

THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society
www.cdaudubon.org

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Articles for the newsletters are welcome. Please submit to the editor Shirley Sturts at: shirley.sturts@gmail.com by the 15th of each month. All submissions are subject to editing.
Thank you and happy reading!

SCHLEPP FARM

OCTOBER MEETING

DATE: October 6, Tuesday
PLACE: Lutheran Church of the Master 4800 North Ramsey
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
SPEAKER: Chris Bonsignore, Regional Biologist, Ducks Unlimited.
PROGRAM: "Ecological Restoration of Floodplain Habitats"

Chris will describe and present examples of the work underway by Ducks Unlimited and partners to restore wetland and riparian habitats at the Schlepp Farm and some of the wildlife using the newly restored habitats.

BOARD MEETING

DATE: October 6, Tuesday
PLACE: Mountain West Bank, 125 Ironwood
TIME: 4:30 p.m.

Visit our website:

www.cdaudubon.org



Wood Duck chick
Photograph by Bill Linn

Our Program

In 2007, the Environmental Protection Agency began cleanup of contaminated soils at the Schlepp Farm located along the Coeur d'Alene River near Medimont, Idaho. The project is part of the interim Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund cleanup plan. The goal of the project is to create clean feeding areas for migratory and resident waterfowl and other wetland-dependent bird species. The cleanup work is scheduled to be complete in late fall/winter 2009. As clean up work is

completed, the Coeur d'Alene Basin Natural Resource Trustees, led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in coordination with Ducks Unlimited and the landowner are completing ecological restoration activities

Our Speaker

Chris Bonsignore, Regional Biologist, Ducks Unlimited. B.S. Biology, Eastern Washington University. M.S. Wildlife Science, University of Washington. Since 1995, Mr. Bonsignore has worked on a wide range of projects involving research, restoration and protection of wetland, riparian and upland habitats in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and California. Mr. Bonsignore has served as a Regional Biologist for Ducks Unlimited since 1998 working on habitat restoration projects, fee title acquisitions and purchased conservation easements in partnership with private landowners, federal, state and local agencies and NGOs. Currently Mr. Bonsignore manages conservation initiatives in Idaho and Eastern Washington for Ducks Unlimited.



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

Judy Waring

On Saturday, October 3, we will be back at it again. We meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Mica Grange Hall for the donut and juice ritual. If you have a free morning, please join us in our community service effort. It is a satisfying way to spend two hours. For more information call Judy at 765-5378.

LANDOWNERS ENLIST IN SAVING DECLINING BIRD SPECIES

Reprint from the American Bird Conservancy Website

Private landowners are stepping up to help a number of cavity-nesting bird species of conservation concern. In many areas of the West, there is a shortage of large snags (dead trees) needed by many species of cavity-nesters, including the Flammulated Owl, and Lewis's and White-headed Woodpeckers as a result of forest management practices of post-fire logging and removing dead and dying trees. To help spread the news and get more landowners involved, American Bird Conservancy has produced a new booklet highlighting with the efforts of private landowners in implementing bird conservation measures in ponderosa pine forests to help cavity-nesting birds.



Photograph from Dick Cripe - snag left on his property with nesting Northern Flicker

"I used to take 10-12 truckloads of dead and dying trees off my property each year, but now I will leave a lot of those dead trees for wildlife, especially cavity-nesting birds," says Jim Dovenberg, a participant in the program from Oregon who is featured in the booklet which was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Produced in cooperation with the American Forest Foundation and Forest Restoration Partnership, the THE FISH HAWK HERALD

booklet, entitled "Landowners Stories in Bird Conservation: Managing for Cavity-Nesting Birds in Ponderosa Pine Forests", features the stories of six landowners who participated in the program."

Landowners hold the future of these birds in their management decisions," said American Bird Conservancy's Dan Casey, the Northern Rockies Bird Conservation Region Coordinator. "We hope that the stories of these folks will inspire other people to manage their land for cavity-nesting bird species, and we are providing a variety of resources to help them make the transition."

LEONARD BERNSTEIN AND THE IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER GO TO WASHINGTON

Cornell Lab of Ornithology eNews, June 16, 2009

This week, the sounds of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers earned a special place of honor in American history: A 1935 recording from the Cornell Lab's Macaulay Library was added to the Library of Congress's National Recording Registry. It was the only nonhuman voice to make this select group of 25 recordings chosen for their historical, cultural, or aesthetic significance. Other sounds included music from the original cast of "West Side Story," John Lee Hooker, and The Who. For the story and links to a montage of the recordings, visit our Round Robin blog.

WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

Shirley Sturts

Western Field Ornithologists, WFO, is an organization of amateur and professional field ornithologists that promotes the study of birds throughout western North America. Each fall WFO holds a four day conference with scientific papers, field trips, workshops, panels, a keynote address, the annual membership meeting, and other events. The location varies each year. This year the meeting was held in Boise on September 10-13th.

Lisa Hardy and I attended the Boise meeting. One of the highlights of our trip was a visit to the Idaho Bird Observatory located at the top of Lucky Peak.

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WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

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Wilson's and Orange-crowned Warblers ready to be released - Photographed by Lisa Hardy

On the first day of the conference, Greg Kaltenecker, our leader and the executive director of IBO, navigated our van up a rough 4-wheel drive road to the top of Lucky Peak. Lisa and I expected to arrive at a place with buildings. Instead, we came to a gate with the name "Idaho Bird Observatory"

above it and a port-a-potty (the only bathroom available). Up the hill and around the corner there was a little plywood shack where they brought the birds in for banding and data collection. Living quarters consisted of one small camp trailer (how did they get that up there?) and a few backpack type tents scattered here and there among the bushes.

In 1993, it was discovered that this area supports one of the largest raptor and songbird fall migration routes in the western United States. What makes this area unique in its attraction to migrating birds is the topography. Lucky Peak is the southernmost peak on the Boise Ridge; looking southwest is the desert, looking northeast is forested mountains. We had a bird's eye view of Boise to the west and the Simplot mansion with its large flag was visible in the foothills above the city.



One of 8 mist nets at the Lucky Peak Banding Station - Photographed by Lisa Hardy

The banding station for migratory song birds, established in 1997 on Lucky Peak, is active everyday from July 16th to October 15th. Using mist nests, researchers and volunteers capture and band 4,000-6,000 song-birds every year, representing 60 species. Besides

banding the birds, they measure wings and tails, determine age and sex. weigh them, check for the amount of fat on their bodies and for parasites lurking in their feathers. During our visit, the banding crew caught and banded Hammond's Flycatcher, Western Tanager, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, 5 warbler species, Spotted Towhee, and White-crowned Sparrow. Some were handed off to us for releasing. It was interesting seeing these birds close up. We had trouble identifying some of them because they look very different in hand than in the field. This banding program has added several new species to the Idaho bird list.

A Chestnut-sided Warbler was sighted by one of our fellow visitors, a top birder from North Dakota. It was not captured, but photos were taken and we all got to see it. The Chestnut-sided Warbler is on the Idaho State Review List. There are 7 accepted records for Idaho, one being banded at Lucky Peak on September 3, 2001, plus 25 other sightings between 1974-2009. These sightings are all from southern Idaho.

In the afternoon, we took part in the daily hawkwatch which is conducted every fall from the 25th of August through the 31st of October. While that is going on, they are also trapping raptors for banding and measuring. They band between 1,000 and 2,000 diurnal raptors and forest owls each fall. There is an owl crew that sleeps all day and traps and bands owls most of the night. While visiting the trapping station, we watched raptor crew catch several Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawk and American Kestrel. Again, we had a chance to hold and release the birds after they were banded and measured. A Red-tailed Hawk came into the trap but escaped. A Golden Eagle flew over but didn't attempt to come in. Charles Swift, from Moscow, said they saw a Broad-winged Hawk during his visit on Saturday.

Besides the banding program, IBO is involved in a year-round environmental education program for local schools, K-12 and programs for university students and the public.

IBO is funded completely through grants, contracts and donations from individuals. See their Website at: www.boisestate.edu/biology/IBO

Lisa and I are considering a possible field trip to Lucky Peak next fall. See our November issue for more highlights of our trip, including the filed trip to the South Hills Crossbills.

**BEGINNING
BIRDING TRIPS
WITH LYNN SHERIDAN**



Birding the trails on The Nature Conservancy's Cougar Gulch

Nature Preserve



On August 20, 2009, Pat Bearman, Valerie Zagar, Vera Taggart, Adela Sussman and Jan Severtson joined me on a two hour, morning trek along the Nature Conservancy trails. The marshy area was thick with reeds and grass with one old nest box peaking out at us. We set off on a level trail that rose slowly for some distance before turning uphill through the forest. We expected to see swallows feeding over the marsh but there were none. Jan heard a Steller's Jay and a Red-winged Blackbird. Later we all got a good look at a Red-winged Blackbird in the marsh. As we started uphill, several Dark-eyed Junco flitted across the path. We heard Red-breasted Nuthatch, chickadees, Pine Siskin, and Northern Flicker. Jan identified two other birds for us: Cassin's Vireo and Willow Flycatcher.

As Jan and I lagged at the back of the homeward bound procession, we heard and then saw a Gray Catbird. Back in our cars, as we joined Hwy 95, a flock of 30-40 Red-winged Blackbirds blanketed the marshy area on the west side. We couldn't stop --- maybe that's where all the swallows were feeding, too!

Thank you everyone, Lynn Sheridan

**EASTERN WASHINGTON MIGRANT
EXTRAVAGANZA**

September 13th, Sunday

Jonathan Isacoff

Eight birders from CDA Audubon Joined Jon and Ann for a great time touring some of the hottest (literally and figuratively!) migrant traps in Adams and Franklin Counties. The locations we visited were: Bassett Park in Washtucna, Palouse Falls State Park, Lyons Ferry State Park, and Sprague Lake.



**Peregrine Falcon
Photograph by
Wayne Tree**

We tallied 70 species; no mega-rarities but lots of good ones. Among others, we had a possible Least Flycatcher at Bassett Park -- photos are at www.flickr.com/photos/isacoff. If anyone has guesses, let me know.

Some of our best birds were: Clark's Grebe 2, American White Pelican 10, Peregrine Falcon 1, Sabine's Gull 4, Eurasian Collared-Dove 20. See Newsletter on our Website for the complete list.

OBSERVATION POST

2009 Kootenai County Big Year - as of September 20 is 185 -- go to our website for a complete list

Great Egret - 1 on September 10 at the Sawmill pond near Cataldo Mission by Larry Miller, 2 on September 15 at the same location and 1 in Lane Marsh by Lisa Hardy. Carrie Hugo also reported 1 in this area during this time period

Black-necked Stilt - 9 on August 27 - IBA Survey along the NIC dike road by Lynn Sheridan and Jan Severtson

Killdeer - Adult with 2 young - July 14 - Rimrock area

Black-headed Grosbeak - nest w/4 young- photographed by Tom Davenport (visit his website <http://www.prairiephoto.biz/>)

Calliope Hummingbird - Nest w/2 young (first confirmed sighting for Latilong 2) - CDA - photographed by Tim Christe

Blue Jay - 7-9 (breeding suspected) July 24
Powderhorn Bay Road, CDA Lake by Doug

Shonewald

FIELD TRIPS 2009-2010

PLEASE REGISTER: Watch the website or newsletter for updates to our field trip schedule. Participants should contact the trip leader at least 24 hours in advance of the field trip to find out if the meeting place/time or destination has been changed. Participants will share in a mileage reimbursement for the driver.

MINERAL POINT TRAIL

DATE: September 26, Saturday

TIME: 8:00 a.m.

MEET: K-Mart parking lot, south side.

LEADER: : Judy Waring - 765-5378

ACTIVITY: This trip was made last year under rainy, foggy weather so we are hoping for a nice sunny day. Mineral Point Trail, #82, overlooks Lake Pend Oreille and is 2.1 miles one way. It is labeled as an easy trail.

In the same area is Lost Lake Trail, #81, and the two trails connect. Lost Lake is 2.3 miles long in a loop and is also labeled easy. Hikers can have a choice of hiking 2.1, 4.4 or 6.5 miles is they so choose. Bring water, lunch, and of course binoculars. We will be looking mainly for upland birds.

MICA BAY SURVEY

DATES: October 13, Tuesday (held 2nd Tuesday of each month - times vary depending on month)

TIME: 8:00 a.m.

MEET: Fairmont Loop and Highway 95

LEADER: Shirley Sturts 664-5318

ACTIVITY: We spend about 3 hours once a month counting birds at Mica Bay. Everybody is welcome. Beginner birders are welcome. We will help you with identification skills.

MARIE CREEK TRAIL

DATE: October 17, Saturday:

TIME: 8:00 a.m.

MEET: Fernan Ranger Station

LEADER: Dick Cripe - 665-0010

ACTIVITY: This is mainly an all day trip so bring lunch and water. The hike is approximately 2 miles of fairly easy terrain. We will look for upland birds but also can spend some time around Wolf Lodge Bay searching for waterfowl.

HAYDEN LAKE AND ENGLISH POINT

DATE: October 24, Saturday

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

MEET: Meet: K-Mart parking lot, south side.

LEADER: Lisa Hardy, 783-1262 or e-mail basalt@earthlink.net

ACTIVITY: This will be a half-day trip looking for waterfowl on Hayden Lake with a hike at English Point.

NOTE: There will not be an Audubon organized Cranberry Bog trip this year.

