

THE FISH HAWK HERALD



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

Chapter Meeting May 9

The regular monthly chapter meeting will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 9, at the Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 Ramsey Road in Coeur d'Alene. Food will be served. A main topic of discussion will be how to increase membership in the Chapter.

George Sayler: Educator, Legislator, World Traveler, Avid Birder

George Sayler, longtime Coeur d'Alene Chapter member, board member, and former board president, has a special "totem bird"—the tiny red-breasted nuthatch. It was a nuthatch that inspired him to become a birder, four decades ago.

"I was mesmerized by that little bird," Sayler recalls, "I had to learn more. That's what got me started."

Since then, he's been an avid birdwatcher and active member of the CDA chapter, leading and participating in numerous field trips in the Northwest as well as traveling to Kenya, Peru, Mexico and Costa Rica to observe bird species. He's been a regular contributor to the chapter's Christmas Bird Count and Migratory Bird Day activities; he organized the chapter's 25th anniversary party, honoring Scott and Mary Lou Reed; he's currently working on Audubon's Tubbs Hill signage, among his other avian-related

activities. Recently Sayler has identified his own "Birding Pal" in Arizona, someone who will show him and his wife Katie the best bird-watching sites around Phoenix. Birding Pal is an international organization that matches local birders with visitors to help "out-of-towners" make the most of their birding vacation.

"Audubon has been a wonderful part of my life," he says. "Birding is one of the best experiences a person can have. It gets you outside, helps you be in tune with the natural environment, it's something you can do by yourself or with other people. It's a wonderful passion and pastime."

Sayler, a native of Montana, graduated from the University of Montana in 1967 with a BA in history. He married Kathleen Frost in 1968, was drafted into the Army and served a tour in Vietnam.

Upon his return to the States, the Saylers moved to Connecticut, where he earned a master's degree in religious studies from the Hartford Seminary in 1973.

He and Katie then moved back west, settling in Coeur d'Alene and raising two daughters, Michelle and Heather. Michelle Query lives in New York and Heather Amorebieta resides in Portland. The Saylers have two grandchildren, Fiala and Joaquin Query.

(Continued next page)

Inside This Issue

May Field Trip Information	P. 2
President's Message	P. 3
Feathered Fakers Quiz	P. 4
Bluebird Trail Updates	P. 4

George Saylor Profile, Continued

Saylor taught history and government at Coeur d'Alene High School until his retirement in 2005. In 2002 he was elected to the Idaho State Legislature and served as a state representative until 2010.

During his stint in state politics, Saylor combined his enthusiasm for birding with lawmaking, drafting legislation (HCR 38) to establish an Idaho State Birding Trail Idaho. The House Concurrent Resolution designated a network of 200 top bird-watching sites throughout the state. Saylor also wrote the introduction to the birding trail guidebook. As he recounts his many birding experiences,

Saylor worries that future generations will not have the same opportunities to enjoy the out-of-doors. He's particularly concerned about the indisputable negative impacts of climate change on wildlife, and specifically on birds.

"The impacts of climate change are obvious," he says. "You see it in the weather, the more frequent and more intense storms. We know it's disrupting bird habitats and migration patterns. I've seen it right here in my neighborhood, where we don't get the variety of birds we used to in our yard. Over the years I'd see about 50 species of birds, but not anymore. Climate change is a real and serious threat, and we have to take a role in creating awareness of that. It's a lot worse than some people are willing to recognize."

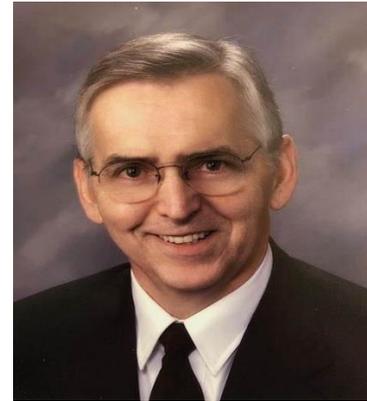
He recognizes that the CDA chapter needs to attract younger members as the "old guard" ages out and plans to offer suggestions for increasing membership at the May 9 meeting, when the topic will be discussed.

"It troubles me that our club is shrinking and we aren't getting younger people involved," he says. "We have to bring in younger folks--otherwise we are going to be like ivory billed woodpecker—extinct!"

Saylor believes there are many ways to increase club membership and participation, and

would like every chapter member to offer suggestions on how to address the issue. He thinks that more public outreach, particularly in schools, is one of the keys to growing the chapter. He hopes a large number of members will attend the May 9 meeting to brainstorm and come up with creative solutions to the "aging-out" problem.

"I encourage everyone to come to this meeting and put their thinking caps on," he says. "We have to stay hopeful and stay involved."



George Saylor

Birding Trips in May

Ted Smith, our CDA Chapter Field Trip Chair and Excursion Organizer Extraordinaire, has set the schedule for birding excursions he'll be leading this month.

These are as follows:

May 4 Lakes	Chain of
May 9 Bay	Mica
May 18 Park	Myrna
May 24	Turnbull National wildlife Refuge (Departure time 6:30 am)

Most field trips will begin at 7:30 am, (note Turnbull exception). Birders will meet in the At Home parking lot, corner of 95 and Neider (Continued Page 3)

May Birding Trips, Continued...

This is on the south side of the lot of the former Kmart. From there participants will group up and carpool as much as possible.

Ted anticipates that most trips, with the exception of Turnbull and Chain of Lakes, will be about 4 to 5 hours. Turnbull and Chain of Lakes will run a little longer due to travel time and size of the area visited. Birders might want to bring lunch for those two trips. Snacks and water are always good things to bring in any case.

These excursions will go off rain or shine, so please dress appropriately for the weather. If you have questions you can reach Ted at 406-540-2673 or tehesmith@gmail.com

President's Message

Greetings Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society birders.

As I scratch my brain to compose my message for May, I will start with the weather. (Don't I always?) Comments about the weather this time of year usually speak of wishing Spring would actually get here (In spite of the calendar indicating Spring is officially here). There is the desire for warmer weather, and with a few exceptions, we have had enough of snow. Welcome to North Idaho. There are signs of spring though with the blooming of early flowers, both wild flowers and garden flowers. Personally, I enjoy the wild Glacier Lilies blooming in my back yard, the Hyacinth in our garden and the Crocuses I see as I walk around. Spring is here but we are all impatient for some warmer temperatures. Hang in there.

What about Spring Birds? The ice is gone from the lakes, the Osprey have returned, the waterfowl are abundant and the Wild Turkeys are strutting their stuff to mention a few. Two of our members were at the Saltese

Flat Wetlands recently and reported identifying 31 species. It is the time of year when we enjoy the first of this or that species. So, let's go birding.

A member of National Audubon (not a member of our chapter) mentioned the red dyed hummingbird food on the store shelves, and is concerned that the red dye kills hummingbirds. I suppose it is possible but I didn't find any research that definitely confirmed it. I did a search for red dye on the National Audubon web site hoping to find some information. The search resulted in showing two references to recipes for mixing hummingbird nectar. Only in a footnote is red dye mentioned, and it says you don't need to use red dye, which "could" be harmful to hummingbirds. Most of us probably mix our own nectar without including any dye and, guess what, the "hummers" locate it just fine. I'll leave it to your individual decisions.

IMPORTANT - As headlined in this newsletter, our May 9 monthly meeting will be in person. This meeting is important for the future of our Chapter membership. I strongly urge you to attend the meeting. We will begin the meeting at 6:00 PM, an hour earlier than usual. We will be serving food due to the earlier hour. Let's all put on our "thinking caps" and bring any ideas for increasing membership.

At the risk of "preaching to the choir," let me call your attention to the National Audubon website (Audubon.org) where there are some pictures of bird behaviors selected from the 2022 Audubon Photo Awards. Just enjoy!

Our April program about the Monarch Butterflies was very interesting. Did you know that the Monarchs can be tagged and tracked? I didn't. An interesting fact presented is that in the 1980s, there were an estimated 10 million Monarchs. In 2020, only about 2000 were confirmed. The good news is that post 2020, an estimated 1 million Monarchs were observed.

(Continued, Page 5)

Test Your Avian Awareness: Winged Prevaricators

Several types of birds are born liars, using deceptive tactics to fool predators. Which fakers use what strategies? (Answers on Page 5.)

1. What bird feigns a broken wing to distract unwanted visitors from its nest?
A. Robin B. Kildeer C. Mallard D. California Quail.
2. How many different species use the "broken wing display" to sidetrack would-be predators?
A. 15 B. 80 C. 150 D. 285
3. What clever ventriloquist mimics a rattlesnake hiss to thwart enemies?
A. Magpie B. Burrowing Owl C. Raven D. Parrot
4. Plovers crouch close to the ground and scurry about, using a distraction technique called a
A. Rodent Run B. Mouse Maneuver C. Sneaky Snake D. The Flail
5. Some birds try to fake out predators by
A. Playing Dead B. Pretending to Sleep C. Feigning Exhaustion D. All of the above
6. What bird mimics a meerkat to scare mammals into abandoning their meal?
A. Vulture B. Crow C. Red-Tailed Hawk D. Fork-Tailed Drongo
7. What bird tries to fool its own species by faking their common alarm call?
A. Flicker B. Siberian Jay C. Barn Owl D. Canada Goose
8. Deceptive tactics are mostly practiced by shorebirds, but even pheasants have been observed faking injuries to protect their nests.
True_____ False_____

9. Some birds pretend to be distracted themselves to draw enemies away from nest by
A. False feeding B. False flirting C. False Preening D. Fake mating
10. What bird definitely never learned to lie?
A. Tundra Swan B. Golden Eagle C. Loon D. Dodo

Bluebird Monitoring Begins for 2023 Season

Nancy Kroese reports that the chapter's annual bluebird monitoring work began in mid-April and will continue on a weekly basis through August 5. Bluebird enthusiasts can meet at the bluebird trail in the Hoodoo Valley, about 25 miles north of Coeur d'Alene.

The monitoring process usually takes a couple of hours to complete, as there are 49 boxes total. Rob and Nancy Kroese inspect the boxes at the beginning and the end of the season to check for needed repairs. This year they found that the winter of 2022-23 did quite a bit of damage—seven boxes needed replacement.

Rob and Nancy saw some swallows on their initial reconnaissance of the trail, and one of the folks living nearby said they had seen blue birds as well. That person was very happy that Audubon chapter members are continuing to monitor the bird houses along the trail. Her late father would quite often come out to greet bluebird monitors on his ATV and told some great stories about the area. It's a beautiful place and our monitors are eager to see to see the birds, the eggs and then the babies.

Ellie Emm and Peggy Albertson handled the first week of monitoring. Peggy gives "kudos" to Rob and Nancy for their maintenance (Continued, Page 5)

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

Bluebird Trail Update, Continued...

and repair on the boxes to start the season.

Peggy and Ellie braved the cold (37-degree) weather on the trail and saw a squirrel, one swallow, a couple red-breasted nuthatches and two mourning doves but never more than a small handful of nesting material in any of the boxes.

Hopefully the weather will warm up and bring the bluebirds back to Coeur d'Alene soon!

Ellie Emm Checks out a Bluebird House



President's Message, Continued...

There is an interesting tie to Audubon with the conservation efforts to benefit the Monarchs. We learned about "Monarch Waystations."

A Monarch Waystation is basically a special garden in which milkweed plants are grown along with nectar producing flowers. The Monarch eggs are laid on the leaves of the milkweed. When the caterpillars hatch,

they feed on the milkweed plants. The caterpillars are subject to bird predation as they grow but once they eat enough milkweed, they become toxic to birds and are no longer eaten.

Once the caterpillar becomes a butterfly, the butterfly needs the nectar from the flowers as its food supply. Hummingbirds are frequent visitors as they feed from the nectar of the flowers also. It is an interesting tie to Audubon. Milkweed seeds are available and a Monarch Waystation could be established in our backyards.

There is so much more that could be said about the Monarchs, but I hope you find this bit of information interesting.

I'd like to say thanks to Ted for scheduling a series of field trips. They look interesting and I hope you will participate. And with that,

Good Birding
Ralph Kerr



The Boys of Spring
Photo by Ralph Kerr

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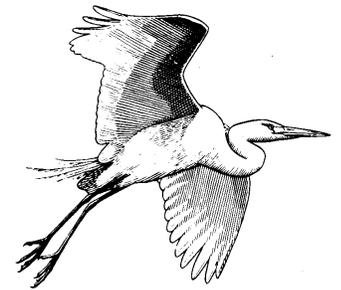
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