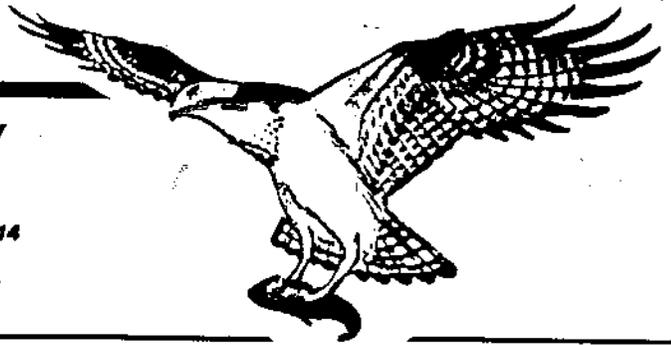


THE FISH HAWK HERALD

Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the Audubon Society

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Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
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March 1993

Volume 2, No. 12

CALENDAR CHECK! -

MAR. 16,
1993
5:30 PM

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING! Members of the Conservation Committee will meet on March 16th at 5:30 pm at the Takara Restaurant, 309 Lakeside Ave., Cd'A.

MAR. 16,
1993
7 PM

MARCH MEETING! The Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society will meet on Tuesday, March 16th at 7 P.M. at the Lake City Senior Center, 1916 Lakewood Drive, Coeur d'Alene. John Rosapepe, NW Regional Grassroots Coordinator for the Endangered Species Coalition, will present a program on the Endangered Species Act and endangered species both nationally and locally. This office of the Endangered Species Coalition was opened in Spokane with a grant from Audubon.

MAR. 16,
1993

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE for submitting articles, etc., for the April newsletter.

MAR. 21,
1993

MARCH FIELD TRIP! For the March field trip we will wander the roads west of Spokane ending up out near the Reardon ponds in search of hawks, owls, and any early arrivals at the ponds (if unfrozen). Meet at the Montgomery Wards (Cd'A) parking lot in the southwest corner at 7:00 am. Please register with field trip leader, Shirley Sturts, at 664-5318, so that we could notify you of last minutes changes, if any. Plan on bringing a lunch, something to drink and dress in layers as weather can be unpredictable this time of year.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE UPDATE -

Our Chapter has appealed two timber sales on the Fernan District of the Panhandle National Forests. The sales were proposed in several drainages of the Little Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, an area which has seen a lot of degradation due to past logging activities. There are several other sales coming up on Fernan which Audubon would like to take a close look at. Anyone who wants to get involved in forest issues please contact one of you conservation co-chairs, Amy Kiesbuy - 664-9293, or Ellen Scriven, E. 14600 Killarney Lk Rd., Cataldo, ID 83810. =

AUDUBON ECOLOGY WORKSHOPS -

As some of you know last May I had the opportunity to participate in the National Audubon Society's Southeast Arizona Ecology Workshop. It is an area of incredible biodiversity and was an unforgettable week of learning natural history. Ranges of mountains rise out of the desert and grasslands to over 10,000 feet. The mountains, known as sky islands offer a wide array of habitats, the composition of the vegetation changing with the elevation and aspect. There are oak savannahs, sycamore riparian areas, pinyon and other pine and oaks in the middle elevations and douglas and subalpine fir on top. In addition to the elevational and precipitation gradients. Southeast Arizona happens to be the only place in the U.S. where species endemic to the Sierra Madrean bioregion occur, overlapping that of the Rocky Mountains. Consequently over 300 species of birds have been recorded, 25 of which are not found anywhere else in the U.S.

Just to whet your appetite, a few of the species we saw were Vermillion Flycatcher, Elegant Trogon, Road runner, Montezuma Quail, Magnificent Hummingbird, Blue Grosbeak, Red-face Warbler, Yellow-eyed Junco, Phainopepla, Hepatic Tanager, Pyrrhuloxia and Bridled Titmouse to name a few.

(CONT. ON PAGE 2)

The trip was well planned and the four leaders were knowledgeable, accommodating, enthusiastic and gracious. The highlight of the trip for me was the several days we spent at and near the American Museum of Natural History's Southwestern Research Station in the heart of the Chiricahua Mountains. We also had the opportunity to meet with several local Audubon members and learn about their conservation efforts in the area such as re-establishing a population of Thick-Billed Parrots and hot issues of grazing on public lands and mining.

Audubon offers ecology camps and workshops in a number of locations across the country and several abroad. If the Southeast Arizona Ecology workshop is an example, I could recommend any of them. I have several brochures and would be glad to share some of my experiences in Arizona with anyone interested. If you decide to enroll in the Audubon Camp in the West or the one in Maine or the Ecology Workshop in Connecticut for a learning vacation in 1993, please mention my name and they will issue a coupon for \$100 good for another workshop experience which I will transfer to our chapter.

I haven't been to the Audubon Camp in the West but Peg Abbot, the National Workshops Coordinator, and our leader for the Arizona workshop writes "For our 1993 season, we will once again host our photography workshop, June 5-14. This course begins at the Camp and travels on to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks for an in-depth course on nature photography. We follow this with the second annual Endangered Species course June 12-19, which examines wolf, bald eagle, grizzly bear and trumpeter swan ecology and conservation in detail. Our Field Ecology sessions run weekly starting June 26. Geology, plant ecology, bird and mammal ecology, Native American studies, insect ecology and conservation issues are subjects presented in the field while you hike and explore the dramatic Wind River Mountain area." The setting is a glaciated 7,500 foot high valley, amidst 13,000 foot snow-capped peaks inhabited by moose, bighorn sheep, mink, beaver, otters and eagles. The facilities include original homestead cabins, providing wonderfully rustic yet comfortable accommodations at the Whiskey Mountain Wildlife Conservation Camp operated by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in cooperation with the National Audubon Society. For more information on the camp or to receive a free brochure, please contact: Registrar, National Audubon Society, 613 Riversville Road, Box L, Greenwich, CT 06831, Tel: (203)869-2017.

[Ellen Scriven]

"Nature is not always a gentle hostess, but she never fails to be an inspiring teacher."

BIRD NOTES --

- Bald Eagles - 01/93, 3 seen at the Cataldo Slough by Ellen Scriven
- Pygmy Owl - 02/93, 1 seen at the Cataldo Slough by Susan Weller
- Pygmy Owl - 02/93, 1 seen sitting on a shopping cart in the parking lot at the Post Falls Tidyman's store checking out 'groceries' - the house sparrows that frequent areas where bird seed is spilled - reported by Judy Waring
- Hooded Mergansers & Common Mergansers - 02/93, seen at Cataldo Slough by Susan Weller
- Townsend Solitaire - 02/93, seen in St. Maries area by Shirley Sturts
- Harlan's Hawk - 02/93, seen in St. Maries area by Shirley Sturts
- American Robin - 02/03/93, 1 seen at Ellen Scriven's home
- Rusty Blackbirds - 02/06/93, 3 seen on Goosehaven Rd. near St. Maries by Dan Svingen; 4 seen in same area on 02/07/93 by Susan Weller and Pam Gontz
- Harlan's Hawk - 02/07/93, 1 seen on Goosehaven Rd. near St. Maries by Susan Weller and Pam Gontz
- Snowy Owl - 02/13/93, 1 adult seen on Hwy 2 about 10 miles west of Fairchild Airforce Base by Pam Gontz
- Great-horned Owl - 02/13/93, pair seen on Coulee-Hite Rd. on Hwy 2 west of Spokane by Pam Gontz
- Bald Eagle - 02/13/93, 1 adult seen at Stateline Rd. and Hwy 53 feeding on carcass with a Raven by Cathy Wilson
- Horned Larks - 02/23/93, flock of approx. 160 seen on Huetter Rd. between Poteline Rd. & Prairie Rd. by Pam Gontz



LEAVE THOSE SNAGS!!

It is surprising how many people still don't see the value of standing dead trees. Of course, we observers of bird life know how important snags are to cavity-nesting species. We may not be aware of all the roles snags fill or how to communicate their importance to others. How many times have you come across someone ready to cut down some "old widow maker" because of its perceived danger, because of its untidy appearance or to cut it up for firewood? We have a responsibility to let others know about all the wonderful things that snags provide in order to preserve this dwindling resource.

The lack of suitable nest sites is probably the most limiting factor for populations of cavity-nesting birds. The decline in many of these species may be directly attributable to the decline in the number of snags due to even-aged forest management, clearing of land and "clean" woodlot management.

In North Idaho there are approximately 42 species of birds, including ten species of woodpeckers; 14 species of mammals; and several species of amphibians that are totally or mostly dependent on cavity habitat. Cavities can occur naturally, such as where limbs have broken off or trunks have split, or they can be excavated. Spaces under loose bark can also offer a cavity. Cavities nearly always occur in dead or partly dead trees. Only a few birds can excavate their own cavities. Most can not. Basically only members of the woodpecker family are capable of excavating in sound wood. The Pileated, Hairy and Down Woodpeckers and the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker are examples. Black-capped and Mountain Chickadees; and Red-breasted and Pygmy Nuthatches can make their own nest hole in soft or decayed wood. For many species of woodpeckers construction of the cavity is a part of the nesting ritual.

All other species of birds, as well as mammals, rely on the holes made by the primary excavators or on naturally occurring cavities. Secondary cavity users include the Peregrine Falcon; American Kestrel; Wood Duck; Hooded Merganser; Bufflehead; Screech, Pygmy, Barred and Saw-whet Owls; Western and Mountain Bluebirds; and Tree and Violet-green Swallows, to name a few. Pine Martens, Flying Squirrels, Bats, Yellow Pine Chipmunks, Raccoons and Fishers all use cavities made by other species. Some species such as the Screech Owl, many woodpeckers and chickadees use cavities throughout the year, for roosting and over-wintering as well as for nesting. Some mammals use them for hibernation. Bats also use the areas under loose bark for roosting. Many invertebrates, such as moths, beetles, ants and pseudo scorpions feed and hid beneath loose bark. They are important food sources for birds and other larger organisms. The decayed wood of snags and downed

trees is important as a growth substrate for countless fungi, mosses and lichens.

Many of the cavity dependent species, most notably the birds and mammals, have specific requirements as to the minimum diameter of the snag and the height of the cavity above the ground. For instance Black-capped and Mountain Chickadees require snags of about 4" dbh (diameter at breast height); Hairy Woodpeckers 10" and Wood Ducks 20". Pileated Woodpeckers require a minimum snag diameter of 20". The minimum nesting height for chickadees is 6 ft.; Hairy Woodpeckers 15 ft.; and Wood Ducks 6 ft. In addition each species shows a preference for a specific species of snag as well as the habitat type in which the snag is situated. There is still a lot to learn of the requirements of each species. In general in our area it appears that of the conifers, Ponderosa, Pine, Tamarack and Fir are most preferred and of the deciduous trees, Cottonwood, Willow and Aspen, where they occur, are preferred. Of course any snag, regardless of species is better than none at all. Other factors to keep in mind are that while the same snag may be used by several species, birds and mammals of the same species will usually not share the same snag because of territory requirements. Also the primary excavators will usually not excavate twice in the same snag. Larger snags evidently can meet the requirements of many more species than can smaller snags. So for instance, if the snag requirements of Pileated Woodpeckers are met, the needs of many other species are assumed to be met.



A problem often arises when Forests are intensively managed, as they are here in North Idaho. Often the trees are cut before they reach the minimum size required by one of our primary excavators, the Pileated Woodpecker. Careful management is necessary to provide snags of sufficient size for the long-term welfare of dependent species.

In the past managers of forest and recreation lands were likely to remove snags because they were not aesthetically pleasing, harbored insect pests, conflicted with other management practices, were fire or safety hazards or simply were cut down in the course of logging an area. As a result nesting sites for many birds and mammals were eliminated. Fortunately, foresters are

becoming more aware of the ecological, aesthetic and economic benefits of protecting non-game wildlife including cavity nesters. Several years ago the Forest Service established a policy to "provide habitat needed to maintain viable, self-sustaining populations of cavity-nesting and snag-dependent wildlife species". Guidelines directed for the "retention of selected trees, snags, and other flora to meet future habitat requirements." The standard on the Panhandle National Forest is to leave 3 snags per acre and 3 live trees per acre as replacement snags in a cutting unit. While this is a bare minimum and may be inadequate, especially when there is a lack of snags in the surrounding area due to past clearcutting, firewood cutting and blow down, at least it is a step in the right direction.

Obviously it is important to have a continuous supply of trees ready to replace the standing snags that eventually fall to become part of the woody debris on the forest floor, another important role in the ecosystem. There they provide shelter and runways for forest mammals and habitat for a variety of invertebrates and microbes. Sometimes they become "nurse logs" upon which tree seeds such as hemlock take root and grow. Where snags fall into lakes and streams they are important in contributing to aquatic habitat through the creation of pools, cover benefitting trout, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates, and help to check the downstream movement of rocks. Rotten wood buried in the ground is important for mycotrophic plant species because it retains moisture and provides organic substances essential to the associated mycorrhizal fungi. Through further decomposition the nutrients of what was once a living tree are released for recycling.

Most of the snag dependent birds and amphibians and some of the mammals are insectivorous (insect eating) and represent a major portion of insectivores in the forest. Their role as biological control agents should not be underestimated, helping to prevent the outbreak of insects considered to be forest pests. Woodpeckers especially prey heavily on many species of tree-killing bark beetles. One has to wonder if the serious infestations of spruce and pine beetles, tussock moths, larch, saw flies and such which are recently taking their toll on our forests, are not related to the decline of cavity-nesting species.

In many places in Europe forest managers realized too late the prudence of retaining snags. Having managed intensively for a longer period of time they are now going to great efforts and expense to try to rebuild populations of insect controlling species by erecting nest boxes en masse throughout their forests. Considering the cost of constructing, installing and maintaining these boxes for each of the species (having differing requirements) we should be taking immediate measures to ensure a healthy supply of snags on our forests. We could also note that it is not apparent that artificial nesting cavities supply the needs of primary excavators.

So ... the next time you are out for a walk and come upon your neighbor or a stranger with saw in hand at the base of one of these standing dead or partially dead giants you might want to pass along a few reasons to leave it there where it can contribute to the health and balance of the surrounding ecosystem. Chances are that person never really gave much thought to the consequences of cutting down one old dead tree but they'll surely think twice about cutting down another.

[Eben Schrenk Sources: Cavity-Nesting Birds of North American Forests, Forest Service U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Handbook No. 511; Snags, Thomas, Jack W.; Anderson, Ralph G.; Maser, Chris; and Bull, Evelyn L.; IPNF Snag and Woody Debris Management Guidelines 1985.]

"FEATHER" YOUR KNOWLEDGE -

Want to learn more about birds, plants, or other interesting topics? Here are two places you can take classes this summer and fall - the **Clark Fork Field Campus** in Clark Fork, Idaho, offers many classes this summer and fall such as:

May 8 & 9, 93
May 15 or 16, 93
Jun 5, 93
Jun 19, 93
Jul 11, 93

Beginning Birds
Intermediate & Advanced Birds
Native Wildflowers, Shrubs & Trees
Trees and Tree Diseases
Nature Photography



Aug 8, 93
Sep 11 or 12, 93
Sep 26, 93
Oct 16, 93
Oct 17, 93

Wolf Behavior & Ecology
Fossil & Geology Tour
Flora of North Idaho
Native American Culture & Myths
Kaliappell Culture



For more information on these classes and others, and to be put on their mailing list write to: Clark Fork Series, College of Forestry, Wildlife, and Range Sciences, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83844.

The **Yellowstone Institute** in Yellowstone National Park offers 80 courses on a wide range of topics. A few of interest are:

June 01-04, 93
June 18-20, 93
June 21-25, 93
June 26-27, 93

Mammal Tracking
Birding Yellowstone
Birds of Yellowstone
Butterflies of Greater Yellowstone



July 9-11, 93
July 17-18, 93
July 31-Aug 1, 93
Aug 21-24, 93

Yellowstone Birds of Prey
Wolves of Yellowstone: The Missing Link
Wildflowers of Yellowstone
The Art of Keeping a Field Journal



For the 1993 catalog of all 80 classes write to: The Yellowstone Association, P.O. Box 117, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190.

MAR 1993

National Audubon Society
11th Rocky Mountain Regional Conference
 August 3-8, 1993

Welcome to the Rocky Mountain Regional Conference at Snowbird, in the Wasatch Mountains of Utah! Our host, the Utah Audubon Council, is arranging an exceptional schedule of fun events, complete with three days of field trips followed by two days of speakers and exciting workshops, all packaged in the stunning Little Cottonwood Canyon just outside Salt Lake City. Fieldtrips are planned for Wednesday through Friday (Aug. 4-6), and will focus on Utah's endangered wetlands and the Wasatch Mountain Range. Fieldtrip details, including sign-up procedures and costs, will be available after April 1st.

Transportation

Snowbird is located just 29 miles (40 minutes) from Salt Lake City International Airport, which is served by 10 major airlines and is the western hub of Delta Airlines. Canyon Transportation, specializing in 10-person service, is highly recommended for transportation to Snowbird. Guests should call in their flight arrival/departure schedule to (800) 255 1841. The cost is \$15/person (with a two-person minimum in van). In addition, limousine service, car rentals, and taxi cabs are available.

Meals

Snowbird has a variety of meal options (snack bars, grills, restaurants) so that no advance booking is necessary. In addition, some rooms have kitchen facilities. Saturday lunch and dinner will be planned meal functions.

Registration

We encourage early registration and will mail out advance program and fieldtrip information to those who request it. To register early see the Registration Form below, to be returned to the **Audubon Regional Conference Office, 4150 Darley #5, Boulder, CO 80303**. Cancellations prior to July 1, 1993, will be refunded in full. Questions? Call (303) 499 0219.

Lodging

All accommodation reservations should be made *directly* with Snowbird Resort (Phone: 800-453-3000) or by filling out the Lodging Reservation Form below and returning it to **Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort, Central Reservations, Snowbird, UT 84092** by June 30th, 1993. Snowbird Resort will hold rooms for Audubon until July 1, 1993 *only*. Please note that prices given are for the room, *not* per person, and do not include tax. Reservations must be accompanied with a credit card number or a deposit of one night's lodging per room. Deposit will be refunded in its entirety if cancellation is received prior to 48 hrs. before arrival.

Registration Form

Please return this form to Audubon Regional Conference Office, 4150 Darley Ave., #5, Boulder, CO 80303. Full payment must accompany this form. Make your check payable to National Audubon Society (please print).

Last Name First Name

Last Name First Name

Street

City State Zip

Telephone

Name of your Audubon Chapter

Registration Fee:

____ x \$25 per person = \$ _____
 ____ x \$40 per couple = \$ _____
 ____ x \$15 per person per day = \$ _____

Lodging Reservation Form

National Audubon Society Regional Conference,
August 3-8, 1993.

Send this reservation form to Snowbird Ski & Summer Resort, Central Reservations, Snowbird, UT 84092.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Total number in party: _____ Number of children: _____

Arrival Date: ____/____/____ Dep. Date: ____/____/____

Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Visa/Mastercard Am.Ex. Diners/Carte Blanche

Rooms at The Lodge at Snowbird Nightly

- Bedroom (1-4 Persons)..... \$64
- Studio/Efficiency (1-2 Persons) \$64
- One-Bedroom Condo/Studio Loft
(1-8 Persons) \$123
- One-Bedroom Condo with Loft
(1-10 Persons) \$182



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 008

Local Chapter Code
 7XCH8

COEUR d'ALENE AUDUBON SOCIETY

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COEUR D'ALENE AUDUBON SOCIETY

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