

# THE FISH HAWK HERALD



Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the National Audubon Society  
[www.cdaudubon.org](http://www.cdaudubon.org)

October 2011

Volume 21 Number 2

## THE BLUEBIRD TRAIL BUNCH

Shirley Sturts



### Mountain Bluebird

Photographed by Darlene Carlton

This year we tried something new in bluebird trail monitoring. It all started when Roland kept insisting that we get some help with weekly checking the houses on the three bluebird trails that the chapter has been taking care of since we adopted them in 1998. Carrie took up the reins and scheduled a workshop, including a trail presentation by Kris and input from Theresa, who has been monitoring the Hoodoo Trail since 1998. Shirley, another 1998 monitor, was reluctantly dragged into the project but she soon became enthusiastic as the project progressed. After the workshop, a work party cleaned and repaired the boxes along the trail, and volunteers signed up on the schedule that Kris developed for weekly monitoring.

Monitoring the trail as a team effort worked out very well. However, April, May and June weather did not cooperate with us. While enjoying our summer-like September, you may have forgotten that spring didn't happen and summer didn't start until July ☺. This, I think, was probably the cause of low fledgling success, especially for bluebirds. Only 22 Western Bluebirds fledged from the three trails. Of the 13 that

fledged from the Hoodoo Trail, 8 came from a pair that nested twice in box 18. The other pair to be successful was from box 31, with 5 fledged young. There were 8 boxes that were used by Western Bluebird pairs and 10 nest attempts.

A highlight this year was two Mountain Blue Bird nests; box 24 fledging 4 or 5 young and box 37 had an uncertain outcome. In this box, there were 5 young close to fledging on June 10<sup>th</sup>. However, on June 18<sup>th</sup> only remnants of a nest remained. If the young fledged, the nest should have been intact.

Mica Flats had 2 boxes with successful pairs of Western Bluebirds, box 1B with 3 fledged young and box 8A with 6. Mica Bay's one Western Bluebird box contained 4 young on June 1st. However, on June 8<sup>th</sup>, it looked like a rodent may have eaten the young as only feathers were found in the nest. A swallow pair then gave it a try, only to have its two eggs found broken on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Jerry and Sharon Hanson, residents of Mica Bay, had better luck, with one of their bird houses hosting a successful pair of Western Bluebirds.,

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## OCTOBER PROGRAM

**DATE:** October 11, Tuesday

**PLACE:** Lutheran Church of the Master,  
4800 N. Ramsey, CDA

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.

**SPEAKER:** Chris Deforest, from the Inland Northwest Land Trust

**PROGRAM:** Chris will be discussing their organization's mission and their efforts in our area to promote land conservation through partnerships. See page 7 for additional information

### **BOARD MEETING**

**DATE:** October 11, Tuesday

**PLACE:** Mountain West Bank,  
125 Ironwood Drive, Coeur d'Alene

**TIME:** 4:30 p.m.

## HELP SAVE THE DIKE TREES



Ed Buchler

As you are probably aware, as a result of a directive from the Army Corps of Engineers and the influence of FEMA, the city of Coeur d'Alene has been directed to remove all trees and understory growth from both sides of the dike road along the border of NIC. Actions on many fronts are being taken to prevent this from happening. One of the easiest things YOU can do to aid in preserving the trees is to go to [www.kealliance.org](http://www.kealliance.org) and sign the petition we at KEA are circulating. Please also tell your like-minded friends to do the same. For the signature to be legitimate, you must be a resident of Coeur d'Alene. The trees thank you.

## FALL "TO DO" LIST FROM YOUR BACKYARD WILDLIFE FAMILY



From the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's *Crossing Paths* Newsletter

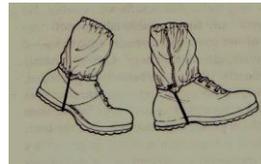
Your family may be making those fall outdoor chore lists, as daylight hours shrink, temperatures drop, and the urge grows to "batten down the hatches" in the yard and garden. Here's another "to do" list from your local wildlife "family" that you may find easier to check off:

- Leave some "dead heads" on your flowering plants to provide seeds for some of us birds and other animals
- If you must rake leaves off grass lawns, just pile them under some shrubs, bushes or other nooks and crannies to provide homes for those insects that we birds love to eat; leaves make great mulch to help your plants, anyway!
- Keep that dead or dying tree right where it is (unless, of course, it's truly a hazard to you), so we can feast on the insects in the rotting wood or make winter roosts or dens in its cavities
- Give yourself and your mower a rest for at least a portion of your lawn so we've got a patch of taller grass to hide and forage in
- Save just a little of that dead bramble thicket for us - it makes great winter cover and we don't need much! Fall is a good time to plant shrubs, so replace invasive, exotic Himalayan and cutleaf blackberries with native plants of higher wildlife value like

blackcap (native black raspberry) or red raspberry; native currants or gooseberries found in your area; or native roses such as Nootka or baldhip.

- Pile up any brush or rocks you clear around your place to give us another option for nests and dens
- Take it easy on yourself and let go of the "perfect" garden image; we wild animals like less tidy, "fuzzy" places because there's usually more food and shelter there
- Get yourself a comfortable chair, sit back, and congratulate yourself on having made a home for wildlife and a haven of relaxation for yourself!

## BIRD MAN WALKING



**Cross Country Trek to Support Important Bird Areas Program**

Chapter Leader Update -

*Wednesday, August 31st, 2011*

Inspired by a chance meeting in Tennessee during the 1970s with *A Walk Across America* author, Peter Jenkins, Brad Storey made a decision that one day he would put on a backpack and set out on a journey of his own.

Nearly thirty-five years later and recently retired, Brad told his family he was going to use his new-found time to walk across America with his dog, Xena. As a family, they agreed that walking for a cause would make his journey even more meaningful. Given Brad's love for bird watching, he immediately contacted the National Audubon Society and offered to help raise money for Audubon's Important Bird Areas (IBAs) Program.

As a devoted birdwatcher, Brad has spent a lifetime inspiring friends and family to learn about birds and the threats they face due to habitat loss from climate change and development. So, starting this September, in Brunswick, GA, Brad and Xena take his message about protecting critical bird habitat across America, mile by mile, flyway by flyway.

From Brunswick, GA they will head west to Montgomery, Alabama and continue west along the Gulf Coast before heading to California. They will be stopping at Audubon Centers and Important Bird Areas along the way. Be sure to follow their progress on Brad's Facebook Fanpage: Bird Man Walking, to see where they'll be walking, or visit his blog: <http://birdmanwalking.wordpress.com/>

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## THE BLUEBIRD TRAIL BUNCH

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**Ed and Kris Buchler checking boxes along the Gertie Hanson ( Hoodoo Valley) Bluebird Trail, April 2011 - Photograph by Peggy Albertson**

In looking back through past nest data, I find we have had as few as 37 Western Bluebirds fledge in 2000 and as many as 92 fledge in 2005. Tree Swallows did better this year with 129 fledging from the threetrails. They have had as few as 71 fledgling in 2002 and as many as 199 in 2006.

To see the complete reports and comparisons, go to Bluebird Reports on our Website:

[www.cdaudubon.org](http://www.cdaudubon.org) and click projects.

Or <http://cdaudubon.org/BluebirdTrails.htm>

Volunteers on the Hoodoo Trails: Peggy Albertson, Ed and Kris Buchler, Darlene Carlton, Linda Childcraft, Roland Craft, Carrie Hugo, Rob Kroese, Cindy O'Bryant, Theresa Potts, Don Scoggins, Shirley Sturts, Mike and Valerie Zagar

Volunteers on the Mica Bay/Flats: Roland Craft, Darlene Carlton, Rob and Nancy Kroese

In March, we will organize our teams and schedule a work party for cleaning and repairing nest boxes for the 2012 nesting season. At that time, we will be asking for volunteers to monitor the nests. If you are interested in joining the "Bluebird Bunch", look for announcements in the March newsletter. We plan to get back into the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's "NestWatch" program

## BIRD MAN WALKING

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Brad and Xena are inviting Chapter Members to JOIN them for any part of the walk and enjoy the birds along the way. The family has invited anyone who wants to meet up with Brad during his journey to contact his daughter, Lucy, at

[lstorey@southuniversity.edu](mailto:lstorey@southuniversity.edu) or 412-377-9367.

If you can't walk with Brad and Xena, but would like to support their effort to protect the most important places in America for birds, please consider making a donation to Audubon's Important Bird Area's Program at the following Audubon site: <http://audubonaction.org/bradstorey>

### BOOK REVIEW



## SHE'S WEARING A DEAD BIRD ON HER HEAD!

By Kathryn Lasky    Illustrated by  
David Catrow

Janet Callen

"Harriet Hemenway was a very proper Boston lady--she never talked with her mouth full. But one day she almost did. Standing by the bay window in her parlor, she had just bitten into a jam cookie when her eyes sprang open in dismay. She gasped, leaned forward, swallowed, then turned to her parlor maid. She's wearing a dead bird on her head! Feathers on ladies' hats were becoming more and more popular. At first, hats had been decorated with just feathers, and then designers began to add pairs of wings. But this woman had an entire bird perched atop her hat! Harriet squinted her eyes as the lady of fashion walked proudly by. Arctic tern, I believe, Harriet whispered. Looks ready to fly away, said the parlor maid. It won't, Harriet replied sadly."

So begins the delightful story based on the true adventures of Harriet Hemenway and her cousin Minna Hall and their campaign to stop the slaughter of birds for decoration. The year was 1896 and women did not have the right to vote and very little power. However, these two women formed the Massachusetts Audubon Society and began their Bird Hat campaign.

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## BOOK REVIEW - Continued from Page 3

Because of their efforts, beginning in 1903, federal laws were passed protecting birds. A law was passed preventing the importation of feathers from Europe and the tropics. The word spread to England where Queen Victoria announced she would never again wear a feather for fashion.

This is a children's book, recommended for ages 5 to 9, or anyone who is still a child at heart. The illustrations are humorous, colorful and fascinating. The book is now out of print, but available through Amazon. However new copies of the soft cover book are \$75 and new copies of the hard cover about \$40. I don't know why the difference. I bought a used copy. Go to Amazon.com, and in the search box, type "She's wearing a Dead Bird on her Head" and you can view a few pages of the book. I have not checked to see if this book is in any of the local libraries. I'll share mine.

### ***SANDERLING SIGHTING ON PRIEST LAKE IS A FIRST***

Shirley Sturts

Sherry Lee – photos – see more on our Website



When I checked Inland-nw-birders (a birding list server for northern Idaho, eastern Oregon and eastern Washington) the other morning, I was excited to see a report by Sherry Lee of 2 juvenile Sanderling on the shores of Priest Lake. I immediately sent her an email asking for more information and soon received a reply. I found out that Sherry and her husband live on the southeast

end of the lake. Best of all, she sent some wonderful photos to share with us. Sherry said the birds were running around on the beach most of the afternoon, coming very close to them at times. This is the first time they have been reported on Priest Lake.



Sanderling, a bird of the arctic tundra in summer, is commonly seen chasing after waves on sandy beaches along all our coasts during the winter months. In

migration, they often show up on inland lakes. Burleigh, in *Birds of Idaho*, lists it as uncommon but regular as a fall migrant in north Idaho, rare in spring. The majority of these sightings are in the Lewiston area where it is seen on a regular basis in fall. He only has two records for the southern part of the state (there are a few more records since his publication in 1972.).

#### **I have collected only 4 records for Kootenai County:**

September 20, 1996 (1) – CDA City Beach – John Shipley

October 7, 2000 (1) – Harlow Pt. Rd (Harrison) – Shirley Sturts, Lisa Hardy, Charles Swift, and others (field trip)

September 16, 2001 (1) – Harlow Pt Road – Steve Lindsay

May 17, 2009 – (2) - Medimont area – Lisa Hardy

#### **And 5 records (now 6) for Bonner/Boundary Counties;**

August 20, 1958 (1) – Sandpoint – Thomas Burleigh

August 31, 1993 (2) Sandpoint City Beach – Shirley Sturts, Gertie Hanson, Nancy Mertz, and others (field trip)

September 7, 1996 (1) Sandpoint City Beach - Shirley Sturts, John Shipley, Gordon and Pam Comrie

August 5, 1998 (1) – Sandpoint – Earl Chapin

September 1, 2007 (2) – Boundary Creek WMA – Lisa Hardy and Kris Buchler

The first recorded Sanderling in Idaho is a specimen collected by William Davis at Rupert, Minidoka County on May 19, 1921. The first report for Northern Idaho is from one recorded by Thomas Burleigh on October 8, 1951

## YELLOWSTONE/DUCK CREEK TRIP

September 2011

Kris Buchler



**Sandhill Crane --  
Photograph by Wayne  
Tree**

Eight Audubon members trekked to Laura Bayless' house September 6<sup>th</sup> for several days of hiking, sightseeing, birding, painting and all-around enjoyment. Wes Hanson, Theresa Shaffer, Valerie and Mike Zagar, Ronn and Roberta Rich, and Ed

and Kris Buchler absorbed every bit they could that Yellowstone had to offer.

Four of the group had been there in different seasons and each is never the same. The herds of bison were concentrated in the Hayden Valley this time although some were scattered all over the park. There were still some old "guys and gals" who preferred to walk down the road giving everyone close-up looks. Several of us got good views of bull elk with their impressive racks. Sandhill Cranes were scattered in small groups of 2-4 but there were no big concentrations that one might see during spring migration.

Wes took advantage of different lighting conditions to paint with watercolors. Mike planned a couple of hikes and all visited various geyser basins. Mike, Valerie, Kris and Ed visited Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, located west of Duck Creek and Henry's Lake. Ed and Kris visited a spot called Horse Butte with a USFS fire tower and magnificent view of Hebgen Lake. Everyone got to Canyon and the South Rim for the view and hikes. Ed got to his favorite ice cream place in West Yellowstone and it turns out Wes and Theresa stopped there every day.

Bird sightings were varied and not as plentiful as in the spring. We saw many families of Mountain Bluebirds, 2 Golden Eagles, Gray Jay, Pink-sided Junco, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, Red-tailed Hawk, White-crowned Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Sandhill Crane, American White Pelican, Osprey, Common Loon, Black-capped Chickadee, Brewer's Blackbird, Clark's Nutcracker and numerous other species.

The most interesting sighting was of 6 Swainson's Hawks, each perched on a section of a long irrigation machine. They varied in plumage from light to dark adults and intermediate and dark juveniles. As water sprayed towards the ground, the birds watched for small mammals to scatter and would pounce upon them and return to the irrigator.



Many of the ducks were in eclipse plumage and very hard to identify. Some still had very young ducklings with them. They will soon be migrating as snow can come at any time.

Each couple took different routes home. Ronn and Roberta went to southern Idaho while Theresa and Wes wanted to visit Philipsburg, centered in sapphire country. The Zagars and Buchlers drove an extra day in order to drive the Beartooth Highway from Cook City to Red Lodge, Montana. It is truly one of America's most beautiful and unique highways.

We are all grateful to Laura Bayless for her generous gift of her home for the Audubon banquet and fundraiser. She has also invited Audubon members to visit in the spring and to experience this wonderful area and national park.

## LATOUR CREEK ROAD AND CRYSTAL LAKE

Shirley Sturts

Rain greeted me when I woke on Sunday morning, the day I was down on the Audubon calendar to lead a hike into Crystal Lake. However, by the time I met my fellow birders at Fernan Ranger Station, the day was looking more promising. On our hike, we had some fog, scattered clouds, and intermittent sunshine, but no rain. The wet vegetation and

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## LATOUR CREEK...

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ground did give evidence of overnight rain. I found the cooler weather and moisture invigorating after the dry hot summer weather we have had up until now. The temperature was perfect for hiking with the exception of a cold breeze off the lake where we had our lunch.



We hiked into Crystal Lake from the Sheep Springs Campground. It is a 2-mile, up and down, rocky trail with great views. Instead of returning the same way, we took another trail that winds up over a ridge and then down to our road, coming out at the saddle where the road heads down to the St. Joe River and Saint Maries. We were again treated to another set of great views, this time looking south at the scenic St. Joe River, St. Maries, west to Benewah Lake, and even into Washington State. It was another 1-½ miles along the road back to our cars.

Our only high altitude target bird of the day was the White-crowned Sparrow. We saw at least two small flocks and possibly others that eluded us as they flew across our path only to disappear without a sound into the vegetation. Other species seen or heard (either along the road or trail) were: American Dipper 1, Red Crossbill 10+, Steller's Jay 1, Red-breasted Nuthatch 4-6, Cassin's Finch 4-6, Hairy or Downy Woodpecker (heard), Grouse sp., Golden-crowned Kinglet (heard), Mountain Chickadee, Black-capped Chickadee, and one possible Varied Thrush.

On our way back down the Latour Creek road, we stopped to check on a bird. Lisa jumped out of the car only to quickly jump back in when she saw a bull moose only a few feet away. During rutting season

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they can be a bit crazy. As it was, he moved off into the woods and except for Jan, the rest of us didn't get to see it.

Although the birds were scarce, the scenery and fall flowers and colors were spectacular. The Indian paintbrush and tiny blue bells were favorites. Sylvia Chatburn and Marilyn George, Native Plant Society members from Sandpoint, helped with flower identification. Roland Craft, retired forester, was our expert tree identifier, in addition to sharing his sack of candy. Other participants were Lisa Hardy, Sally Jones, Roberta Rich and Jan Severtson

## ROSE LAKE AREA

SEPTEMBER 25

Judy Waring.

Birding is a fickle pursuit. One day you may get excellent results and the next day, in the same spot, nothing. Our group of six Auduboners is happy to report a very good day of birding from Rose Lake to Medimont along Highway 3. We made several stops at promising locales along the route and came away with 29 species. On Shady Lane, where the American Redstart can often be found in summer, we located a Hairy Woodpecker and a Pileated Woodpecker sharing the same tree, a Spotted Towhee, and a White-crowned Sparrow. Waterfowl were still in abundance and we identified 15 species. We enjoyed a lunch break on a sunny dock at Medicine lake, got a few more species, and called it a day. Participants: Roland Craft, Valerie Zagar, Janet Callen, Sheryl Harris, Phil and Judy Waring.

## ADOPT-A HIGHWAY FALL CLEANUP

**Date:** October 1, Saturday

**Time:** 8:00 a.m.

**Place:** Meet at Mica Grange Hall for donuts, coffee and road assignments. It may take 1-2 hours depending on number of volunteers. Long pants, long sleeves and gloves are advisable. You must sign a roster as IDOT requires signatures prior to the event. If you have not signed the roster yet, call Mike Zagar, 208-819-5115.

## PROJECT FEEDER WATCH

25<sup>TH</sup> SEASON

The 2011-12 season goes from Saturday, November 12, 2011 to Friday, April 6, 2012. For information go to: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/>

## OCTOBER PROGRAM NOTES

### INLAND NORTHWEST LANDTRUST

Inland Northwest Land Trust protects the Wild Lifelines – the special places and connecting corridors (including flyways) that nourish wildlife and preserve the clean air, clean water, and scenic beauty of our region. With backing from the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society, INLT worked with Spokane Audubon Society to protect Audubon Lake – raising money, purchasing the land, and then selling it to WDFW as a nature preserve. INLT Executive Director Chris DeForest will talk about how the land trust works, recent projects to protect wildlife habitat in the Coeur d'Alene area, and what's in store for the future.

### FIELD TRIPS 2011-2012

**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.

#### MICA BAY SURVEY

**Date:** October 11, 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 2-3 hours once a month counting birds at Mica Bay. Beginner birders are welcome. We will help you with identification skills.

#### BOREAL TRIP – SALMO WILDERNESS / NE WA

**Date:** October 8-9

**Time:** 8:00 a.m.

**Meet:** Home of Nancy Mertz on Pine Street – call for directions 765-5254 or 765-3116(work)

You must register for this trip – housing may be full.

Call Lisa Hardy 208-783-1262 or email

[basalt@earthlink.net](mailto:basalt@earthlink.net) for information.

See our Website for details;

#### EAST SIDE LAKE COEUR D ALENE & HWY 3

**Date:** October 22, 2011, Saturday

**Leader:** Janet Callen, 664-1085

**Meet:** Fernan Ranger Station

**Time:** 8:00 a.m.

Target birds: Loons and other waterfowl, with a stop at Karen William's property. We will return via

Highway 3 and time permitting stop at Medimont, Schlepp Ranch and Rose Lake. Karen says she will serve tea and crumpets. Bring a lunch and water and be prepared for cool weather.

### MINERAL RIDGE DAY HIKE

**Date:** November 5, 2011 Saturday

**Leader:** Janet Callen, 664-1085

**Meet:** Fernan Ranger Station

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.

Hike the trail, and look for waterfowl in Wolf Lodge and Beauty Bay. This will be a half-day trip.

### KOOTENIA ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE (KEA) CALENDAR

#### Lunch and learn

##### CDA City Council Candidate Forum

**Date:** October 6<sup>th</sup> - **Time:** Noon-1:00

**Location:** Iron Horse Restaurant 407 Sherman Ave.

**Info:** Who's running for CDA City Council? Come find out. KEA will be hosting a City Council candidate forum allowing the candidates to introduce themselves and weigh in on "hot topic" issues they would face if seated. *Free Admission. Food available for purchase.*

##### Junk2Funk Eco-Fashion Show

**Date:** October 14<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** Doors Open at 7:00 p.m.; Runway starts at 8:00 p.m.

**Location:** The Eagles Lodge- 209 Sherman Ave.

**Price:** \$24.99 tickets available for purchase at The Art Spirit Gallery or online at [www.kealliance.org](http://www.kealliance.org)

**Info:** Come enjoy a collection of eco-friendly fashions by local artists. All runway creations are made from everyday *junk, trash* & recycled materials.

##### KEA Lunch & Learn: Solar Roadways

**Date:** October 20<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** Noon-1:00

**Location:** Iron Horse Restaurant 407 Sherman Ave.

**Info:** Join us for a peek into the future, with Solar Roadways co-founders Julie & Scott Brusaw. The Solar Roadway is a series of structurally-engineered solar panels that are driven upon. The idea is to replace all current petroleum-based asphalt roads, parking lots, and driveways with Solar Road Panels that collect energy to be used by our homes and businesses.