COMING EVENTS

AUDUBON’S ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY PROJECT
DATE: October 11, Saturday
TIME: 8:00 a.m.
MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95
ACTIVITY: OK, let’s try it again. The highway department has completed (more or less) the construction on the section of Highway 95 that our Audubon chapter has contracted to clean. Our two-mile stretch is the south (downhill) side of Mica grade, mile 421 to mile 423, ending at the turn into Mica Bay. We have agreed to tidy it up twice a year, spring and fall. At the meeting point we will review instructions over muffins and juice. Wear long pants and long sleeves. The clean up should be over in one or two hours. When the job is done, plan to bird at Mica Bay if you have time. Please contact Judy Waring at 765-5378 to sign up or for more information.

BOARD MEETING
DATE: October 14, Tuesday
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Mountain West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

OCTOBER PROGRAM
DATE: October 20, Monday
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: First Presbyterian Church,
521 Lakeside
PROGRAM: Program information was not available in time for this newsletter. Check our website for our October program or look for it in the paper.

Visit our website:
www.cdaaudubon.org

THE BIG SIT

“If you sit in one place long enough, eventually every species of bird will pass by.”

We are participating in the Eleventh Annual New Haven Bird Club’s, “The Big Sit!”- co-sponsored by SWAROVSKI OPTIK! Sunday, October 12, 2003. This is our third year to participate in this event. See the field trip page for how to participate.

The Big Sit! is like a Big Day, or a Bird-a-thon in that the object is to tally as many bird species as can be seen or heard within 24 hours. The difference lies in the area limitation (17 foot circle) from which you’ll be allowed to observe. This free event is open to all individuals & every club in every state in every country.

There are 3 categories:
1) Best Overall Count (Most species seen by a single circle - wins our commemorative T-shirt)
2) Best State Count (Highest combined total from circles within a state - wins state pride.
3) The Big Prize!: Swarovski Optik is offering $500 to the circle who finds the “Golden Bird”. (A random drawing-we could win!)

RULES:
1) Observations can be made from any area within the state/country you live, or wish to represent.
2) Observations can only be made from within a 17-foot diameter circle.
3) There’s no limit to how many people can occupy the area (other than the obvious spatial limitations). Bring some chairs. Have a picnic or barbecue. Welcome passers-by and their contributions to your list.
4) If a bird is seen or heard from within the circle but is too distant to identify, the circle can be left to get a closer look for confirmation. However, any new bird seen or heard while confirming the original can’t be counted unless it’s seen from an "anchor" who stayed behind in your circle, or when you return to your spot.
5) The participants can work in shifts. No one person needs to be there throughout the whole Big Sit! The area can be left and returned to as frequently as desired, but you must be sure to return to the exact spot each time.
6) The same circle must be used for the entire Big Sit!
7) The Big Sit! Will begin at 12:00 am midnight on October 12 and ends in 24 hours. (Unless there is a volunteer for night duty, we will do dawn to dusk)
Audubon Members make a difference

BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT
Shirley Sturts - Theresa Potts - Roland Craft (Bluebird Committee)

Our chapter is responsible for monitoring 3 bluebird trails: The Gertie Hanson Blue Bird Trail in the Hoo Doo Valley along Kelso Lake Road containing 50 boxes, The Mica Bay Trail containing 8 boxes, and the Mica Flats Trail containing 12 boxes.

Gertie Hanson established the Hoo Doo Bluebird Trail in 1983. It was a project sponsored by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game Nongame Advisory Committee. Gertie monitored and managed the trail until her death in 1998. Since that time our chapter has continued to keep the trail in good condition and has continued to monitor nesting success.

In the summer of 2000 we joined "The Birdhouse Network", a Citizen Science Project of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. We check the boxes about every 10 days and record information such as bird species, date of the first egg, number of eggs, date hatched, and date fledged for each nesting attempt. This information is then reported to Cornell on their website (www.cornell.edu).

In 2000 we also paired most of our boxes, putting two boxes about 10 feet apart. The idea is that Tree Swallows will use one and bluebirds will use the other. We feel this pairing has been successful to some extent. This summer 8 of our paired boxes had swallows in one and bluebirds in the other. One pair of boxes had Western Bluebirds in one, Mountain Bluebirds in the other and after the baby Mountain Bluebirds fledged a Tree Swallow pair successfully fledged young from the same box. Another paired box set had a Western Bluebird in one box and the other remained empty. The best news is, we had more Western Bluebirds fledge this year than ever before: 15 boxes were used, 13 of 23 nest attempts were successful and 67 fledged of which 59 were banded. Six adult Western Bluebirds were also banded. Mountain Chickadee nested successfully in two of the boxes. The Tree Swallow nested in 27 boxes of which 21 were successful and 105 young swallows fledged. I didn't band the young swallows this year but I did band 5 adults.

We only had one Mountain Bluebird pair. They successfully fledged 5 young. A visiting birder from Montana, with experience in bluebird trails, told us we should enlarge the holes to accommodate the slightly larger Mountain Bluebird. We plan to do this for a few of the boxes before the next nesting season.

At Mica Bay, 6 Western Bluebirds were fledged out of one box and Mica Flats had 2 boxes used by Western Bluebirds with 3 nest attempts - 2 successful. For some reason there was high nest failure for the Tree Swallow on Mica Flats. Of the 9 boxes used only 2 were successful.

BANDING RESULTS
Tree Swallow 6+ Years Old

We have been banding adults and young from these three trails for several years. This information is sent into the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Bird Banding Laboratory.

This year we found a female Tree Swallow sitting on eggs in box 6 (Mica Flats) that was banded as an adult on June 25, 1998 in box 11 (Mica Flats). That means this bird is at least 6 years old. According to information found in The Birds of North America, "swallows show an average life span of 2.7 years and a maximum life span of 8 years. Based on band recoveries of birds banded as nestlings, mortality in first year of life is estimated at 79%, indicating that only about 20% of birds leaving the nest survive their first year. Annual survival rate thereafter ranges from 40% to 60%." This high mortality for birds in their first year is probably why I have never had a recovery from any nestling I have banded.

Another recovery this year was a female Tree Swallow in box 4 that had been banded in the same box on June 3, 2002. We found a Western Bluebird in box 26 that we had banded as an adult from this same box on July 8, 2001, making this bird at least 3 years old.

The committee wishes to thank all those who have helped with building, repairing and monitoring the boxes along the bluebird trail. Special thanks goes to Roger Young for providing the wood shop, lumber, tools, and expertise in building the bird boxes and in helping put them up.

"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
OCTOBER FIELD TRIPS

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION
1. Please register with the leader ahead of time.
   a. It helps the leader plan the trip.
   b. You will be informed if the trip time or location is changed or if the trip is canceled.
2. Fees: (to be paid to the driver of the car) $5.00 - all day trips $3.00 - 1/2 day trips.
3. We sometimes use radios to communicate between cars. If the radios are used we are asking participants to contribute $1.00 toward batteries.

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATES: October 6 and 20, Monday
TIME: 8:00 a.m.
MEET: carpool @ Fairmont Loop and Highway 95
LEADERS: Shirley Sturts, 664-5318 - Kris Buchler, 664-4739
ACTIVITY: We spend about 3 hours twice a month counting birds in the Mica Bay area. Beginner birders are encouraged and welcome to join us.

BROWN BAG BIRDING TRIP

DATE: October 21, Tuesday
TIME: 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.
MEET: Fernan Lake Boat Dock, west end
LEADER: Lynn Sheridan (leave messages for Lynn with Kris Buchler 664-4739)
ACTIVITY: We will walk around the area of the boat dock looking for both waterfowl and songbirds. If time permits we will drive down the east end of the lake

THE BIG SIT

DATE/TIME: October 12, Sunday / sign up for a sit time
LOCATION: Mica Bay Platform
LEADER: Shirley Sturts, 664-5318
ACTIVITY: As a group effort we are counting birds at Mica Bay from dawn to dusk. Contact Shirley to sign up for a time. You can sign up for 2 hour shift or (shorter-longer time period). There is no limit to the number of people we can have at one time. We would like to spread participants out over the entire day to get as much coverage as possible. Bring a chair, binoculars, bird book, scope (if you have one), water, food and your enthusiasm. See the article on page 1 or more information.

HIDDEN LAKE CRANBERRY BOG

DATE: October 19, Sunday
TIME: 7:00 a.m.
MEET: carpool @ Fernan Ranger Station at 7:00 a.m. Or 7:25 a.m. at Rose Lake Junction (Café)
LEADER: Lisa Hardy, 682-4808 or basalt@earthlink.net
ACTIVITY: This will be a full day canoe trip to the cranberry bog near Killarney Lake. Please call leader ahead of time so we will know how many canoes we will have, and how many canoeless trippers we can accommodate. Bring lunch and water, and buckets or bags for your cranberry harvest.

SANDPOINT AND PEND OREILLE LAKE

DATE: October 25, Saturday
TIME: 7:30 a.m.
MEET: carpool @ K-mart parking lot, behind Fast Burger
LEADER: Lisa Hardy, 682-4808 or basalt@earthlink.net
ACTIVITY: We will look for fall birds, especially rare gulls and early winter visitors. Plan for a full day, bring lunch and water. We will stop for coffee by request ☺
THE TOUGHEST BIRDING YOU’LL EVER DO

Kris Buchler

On a foggy pre-dawn September 20th, five Coeur d’Alene landlubbers boarded Westport Seabirds’ Monte Carlo for a day of pelagic birding. There were twenty birders in all plus the captain and first mate, as well as our “spotters”, Bruce and Ryan. A trip like this would not be successful for novices without the spotters’ experience in the body language and field marks of seabirds on the wing. Forget your spotting scope and high-powered binoculars. The naked eye is one of the best tools on a moving boat dipping and rolling with the ocean swells. Optics could be used but the glimpses were brief of birds soaring by us. Bruce greeted the group with “pelagic birding is the toughest birding you will ever do!”

Pelagic birds are seabirds that spend their lives on the oceans except to breed on various islands. Many are found far offshore. They alight on the water to rest or feed and can be found like this in large groups. Many of the areas of the oceans are virtual deserts without birds while others are teeming with activity. It is easy to guess where the schools of fish are found as well as the fishing boats.

Within an hour we had left the harbor behind with the Brown Pelicans, cormorants and usual gulls. We saw our first shearwater, a graceful Sooty with long narrow wings. Heerman’s Gulls were mixed in with Western and Glaucous-winged which were far outnumbered by their hybrids which seem to populate that area of coast. Common Murres became – well, common. They were already in winter plumage.

About 20 miles offshore we encountered two more shearwaters, the Pink-footed and Buller’s. By mid-morning, good instruction from Bruce and Ryan enabled our CDA birders to distinguish the 3 species of shearwaters from gulls, identify the gull-like but chunky Northern Fulmar in two plumages and gasp with delight at the first encounter with a Black-footed Albatross. This bird stands out with its large size, distinguished bill, straight board-like narrow wings and effortless flight over the waves.

By noon, Roland Craft, Lisa Hardy, Shirley Sturts and Ed and Kris Buchler had added other smaller seabirds to their life lists. Cassin’s and Rhinocerous Auklets skittered over the water. Fork-tailed Storm Petrels fluttered by and a Sabine’s gull was spotted far off but recognized by its tern-like flight and dramatic black and white wing pattern. Overhead flew Pomarine Jaeger and Black-legged Kittiwake, easily mistaken for a gull. South Polar Skua was spotted by one of our leaders but few got great looks at it. We did have terrific views of Red and Red-necked Phalaropes in winter plumage resting on the water and in flight.

“Chumming” gave us a chance to observe some species up close on the water. The birds gather near the boat to snap up “chum”, a mixture of suet, vegetable oil and cod liver oil. Many of these birds follow the fishing fleets to scavenge the rewards of the harvest.

We learned a lot about these birds we seldom see – how shearwaters gracefully glide over the waves at a steep angle with the lowered wing “shearing” the water, - how Buller’s Shearwater appears bright white underneath while Sooty is sooty with beige underwings and Pink-footed has light underwings with very dark edges and wingtips. The Northern Fulmar flaps with stiff wings then glides, exhibiting its tubenose.

A day trip like this is certainly recommended if you want to challenge yourself. Prepare. It is much more fun if you aren’t green around the gills or bending over the back of the boat. Many products, from tablets to patches, are available to prevent seasickness. Bonine seemed to be a favorite and does not make you sleepy. Bring layers of clothing and waterproof footwear if you want to stay up near the bow. Saltines are great to munch and the crew provides ginger snaps, a home remedy for queasiness.

An added bonus to bird sightings was the whale watching. As we traveled 40 miles offshore, we had at least eight good sightings of Humpbacked whales with many near the boat. Dolphins followed us and Harbor Seals were a fixture of the harbor.
Scott Rea, our summer flycatcher expert, is spending several months at Ocean Shores, Washington. Lisa arranged for us to meet Scott the following day so we could benefit from his knowledge of the area’s shorebirds. Scott led us to a bayside marsh known for migrating Pectoral and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. After an hour or two of scouting the area, we paused to discuss our strategy while Roland spotted the Pectorals right in front of us. They were amazingly tolerant of us and allowed us to get great looks. We had other good observations of American Golden-Plover and Pacific Golden-Plover, with flyovers by Peregrine Falcon, Merlin and Northern Harrier. Scott increased our knowledge of cormorants, helping us distinguish Double-crested, Pelagic and Brandt’s while in flight. Other sightings for the weekend included Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit, common Loon, Surfbird, White-winged and Surf Scoter and Mallard.

It was a great trip full of new sights and birding education. Lisa, Shirley and Roland checked out the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge near Hoquiam before heading home. Ed and Kris made a stop at Nisqually Wildlife Refuge on the way west. In 45 minutes they observed Green Heron, Brown Creeper, various migrating warbler, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, three species of woodpecker as well as numerous River Otter tracks. It looks as though one could spend more than a day exploring the trails and lands of this refuge.

**Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival,**

**January 16-19, 2004**

Migrate to one of the country’s pre-eminent birding spots and join the Morro Coast Audubon Society (MCAS) for the 8th Annual Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival. Morro Bay -- located on California’s scenic Central Coast -- is an important stop on the Pacific Flyway, and is recognized worldwide for its diversity of both resident and wintering birds. Over 200 species of birds have been identified during past Festivals.

The Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival is sponsored by MCAS and gives you the chance to join local and national birding experts on a variety of field trips and workshops. Field trip group sizes are limited to maximize spotting and identification opportunities. The Festival also offers workshops aimed at sharpening your birding skills, as well as evening programs with outstanding speakers.

Please note that the Morro Bay State Park campground will be closed during this year’s festival; however, the area offers a number of other nearby campgrounds, such as Montana de Oro State Park and Atascadero State Beach.

For more information about the Festival, check out our website at [www.morro-bay.net/birds](http://www.morro-bay.net/birds), where you can request that your name be added to the mailing list for our 2004 brochure, due out in October. Registration deadline is December 31, 2003 and early signups are encouraged as the most popular events fill up quickly.

**Continued on Page 6**

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**Winter Wren**
Photographed by Wayne Tree

On this sunny day, ten of us walked around Tubbs Hill from the 10th Street entrance, to enjoy the sights and sounds of the many birds migrating through and residing there. With the help of Kris and Bill, three warblers were heard and identified: Nashville, Yellow-rumped and Orange-Crowned. Spotted Towhee were seen and heard several times. A few California Quail scurried off the trail.

As Roland joined us from a lower trail, a Steller’s Jay was heard. Resident American Robin, Pine Siskin, Chickadee, Song Sparrow, Pygmy and Red-breasted Nuthatch made themselves known.

Our best bird was a Winter Wren, which Sarah was able to photograph. Will we all remember its tinkly song? Overhead were 3 Osprey cavorting, a Great Blue Heron flew by, and Violet-Green Swallow swooped over the water.
BIRDING WITH A BROWN BAG
Continued from Page 5

Flowers were not overlooked. Twenty-five varieties were identified. Some of the best were: mitre-wort, chocolate lily, phlox, larkspur, columbine, shooting stars, calypso orchids, arrowleaf balsam root, prairie smoke and false solomon seal.

Thank you everyone who contributed what they knew and had experienced, and helped us all learn a bit more.

Participants: Pat Bearman, Ruthie Arbuckle, Robert and Jean Imperatrice, Roland Craft, Bill Gundlach, Sarah and Karen Read, Kris Buchler and Lynn Sheridan

September 16, 2003
It was a cool breezy day as 5 of us started up Tubbs Hill: Mary Beth Sokolik from Harrison, Sarah and Karen Reed, Roland Craft and myself. With patience we saw Black-capped Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch and a chipmunk. Flying aloft, an Osprey called attention to itself.

We noted some plants: serviceberry, wild rosehips, Oregon grape, snowberry, ocean spray, ninebark, and red false solomon seal berries.

Darkening skies urged us homeward, when near the trail head, we saw, close by 2 male American Goldfinch in wintry plumage—wonderful. Ring-billed Gulls, about 15, dotted the parking lot, and a lone male Mallard hopped up to a dock. Quick farewells as the cloudburst came.

Thanks everyone!!

FARMER’S MARKET
AUGUST 30, 2003
Janet Callen

Lynn Sheridan and I represented Coeur d’ Alene Audubon at the Farmer’s Market this year. All day long market shoppers stopped by our display to talk about birds and all things related. We sold a few items and again Lynn’s beautiful pressed flower and feather cards were a hit.

Many people signed up for a complimentary newsletter and expressed interest in our activities. The courtesy booth extended to us each year by the Farmer’s Market is a great way to inform the public about our Audubon chapter. This year’s event seemed a great success.

RAINFOREST ALLIANCE HONORS SUSTAINABLE COFFEE LEADERS

At its 13th annual gala next month, the Rainforest Alliance will be honoring seven outstanding leaders in the coffee industry, leaders who have been instrumental in guiding the sustainable coffee movement (encompassing shade-coffee, organic coffee, and fair-trade coffee). As the coffee industry suffers from a deep crisis brought on by a glut in the coffee market affecting the livelihoods of thousands of coffee workers and millions of acres of coffee production worldwide, these visionary individuals and companies have been committed to making coffee production environmentally, socially, and economically sound.

Those honored will include: Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Mary Williams of Starbucks, Hans Jöhr of Nestle, Volcafe Ltd., Balzac Brothers and Co., DR Wakefield and Co., and Thanksgiving Coffee Co. A number of farmers and cooperative leaders will also be recognized.

The social and ecological benefits of sustainably managed coffee extend far beyond the farms in prosperous rural communities, cleaner rivers, increased bird and wildlife populations, reliable water supplies, sanitary systems, collaborations between farm managers, and neighboring parks, protected watersheds, and decent pay for workers.

The Thanksgiving Coffee Company, producers of ABA’s Song Bird Coffee will be among those recognized by the Rainforest Alliance. Paul and Joan Katzeff will be honored for Thanksgiving’s outstanding leadership in promoting environmentally friendly, sustainable, economic development. From leading by example in the bird-compatible shade-coffee scene, to establishing “cupping labs” in Nicaragua that enable small farms to be more competitive in the larger marketplace, Thanksgiving has initiated creative sustainable development initiatives.
For a good article on birds and shade-grown coffee see the recent February BIRDING: "Shade-grown Coffee and Northwest Migratory Birds" by Jennifer Seavey.


For particulars on ABA’s contribution to our chapter and Birds Unlimited, for your self as an Audubon member go there be sure to identify your products are all first class. There are some great gift items as well as good quality seed, feeders, birdbaths and other useful items for backyard bird watching.

The Wild Birds Unlimited store is at 296 W. Sunset Ave. #22, Coeur d’Alene. When you go there be sure to identify yourself as an Audubon member so that our chapter gets credit.

Thank you Irv and Helen Stephenson, owners of Wild Birds Unlimited, for your contribution to our chapter and for providing quality bird products and friendly service.

**OBSERVATION POST**

Kootenai County Big Year Additions since the September 2003 Newsletter (see February-September Newsletters or go to our Website to see bird species seen so far this year in Kootenai County - Current total 186)

Cooper’s Hawk 1 Mica Bay Survey Sept. 5 (KBUC, CCAM, BRET, JRET)

Ferruginous Hawk 1 Rathdrum Prairie Aug. 19 (JTAG)

Semipalmated Plover 1 Saw Mill Pond near Cataldo Sept. 28 (LHAR)

Lesser Yellowlegs 1 Lane Marsh (CDA River drainage) Aug. 24 (LHAR, SREA) and 4 Sept. 28 Saw Mill Pond - Cataldo area (LHAR)

Baird’s Sandpiper 2 Rathdrum Prairie Sept. 23 (LHAR, RCRA) 15 Kootenai NWR and 12 Boundary Creek WMA Aug. 31 (LHAR, SSTU)

Western Sandpiper 1+ Lane Marsh (CDA River drainage) August 24 (LHAR, SREA)

Least Sandpiper 1+ Lane Marsh (CDA River drainage) Aug. 24 (LHAR, SREA)

Short-billed Dowitcher 1+ Lane Marsh (CDA River drainage) August 24 (LHAR, SREA)

Long-billed Dowitcher 2, 11 and 23 Saw Mill Pond near Cataldo September 23 & 25 & 28 (LHAR)

Wilson’s Phalarope 2 Boundary Creek WMA Aug 31 (SSTU, LHAR)

Red-necked Phalarope 1 Saw Mill Pond, Cataldo area Sept. 12 (LHAR)

Common Tern 17 Harlow Point Rd, Harrison, 12 Anderson Lake, 32 Cave Lake Aug. 24 (LHAR, SREA)

Other Sightings of Interest

American White Pelican 1 immature Thompson Lake Aug. 24 (LHAR, SREA), 4 Boundary Creek WMA Aug. 31 (SSTU, LHAR)

Double-crested Cormorant 14 Mission Slough, 2 Harrison and 2 Thompson Lake Aug. 24 (LHAR, SREA)

Merlin 1 Ball Creek Ranch Survey Aug. 31 (KBUC, EBUC, JRET)

Semipalmated Plover 3 Kootenai NWA Aug. 31 (LHAR, SSTU)

Greater Yellowlegs 4 Saw Mill Pond, near Cataldo Sept. 12 & 28 (LHAR)

4 Boundary Creek WMA Aug. 31 (LHAR, SSTU)

Solitary Sandpiper 1 Lane Marsh Aug. 24 (LHAR, SREA)

Wilson’s Snipe 1 Lane Marsh 1 Harlow Point Road, Harrison Aug. 24 and 3 Saw Mill Pond near Cataldo Sept. 12 (LHAR)

Blue Jay and Blue XSteller Jay (Hybrid) 1 of each still coming to feeder in Coeur d’Alene - Pine Ave. during September (NMER)

White-breasted Nuthatch 1 Mica Bay Survey Sept. 5 (KBUC, CCAM, BRET, JRET)

Brown Creeper 1 Mica Bay Survey Sept. 5 (KBUC, CCAM, BRET, JRET)

Western Tanager 6-8 Ball Creek Survey Aug. 31 (EBUC, KBUC, JRET)

American Pipit 3 Burnt Cabin Summit, CDA National Forest Sept. 10 (LHAR)

Observers: Ed and Kris Buchler (EBUC, KBUC), Corinne Cameron (CCAM), Roland Craft (RCRA), Lisa Hardy (LHAR), Nancy Mertz (NMER), Bob and Jean Retzler (BRET, JRET), Scott Rea (SREA), Shirley Sturts (SSTU), Joe Taggart (JTAG)

Editors Note: I would like to hear from you, our readers! This is your Chapter Newsletter and you are welcome to be a part of it. Please feel free to send me articles, stories about bird or wildlife experiences you have had, poems, observations, book reviews, letters to the editor, pictures, etc. Send by email to Shirley Sturts s.sturts@verizon.net