virtually every vertebrate in the drainage smaller than a football.

What is the solution? Like most problems a simple answer wearing a white hat does not come riding in from the West. Pike seem to be in the drainage to stay. Not only are they predacious, they are tenacious.

Certainly they do not warrant "game fish" status. I do not believe that the Idaho Department of Fish and Game would have introduced this species; therefore they should not act like they think illegal introduction is a good idea by affording the predator protection.

I advocate unlimited fishing for pike.

What can you do? Take ten minutes to write a letter to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, 2320 Government Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814. Take another ten minutes (and another stamp or two) to write to your Idaho State senators, representatives, and to the Governor. And if you want to express your concern for waterfowl and native fish in person, come to the Fish and Game Hearings on June 10th from 7:00--10:00 pm at the Kootenai County Extension Building, just north of the fairgrounds on Government Way in Coeur d'Alene.



# NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

## CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

YES, I'd like to join. Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send the Audubon magazine and my membership card to the address below. My check for \$20 payable to the National Audubon Society is enclosed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Send this application and your check to

National Audubon Society  
Chapter Membership Data Center  
P.O. Box 51001  
Boulder, CO 80322-1001

Local Chapter  
Coeur d'Alene G06

Local Chapter Code  
7XCH8

## Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society

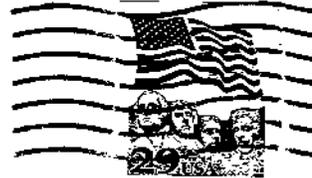
### OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President:	Susan Weller	682-3413
Secretary:	Bee Finne	667-0425
Treasurer:	Linda Daley	682-3573
Board Members:	Scott Reed	664-2161
	Joyce Cicco	772-6235
	Ronn Rich	772-4512

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Conservation Co-Chairs:	Ellen Scriven	
	Mike Bowman	667-2499
Membership Secretary:	Cathy Hurrell	664-0689
Hospitality Chair:	Joan Sestak	772-7452
Newsletter Editor:	Pam Gontz	765-1115

Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society  
% Pam Gontz  
4301 N. Ramsey Rd., #A2-14  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814



Shirley Sturts  
4615 Fernan Lake Rd. E.  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814