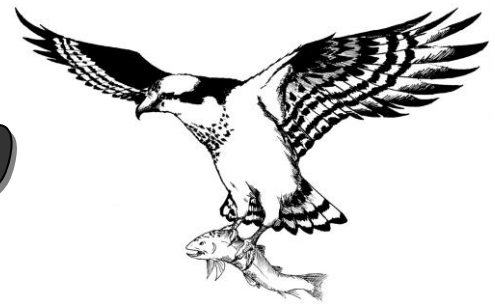


THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society

March 2006

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 7

BOARD MEETING

DATE: March 20, Monday
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Mt. West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

MARCH PROGRAM

DATE: March 20, Monday
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: First Presbyterian Church,
521 E. Lakeside, Coeur d'Alene
SPEAKERS: Terry Prichard and
Nancy Mertz, Sea Kayak
Adventures
PROGRAM: "Vancouver Island
Orcas".

Visit our website:

www.cdaudubon.org

MAJESTIC FEATHERS

Newsletter and Website

Shirley Sturts



Long-eared Owl Chick:
Photographed by
Kathleen Cameron

In an email conversation with Kathleen Cameron from Bellevue, Idaho, I discovered that Kathleen is author and editor of *Majestic Feathers*, a wonderful, informative newsletter about Idaho's birds. In addition to the newsletter, she now has a website by the same name that includes articles, facts, and exquisite photographs of birds. Although her emphasis is on

birds of Idaho and the western United States, she has traveled widely across the continent and to other countries, recording by photo and word what she

has learned and what she has experienced.

I can't say enough about her fun-to-read, educational, and interesting articles. Whether you are a novice birder or have years of birding experience and knowledge, you will enjoy not only her articles, but also the photographs found both on the website and in the newsletter. While other birding journals often go unread by me, I

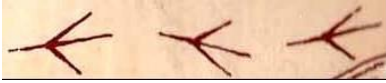
will never set aside a copy of *Majestic Feathers*.

On the *Majestic Feathers* website you can explore two sample newsletters. Anyone who has done a Christmas Bird Count will be able appreciate her account of the Wood River CBC in 2004, in which 3 feet of snow had fallen in a period of 48 hours prior to count day, and temperatures ranged in the single digits the day of the count. Besides the snow and cold temperatures, the participants experienced both tragic and joyous events. Their day started with their futile effort to save a yearling deer that had been chased into icy water by a coyote. It was a long while before their spirits lifted and they could enjoy their day of birding. And what a grand day of birding they had! At the end of the day they came up with a total of 40 species and 1012 individuals. Heading the list was a female Rusty Blackbird, a winter resident of the eastern United States and rarely seen in Idaho any time of the year.

In another newsletter she has included a short essay titled "What is a Life List?" Kathleen defines a life list as: "...a list of all the species of birds that you have identified with absolute certainty over a lifetime". She warns birders not to become so focused on checking off a species that they lose sight of the beauty of the birds and their habitat. (see page 7 for entire essay)

Kathleen has a deep understanding and love of birds and their habitat, and an enthusiasm for birding. She expresses this love and enthusiasm in her writing and photographs. I encourage you to explore her website and read her sample newsletters at www.majesticfeathers.com.

BIRD TRACKS



AUDUBON MEMBERS MAKE A
DIFFERENCE

HUGE GARAGE SALE!

Time to start planning for this important annual fund raiser. June 3rd, Saturday is garage sale day! Please save items for this fun event. We need everything, with clothing the exception.

If you need space to store items, please call Jan Severtson, 667-6209 - Theresa Potts, 765-0229 or Janet Callen 664-1085.



GREEN TIPS

Green tips will be a monthly feature in our newsletter. It is designed to give you ideas for taking personal conservation action to improve the environmental health and habitat quality of our yards and neighborhoods. (*Members are encouraged to send tips to the editor for inclusion in future newsletters.*)

CHOCOLATE

Lisa Hardy

You may be surprised to learn that your favorite food originates against a background of poverty and exploitive child labor. The cocoa beans from which chocolate is derived are grown in tropical areas of Africa, and Central and South America. 43% of cocoa comes from the Ivory Coast, where child labor is the norm on cocoa farms. A

small number of the children have actually been sold by their destitute parents, and are in fact slave labor. The large chocolate producers in this country, such as M&M/Mars and Hershey's, have expressed dismay over these labor practices that were first brought to the public's attention in 2000 by investigative reporting. However, the big producers appear unwilling to force a change in the current state of affairs.

But don't despair. There is a way you can have your chocolate and eat it with a clear conscience, too. As a consumer, you can make a difference by buying chocolate with the "Fair Trade Certified" and "Fair Trade Federation" labels. Fair Trade is an international monitoring and certification system that guarantees a minimum price under direct contracts, prohibits abusive child labor, and promotes environmental sustainability.

Fair Trade brands available in our area are Dagoba, Endangered Species, and Equal Exchange. In supporting smaller farm co-operatives, for example, The Endangered Species Chocolate Company says "we encourage the indigenous people to harvest what is naturally grown in the area rather than clear-cutting the rainforest to make way for more destructive uses of land." Other good choices are organic chocolates in general, and specifically Green and Black's, and Newman's Own Organics. These brands are available at the Flour Mill in Hayden, Pilgrim's Natural Foods and Fred Meyer. Let me know if there are any other stores in the area that carry these products. At a recent meeting, your chapter board members sampled a "Chimpanzee Bar" made by The

Endangered Species Chocolate Company, and pronounced it quite good.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/fairtrade/cocoa/index.html>

In-depth information on cocoa farming practices, and the role that small, sustainable farms can play in sustaining biodiversity can be found on the Smithsonian site:

<http://nationalzoo.si.edu/ConservationAndScience/MigratoryBirds/Research/Cacao/>

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE PROJECT



Stephen
Johnson

Hi, everyone. For 2006, I am compiling a list of all the bird sightings on the Rathdrum Prairie. I will keep track of when and what time of the year certain species of birds are found on the prairie and the first arrival and last seen dates for migrants. Also, I would like to find out if some birds, such as the Lewis' Woodpecker, use the prairie as a migration route. At the end of this year, I will compile all of the graphs I have into one, and make a checklist of birds for the Rathdrum Prairie.

I really think the prairie is a place that people have to keep an eye on. There are a lot of housing developments going in. I would like to find out what effect this will have on the birds.

If you would like to be a part of this project, please send me all of your Rathdrum Prairie bird sightings for 2006. Email me at shorthair12003@yahoo.com or call me at 765-6516.

MARCH FIELD TRIPS

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

1. **PLEASE REGISTER:** Dates and trips could change.
2. **COST:** Participants will share in a mileage reimbursement for the driver at a rate of \$0.25/mile, with the trip leader responsible for collection and distribution of the compensation.
3. **RADIOS:** We will ask participants to contribute \$1.00 toward batteries as needed.
4. **UNSCHEDULED TRIPS :** Sign up to be on the group email list for unscheduled trips with Shirley Sturts: s.sturts@verizon.net, or get on a call list by calling Shirley at 664-5318.

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATES: March 14, Tuesday

TIME: 8:00 A.M. NOTICE THE TIME HAS MOVED UP TO 8:00 A.M.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

LEADERS: Shirley Sturts, 664-5318 - Kris Buchler, 664-4739

ACTIVITY: We spend about 3 hours once a month counting birds in the Mica Bay area. Beginner birders are welcome.

SPOKANE VALLEY AREA

DATE: Saturday, March 18

TIME: 8:30 A.M.

MEET: K-Mart parking lot, south end.

LEADER: Roland Craft, 457-8894 (maybe jointly with Spokane Audubon)

ACTIVITY: Visit Dishman Hills and Liberty Lake. Be prepared for doing a bit of hiking on this full day of birding. Wear shoes for hiking and bring a lunch and water.

BROWN BAG BIRDING TRIP

DATE: March 21, Tuesday

MEET: Fernan Lake, west end boat docks

LEADER: Lynn Sheridan, 765-2603

ACTIVITY: Take an hour out of your busy day to enjoy the out-of-doors, see how many different species of birds one can find in an hour and get to know people that share your interest in nature. The Great Blue Herons are back at their nests across from the west end boat docks. Beginner bird watchers are welcome

START PLANNING FOR THE FIELD TRIP TO OTHELLO, WA APRIL 8 & 9

We will visit the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge a couple of weeks after their big Sandhill Crane Festival. We will leave Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and drive to the refuge and spend the afternoon birding. We have reserved some rooms at Mardon's Resort outside of Othello where we will spend the night. We'll bird the next morning until after lunch, then return home in time for supper. We should see lots of waterfowl and shore birds in this important way-station as they migrate north. Don't miss it!

It will be important to make reservations ahead of time to secure a ride and lodging. If you have your own transportation and lodging please let me know anyway that you are coming.

DEADLINE MARCH 15. Please call Dick Cripe: 665-0010.

START PLANNING FOR THE PELAGIC TRIP TO WESTPORT, WA. JUNE 23-25

A pelagic (ocean) field trip out of Westport, WA will be held on June 24th. We will drive over on June 23rd and return home on June 25th. The cost of the Outer Slope boat trip is \$125 per person, plus costs for transportation to Westport and lodging. We will carpool to reduce costs. Contact Dick Cripe (665-0010) or Roland Craft (457-8894) so that we know how many reservations to make. This is a fantastic trip to view many unique birds. DEADLINE, MARCH 15.

7TH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES
ABOUT LAWN CARE

THE BEAUTIFUL LAWN, PART VII

Judy Waring, Janet Callen



This month's article is a summary of organic garden techniques and sources of products and information. On January 26, 2006, Pat Munts wrote an article for the Spokesman Review titled "Organic gardening a must." In it she wrote: "Using environmentally sound gardening and lawn care practices is quickly becoming a matter of necessity instead of a lifestyle choice. The recent debate about reducing the use of phosphorus, a key ingredient in fertilizers, to improve local water quality is just the beginning of a long-needed conversation about our environment in the Inland Northwest. Moving to environmentally sound gardening practices isn't just about pulling out your wallet to buy environmentally friendly products. It is about how we plant, water, mow, weed and trim."

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR LAWNS

- 1) A healthy lawn is more resistant to weeds, insects and disease problems.
- 2) An Idaho lawn needs between 1 inch to 1½ inches of water a week.
- 3) Mow at a height of 2 ½ to 3 inches.

- 4) Do not pick up grass clippings.
- 5) Minimize fertilization, and use an organic when you do.
- 6) Never use a combination fertilizer and weed killer.
- 7) Core aeration is recommended for heavy soils.

FOR ORGANIC FERTILIZERS

- 1) Steer manure, chicken manure, peat moss, bone meal and fish meal.
- 2) Ringer All Natural Lawn Restore at Home Depot
- 3) Worry Free Lilly-Miller Spring and Summer Lawn Food at Lowes.
- 4) Nitro Cal at Greenacres Plant Food Center in Post Falls.
- 5) Lawn clippings can provide up to 25% of a lawn's fertilizer needs.

Unfortunately, even some organic fertilizers contain phosphates. It is found in poultry manure, rock phosphate and bone meal. Ringer's product contains 2% phosphate in a 25# bag. Phosphate does not move through the soil readily and is therefore more susceptible to erosion. Nitro Cal is not an entirely organic fertilizer, but it contains no phosphate.

FOR WEEDS

- 1) Hand pull where possible
- 2) Fill in holes with a mix of compost and grass seed.
- 2) Spot spray with white vinegar and water.
- 4) If a chemical is used, spot spray only.
- 5) Try the following Corn Gluten Meal products as pre-emergent weed control:
 - a. Orland's Safe-T-Weed Corn Gluten Herbicide at Cenex-Coop Supply, 5831 N Govt. Way. This product is also a fertilizer

b. Uncle Malcolm's Weed Whompin' Mulch at Northland Nursery, 8092 W. Prairie Ave. for use on flower and shrub beds.

c. Concern Weed Prevention Plus at Petal Pushers Nursery, 1842 N. Govt. Way.

Moss: Eliminate the cause: excessive shade; excessive water; soil acidity or compaction.

Lawn Insects: Let the birds have them

Fairy Rings: Will grow out of the lawn and eventually disappear.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Rodale Books: www.rodale.com
 Organic Gardening Magazine: www.organicgardening.com
 Organic lawn care for the cheap and lazy: www.richsoil.com
 Organic Fertilizer Guide: www.extremelygreen.com
 Audubon at Home: www.audubon.org
 Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides: www.pesticide.org
 National Pesticide Information Center: www.npic.orst.edu
 Grassroots Environmental Education: www.grassrootsinfo.org
 University of Idaho Extension: 100 W. Hubbard, Ste. 140 CdA, (208) 664-1085.

A Spokane County Commissioner, Todd Mielke is working to remove phosphate-containing dishwasher detergent and fertilizers from the market in order to reduce phosphorus inputs into the sewage treatment plants and outputs into the Spokane River.

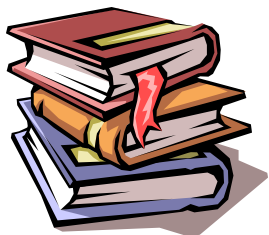
Continued on page 6

Book Review

COLLAPSE

How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed

A review of geographer Jared Diamond's latest book.



Lisa Hardy

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." - *George Santayana*

In *Collapse*, Jared Diamond first tells the stories of six failed societies, and derives a set of common threads that explain their downfalls. These threads can be summarized as: (1) using up natural resources (2) climate change (3) hostile neighboring societies (4) loss of trade on which the society was dependent (5) societal culture unable to make changes required for continued survival

Diamond's first example of a failed society is Easter Island, first settled by Polynesians around A.D. 900. Agricultural methods adapted to the island's climate were devised, the population grew, and the development of elaborate religious rituals found expression in the huge monolithic statues for which Easter Island is famous. But by the 1600's, the island was deforested, the population had crashed to less than half its previous level, and signs of starvation and cannibalism appear in the archaeological record.

Easter Island is an isolated

point in the southern Pacific Ocean, 1300 miles from the nearest islands. It did not have hostile neighbors, nor any trade economy. Climate change does not appear to have any affect. Instead, the collapse of Easter Island society is explained as a culture that used up all its natural resources, because it was unable to make the changes necessary for sustainability.

All is not gloom-and-doom, though. While Diamond outlines problems today that are analogous to those that brought historical societies to their knees, he also tells an equal number of success stories. His description of the corporate culture of Chevron, illustrated by his visit to their clean oil-producing operation in Papua New Guinea, convinced me to switch to buying Chevron gas.

I recommend this book to anyone who wonders about the state of our planet. Diamond's highly readable narrative builds a broad framework into which we can place fragments of information from the news or our own local experience. He notes, "Polynesian Easter Island was as isolated in the Pacific Ocean as the Earth is today in space." But our global culture does not have to play out the Easter Island story - we have choices, as the author makes clear.

COOTS WIN AND THE EAGLE WENT WITHOUT LUNCH!

Sunday February 14

Dick Cripe

It was a bright and brisk day with excellent light for seeing birds. There was open water on both sides of the lake at the south end of the bridge at Sandpoint. We were able to see

several Bald Eagle, about a dozen Double-crested Cormorant, and a wide variety of waterfowl - Redhead, Buffle head, American Wigeon, Common Merganser, Common Goldeneye, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, American Coot, and Canada Goose.

We proceeded to the City Beach where we hoped to see some unusual gulls, but nothing unusual was to be seen. At the Third Street Dock, the water was frozen and the river to the west appeared to be frozen all the way across.

The trip around to Bottle Bay revealed Red-necked, Pied-billed, and Horned Grebe, in addition to the above mentioned birds. But, no unusual gulls, nor Long-tailed Duck, Greater Scaup, or loons, all of which we thought might be there.

There were several large rafts of American Coot along the road to Bottle Bay. When we stopped and looked to see what other species might be out there, we were attracted to a commotion among one of the rafts of coots. A Bald Eagle was making repeated passes very low over the raft and the coots were scurrying to get as close together as possible. Apparently, closing together is their defense against predatory birds. As the eagle approached each time there was a big commotion of splashing as the coots frantically moved closer together. We watched for several minutes as the eagle made repeated passes, but did not see him get any of the coots. So, on this afternoon on the road to Bottle Bay the coots won and the eagle went without lunch.

Participating were Connie Haskins, Lisa Hardy, Janet Callen, Roland Craft, and Dick Cripe.

BIRD TRACKS



Continued from page 2

EDUCATION COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Janet Callen

February 13, 2006. Kris Buchler, Janet Callen and Stephen Johnson traveled to Sunnyside Elementary School in Kellogg to present the "Bird Adaptations" program to two 3rd grade classes. The program created and presented by Kris Buchler includes a number of slides of birds and recorded calls of raptors. Kris asks the students many questions and always gets great participation. Stephen helped carry and handle two live owls which belong to Beth Paragamian and Idaho Fish & Game. Both owls have been injured and rehabilitated, but neither can fly. The Short-eared Owl and the Northern Saw-whet Owl were a big hit.

HOUSE BUILDING FOR THE BIRDS

Lynn Sheridan

Roger Young, our master carpenter, prepared 30 nest boxes in organized pieces and pre-drilled holes, and two teams went up to assemble them on Feb. 16 and Feb 18. It was fun and enjoyed by all: Roland Craft, Judy and Phil Waring, Lynn Sheridan, Dick Cripe, Janet Callen and Jan and Herb Severtson.

Some will be used at the Resort Golf Course, some at the 2 bluebird trails that Shirley Sturts and Theresa Potts manage, and some will be mounted up at Higgins Point by Kris and Ed Buchler.

It's spring and the birds are coming soon!!

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Roland Craft

At the February meeting of the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Conservation Committee the following issues were discussed: 1. The proposed sale of Federal land to private interests. 2. The rapid development of open land on the Rathdrum Prairie and other undeveloped land with little or no thought about parks, recreation areas, trails and wild or semi-wild areas. 3. The Bureau of Land Management plan-revision, where various alternatives to the use of their land are being proposed.

We also made plans for the placement of new bird boxes.

The committee is always open for new members. Just call Mike Mehelich, 664-4741 or Roland Craft, 457-8894.



"If I were to make a study of the tracks of animals and represent them by plates, I should conclude with the tracks of man"

Henry David Thoreau

THE BEAUTIFUL LAWN, PART VII

Continued from page 4

Phosphate-free dishwasher detergent is sold by Fred Meyer. Seventh Generation dishwashing detergent, which has no phosphates, costs \$2.00 more per 45 oz box than a similar box of Cascade. It will be given a test run.

Our final article, which will identify local area lawn services that provide organic lawn-care, will appear in either the April, or May newsletter.

BROWN BAG BIRDING

Lynn Sheridan

On February 21, 2006, Judy Edwards, Bill Gundlach, Jan Severtson (with dog Daisy), and Roland Craft met me at Independence Point at noon.

Among the ducks and geese were 3 Mallard/barnyard hybrids looking like a new species with their identical dark brown bodies, green heads, white bibs and greenish-yellow wide beaks! But out in the bay, 5 real Bufflehead and 1 Red-necked Grebe were diving.

Scattering from the lawn into the lake were 37 noisy Canada Geese, a few Ring-billed Gull and 25 Mallard.

Walking through the park, we heard and saw a male Northern Flicker and a flock of House Sparrow took cover in a hedge. The ponderosa pines were alive with Pygmy Nuthatch. Along the NIC beach, Bill counted 33 Double-crested Cormorant out on the log booms, and beyond them 5 Tundra Swan. Among the more than 20 Common Merganser, 2 rarer Red-breasted Merganser were seen. Roland zeroed in on a Great Blue Heron, and we soon spotted 5 more. After an hour we turned back,

Back at the parking lot, with bread as a lure, 2 California Gull were seen among the usual Ring-billed Gull. Judy noticed one paler speckled gull with a black eye and an all yellow beak and feet. It was smaller in size than the Ring-billed. Checking the book, we concluded was a Mew Gull.

Thank you, all-- Lynn S.

WHAT IS A LIFE LIST

Kathleen Cameron

Reprinted by permission the from
Magic Feathers Newsletter June
2004 (now called Majestic
Feathers).



**Black-crowned Night Heron
Photographed by Kathleen
Cameron**

The simplest answer to this question is that it is a list of birds you have seen. A more serious look at a life list is this; it is a list of all the species of birds that you have identified with absolute certainty during your lifetime. This requires close study of all field marks and behavior. Field guides to the birds have checklists in the back or front for keeping track of the birds you see. Sadly, some birders fall into sort of an obsession about their lists and become so focused on checking off a species that they lose sight of the beauty of the birds and their habitat. For me as well as the majority of the birders that I know, the beauty of the birding experience is the search and ultimate find of these feathery creatures, not the next notch on our life lists, although we appreciate the opportunity for the add-on.

OBSERVATION POST

FROM THE JOURNALS OF
LOCAL BIRDERS

**From the Field notes of
Stephen Johnson - Sunday
February 19, 2006**

Today, while I was out in my front yard, I saw a Great Blue Heron stalking and eating voles. (Meyer road on the Rathdrum Prairie)

**From the Field notes of Jan
Severtson - February 2006**

Puzzling Flicker Behavior

The male flicker spied our newly filled sunflower seed tube feeder, flew down to the saucer on the bottom of it and by lying down on his side with one claw on the lowest perch, the other tucked under him, he proceeded to jab his beak into the lowest port. He then worked his beak back and forth rapidly, emptying all the seed onto the ground in about 3 minutes, then flew to the next tube feeder with the same results. After that, he moved on to the wire-screen cylinder feeder with saucers for the top and bottom. He emptied that also. Next on his list was the saucer fixed to a tree stump filled with mixed seed plus peanuts for the Steller's Jays. He started flinging that seed but also ate a little too. A jay flew in to challenge him but he puffed his feathers, opened his beak, and away flew the jay. The quail and turkeys had a wonderful feast that morning eating all the spilled seed. The flicker has been back a few times to repeat his foraging, but I did seal off the lowest ports on the tube feeders with Scotch tape. He wasn't able to twist himself enough to reach the other ports. He still works at the wire-screen feeder but I don't keep very much seed in it now. Puzzling behavior?? Yes!!

**From the Field notes of
Nancy Mertz - February 17,
2006**

I saw a Sharp-shinned hawk burst explosively out of nowhere to nail a small bird at my feeder. Judging from the feathers that fell off, I think it was a Red-breasted Nuthatch. The Blue Jay showed up today. I hadn't seen it all winter. (editors note: Guess where Nancy's Blue Jay has been hanging out? Judy and Phil Waring live only a few blocks away.☺)

**From the Field notes of Judy
Waring - February 2006**

The three jay species seen locally have been coming to our yard regularly all winter - the Steller's Jay, the Blue Jay, and the hybrid offspring. The draw is an endless supply of peanuts which even I dip into now and then. We don't have a feeder platform big enough to accommodate peanuts and jays so I temporarily put the open box of peanuts in our garage until I could make a better arrangement. It didn't take these clever birds long to sniff out the mother load hidden from sight and they now make daily forays into the garage for treats. However, as we all know, there is no free lunch. Neighbor cats sometimes lurk in the garage awaiting their "treats". I have gone in and caught a panicked jay and sent him on his way. So far I have not found a pile of telling feathers. If anyone has a sure-fire method of keeping marauding cats out of your yard please let me know.

**Please share your bird
behavior observations for
next month. Submit to the
editor by March 21
s.sturts.verizon.net**

