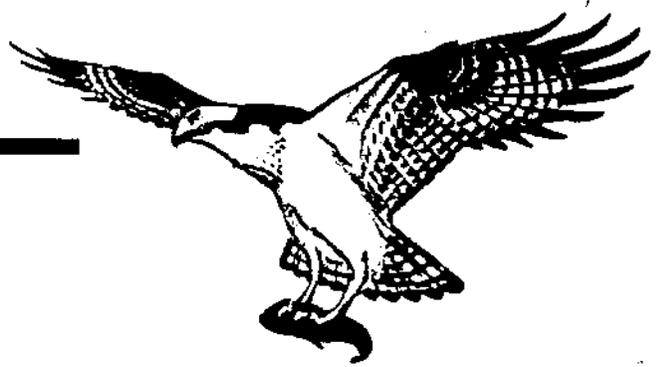


# THE FISH HAWK HERALD

**Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the Audubon Society**

**Pam Gortz, Editor**  
4301 N. Ramsey Rd., #A2-14  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
765-1115-h 773-4516-w



**September 1992**

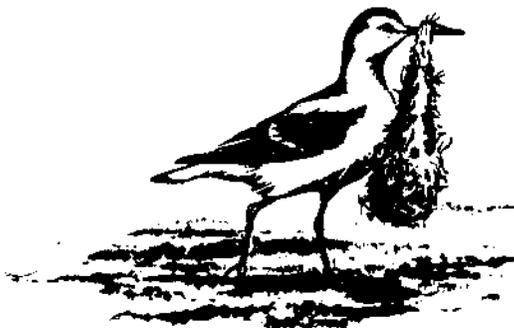
**Volume 2, No. 6**

## CALENDAR CHECK! -

- SEPT 15, 1992 7 PM** The September meeting of the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society will be held on Tuesday, September 15th at 7 P.M. **NEW MEETING PLACE: Lake City Senior Center, 1916 Lakewood Drive, Coeur d'Alene.** Susan Weller will present a slide program entitled "Migrant Birds: A Troubled Future?". The program explores the perils faced by neotropical migratory bird species on their breeding grounds in the U.S.; and on their migratory staging and wintering areas in Central and South America. Be prepared to recount any good summer birding stories you may have!
- SEPT 16, 1992 6 PM** Kootenai County Planning and Zoning Commission hearing on the proposed subdivision on Cougar Bay - please attend and show your support for the future of Cougar Bay!! [See article on page 2 for details.]
- SEPT 20, 1992** NEWSLETTER DEADLINE for submitting articles, etc., for the October newsletter.
- SEPT 27, 1992** September Field Trip!! Shirley Sturts will lead the September field trip which will check out Cougar Bay and Mica Bay for fall migrants. Meet at Rustler's Roost, 819 Sherman Avenue, for breakfast (optional) at 6:30 a.m. or in the parking lot at 7:30 a.m. Please register with field trip leader, Shirley Sturts, 664-5318, so that you can be informed should there be any changes.
- OCT 10, 1992** October Field Trip!! The October field trip will wind around the Cataldo slough and continue down to Thompson Lake and the Coeur d'Alene Wildlife Management area near Harrison. Meet at Rustler's Roost, 819 Sherman Avenue, for breakfast (optional) at 7:00 a.m. or in the parking lot at 8:00 a.m. We will carpool into groups so that those who want to quit earlier will be together and those that want to continue to mid-afternoon can do so. Bring a sack lunch if you choose to go past noon. Call field trip leader, Pam Gortz, 765-1115, to register so that you could be called if there are last minute changes.

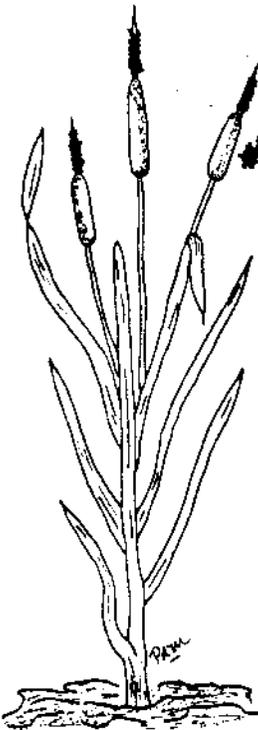
## NEW MEETING PLACE - WE'RE MOVING!!

Audubon members will be pleased to know that while we have lost our meeting place in Hayden Lake, we get to keep Ronn Rich. Besides being our Treasurer and serving on the Board of Directors, Ronn has very faithfully allowed us to meet at his place of business over the past two years. The recent acquisition of Security Pacific Bank by the Bank of America left us without a place to congregate, and put Ronn in danger of being transferred. It was fairly easy to find a new place to hold our monthly meetings, but it would have been impossible to replace valuable members like Ronn and Roberta. We will now be meeting at the Lake City Senior Center located at 1916 Lakewood Drive, in Coeur d'Alene.



*The Greater Wandering Vagrant  
from the publication A Field Guide  
to Little-Known & Seldom-Seen Birds*

## HEARING ON COUGAR BAY CONTINUES!!



A Kootenai County Planning and Zoning Commission hearing on a proposed subdivision on Cougar Bay has been continued to September. The hearing will resume Wednesday, September 16, 1992, at 6 o'clock p.m. at the Lake City Senior Center. About 150 people turned out for the hearing, which began in August, including an outstanding contingency of Audubon members.

Many of those attending that first meeting in August were dismayed to find the Cougar Bay item listed last on the agenda. It is very important that we do not let this discourtesy by the commission effect our participation in the democratic process. I was impressed not just by the number of opponents that came to the hearing, but by the patience and tenacity displayed by those wishing to testify on behalf of Cougar Bay. Nearly all of the folks who came to defend Cougar Bay sat in the sweltering, unairconditioned hearing room, or stood outside in the heat, waiting for the commission to plod through the six preceding agenda items. After three and one-half hours of waiting, the attorney for McCormack Properties was allowed to outline his defense of the proposed subdivision, telling the commission that he too, "was a friend of Cougar Bay."

Testimony on behalf of Cougar Bay will begin at the September 16th hearing. It's important that we do not let this delay diffuse our numbers, or our zeal. It would be a good idea to call and confirm that hearing place and time to make sure there are no last minute changes. The Planning and Zoning Commission telephone number is 769-4401. See you there!

[Susan Weller]

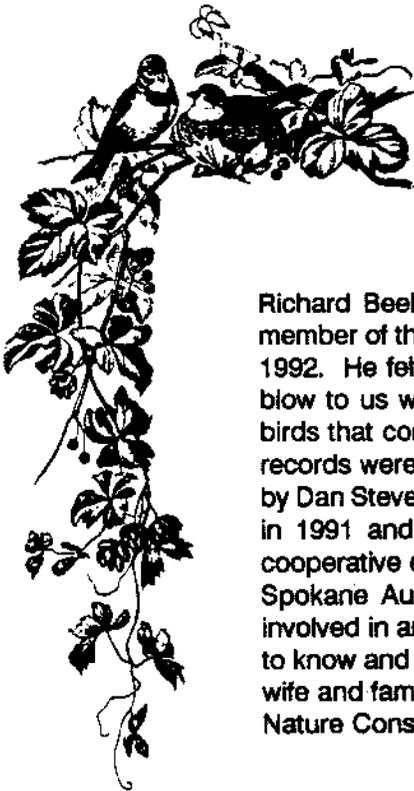
\*9/12 Meeting moved to FAIRGROUNDS - A call to confirm 769-4401

6 PM

*"The human race, as a whole, is far worse than any individual. . . .*

*The most important environmental issue, therefore, is the human race itself."*

*- Edward Abbey*



### IN MEMORIAM -

### RICHARD BEEKS



Richard Beeks, a member of the Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society and a committee member of the nongame board of the Idaho Fish and Game died suddenly on August 1, 1992. He felt strongly about the protection of our natural resources and his death is a blow to us who have known him. Richard and his wife Elva have kept records of the birds that come to their feeders and in their travels around North Idaho. Many of these records were used in the *Idaho Bird Distribution: Mapping by Latitude/Longitude*, a study done by Dan Stevens and Shirley Sturts and published by the Idaho Museum of Natural History in 1991 and in a Checklist of the birds in North Idaho, soon to be published as a cooperative effort of the U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Fish and Game Department and the Spokane Audubon Society. Richard contributed much to the organizations he was involved in and his knowledge and help will be missed by those of us who had the honor to know and work with him on various projects. Our sympathy and support go out to his wife and family. They have requested that any donations in his memory be made to the Nature Conservancy at 1815 N. Lynn, Arlington, Virginia 22209.

[Shirley Sturts]

**BIRD NOTES -****\*\*OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

- Arctic Loon - 1 Immature reported on Coeur d'Alene Lake by Don Johnson and Wayne Melquist
- White Pelicans - 07/22/92, 18 reported at McArthur Lake by Pat Cole (PC), Manager of McArthur Wildlife Management area, still there as of August 6, 1992
- White-winged Crossbill - 07/19/92, seen feeding on huckleberries on Hidden Lake trail near Bonners Ferry by Pam Gontz
- Bald Eagle - 07/28/92, 1 adult seen sporadically on Benewah or Round Lake by several observers, reported by DNS  
1 egg let was raised and is flying now on McArthur Lake by PC
- Sharp-shinned Hawk - dependent young found in Shoshone County by DNS
- Cooper's Hawk - nest found in Benewah and Shoshone County by DNS
- Northern Goshawk - dependent young found in Benewah and Shoshone Counties by DNS
- California Quail - 4 + 7 young seen in Meadowbrook area 5 miles S.W. of Cd'A, by Dale Beeks
- Wild Turkey - Chicks from 7 hens, as many as 12 chicks with one female, seen by Frank Andrews
- Western Screech Owl - 06/24/92, calling near St. Maries River, by DNS
- Great Horned Owl - 06/13/92, fledging at Benewah Lake, by DNS
- Common Nighthawk - 06/12/92, first seen in St. Maries area, uncommon, by DNS; 06/15/92, first seen by Gertie Hanson
- Vaux's Swift - 07/30/92, dependent young seen flying with parents, Shoshone County, by DNS
- Broad-tailed Hummingbird - 07/14/92, 2 or 3 birds at feeder, reported by DNS. this is only the 4th sighting of them in North Idaho
- Black-backed Woodpecker - 07/07/92, 1 near Emida, Idaho, by DNS
- Cordilleran Flycatcher - nest found near Benewah Lake, by DNS
- Steller's Jay - rarely seen or heard, by DNS
- Rock Wren - scattered locations in Benewah County, uncommon, by DNS
- Marsh Wren - in Benewah County, uncommon, by DNS
- Bewick's Wren - 06/13/92, 1 male still on territory at Benewah Lake, singing and displaying. Unknown whether mate was attracted or whether nesting was attempted. Bird may still be present. Has been in same area as found this past winter. Reported by DNS.
- Lincoln's Sparrow - 06/27/92, seen near Marble Creek on territory, by DNS
- Northern Oriole - uncommon in the St. Maries area throughout period, DNS

**\*\*DUCK PRODUCTION REPORTS**

- McArthur Lake Wildlife Management Area, reported by Pat Cole: Mallard 13 broods, Gadwall 3 broods, Am. Wigeon 8 broods, Green-winged Teal 1 brood, Blue-winged or Cinnamon Teal 4 broods, Wood Duck 19 broods, Ring-necked Duck 2 broods, Common Goldeneye 1 brood

- Shepherd Lake, reported by Pat Cole: Mallard 4 broods, Wood Duck 4 broods, Common Goldeneye 3 broods, and Hooded Mergansers 1 brood

(Total 118 breeding pairs, 63 broods, 53% of paired hens produced broods.)

-- Harlequin Ducks: seen by Dan Svingen in upper St. Joe River and Marble Creek, at least 4 broods known

Harlequin duck research by Francie Cassirer, US Forest Service, has documented twice the production that she found last year on certain tributaries of both Priest and Pend Oreille Lakes. Francie reports 28 pair, 16 broods on 14 streams including tributaries of the Selway, Lochsa, St. Joe, Priest and Upper Priest, and Moyle and Pend Oreille Lake.

(Shirley Sturts)

## **\*\* SPECIAL SIGHTINGS FROM THOSE SUMMER EXPEDITIONS \*\***

I have heard from a few of our members relaying their memorable sightings from summer excursions and would like pass these on to you.

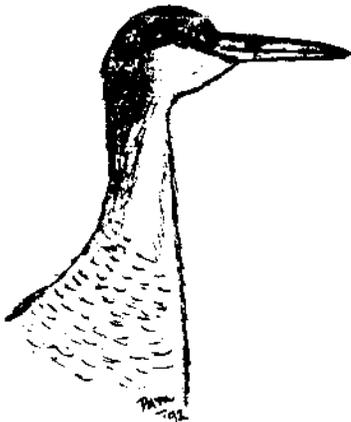
On July 7, 1992, Richard Hermstad spotted a Harlequin Duck at Glacier Park near Deadwood Falls. Those of you who have seen the Harlequin share the enjoyment one gets at seeing this beautifully colored duck.

Our youngest member, Noah Couser, and his grandparents, Bee and Chuck Finne, took a June trip to St. John in the Virgin Islands. Noah and Bee were ecstatic to see a Magnificent Frigatebird and Blue-footed Booby, as well as the beautiful Laughing Gulls and the prevalent Brown Pelicans.

Herb and Jan Severtson birded in Alaska this summer. A few of their wonderful sightings on the journey up and back included the Common Loon, Pacific Loon, Harlequin Duck, Bonaparte's Gull, Mew Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Arctic Tern, Spruce Grouse, Willow Ptarmigan, and a Veery.

Yours truly spent about 40 days this summer at the Yellowstone Institute in Yellowstone National Park this year, both in and out of classes. I participated in a Wildlife Observation class, a 5-day bird class, and a Bird's of Prey class as well as an Edible and Medicinal Plant class and an Alpine Wildflower class. I recorded many wonderful things in my journal but will relay just a small sampling.

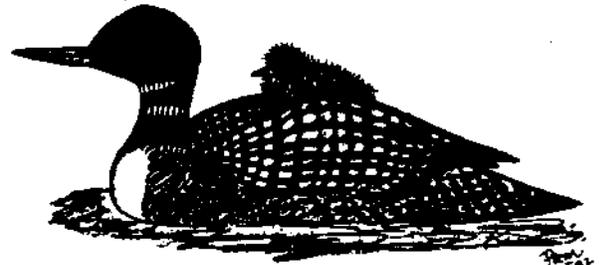
Individual species of special interest to me were Rosy Finches, Pine Grosbeaks, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Wilson's Warblers, Lewis' Woodpeckers, Common Loons, Green-tailed Towhees, Prairie Falcons, both Golden and Bald Eagles, Willets, White-throated Swifts, Great Gray Owls, and on and on. Besides the wonderful close views of these different species, I also enjoyed some exceptional interactions, both intra-species [interaction within the species] and inter-species [interaction between different species].



One evening while sitting and watching for bears, I sat and watched a pair of Sandhill Cranes in the valley below doing their beautiful dance. Their vocalizations carried throughout the valley as they danced away. After they had settled down and gone back to feeding, a cow elk became interested in the two cranes. Soon the cranes and cow elk were playing a game of tag -- taking turns chasing each other across the valley.

Prairie Falcon sightings were quite frequent this summer. One extraordinary scene that's embedded in my mind and my journal is that of a Prairie Falcon eating on a ground squirrel. Well, that in itself is not uncommon, but as I watched the Prairie Falcon pull apart the ground squirrel, throwing pieces of unwanted material on the rock, I noticed a coyote circling around and coming up on the falcon. When the coyote invaded the falcon's space, it took off, carrying it's cache with it. The coyote, not discouraged by the near miss, jumped up on the 3 to 4 foot rock and proceeded to devour the unwanted parts left by the falcon and finished by licking off the rock.

I could go on and on about the many things I saw this summer but will close with one of my favorite sightings. While camping with a class in the Targhee National Forest south of Yellowstone, I spotted several nesting Common Loons. One sight I will always remember is that of the loon chick riding its parents back. I had never seen this before and, with my trusty spotting scope, was able to view these daunting parents at a safe distance.



My summer journal is bursting at the seams with unforgettable experiences . . . not only were the bird sightings extraordinary but spending many hours bear watching was quite rewarding -- 134 sightings for the summer, mostly grizzly bears.

I hope you had a great summer, as well, and are ready to "FALL" back into stride attending our meetings and excellent programs as well as the great field trips!

[Pam Gontz]

**FEATHERED FACTS --****GREAT GRAY OWL [Strix nebulosa]**

The most memorable sighting I had in Yellowstone was a Great Gray Owl. Being able to observe and study the behavior of this phantom of the forest was a rare and unusual treat. I was able to view this gentle giant on two separate occasions, each time for about an hour. Once located by the smaller inhabitants of the forest, the Great Gray was subjected to mobbing by Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Robins. The kinglets and nuthatches joined forces in the attack but would keep their distance. The robin would dive bomb the owl and actually hit the top of its head. The Great Gray being the docile sole that it is, took these attacks with a grain of salt and continued its vigilant perch.

The Great Gray Owl is so named because of its large size and gray plumage. *Strix* is Latin for "a screech owl", which members of this genus are not. *Nebulosa* means "clouded", as it has the color of a dark cloud.

**DIAGNOSTIC FEATURES:**

- rounded-head without ear tufts and with prominent facial disk, gray within and surrounded by a black border
- has a black chin spot bordered by two broad white patches like white mustaches or a bow tie on the throat
- yellow eyes, which are dwarfed by the large facial disk, and yellow bill
- overall plumage appears gray, but this owl is mottled with varying shades of dark and light grays, browns and white
- tail is long, extending beyond the folded wings
- call is a loud low and descending, "Wooooooo, woooo, wooo, woo, woo, wo..."
- size: largest owl - 24 to 33 inches; weight 33 to 46 ounces (two to three pounds). Even though the Great Gray is the largest, its bulk is basically all feathers, under which is a trim body of considerably less weight than that of either the Great Horned or the Snowy Owl.

**SIMILAR SPECIES:** The Barred and Spotted Owls are smaller, have dark eyes, and lack the white bow tie.

**BREEDING HABITAT AND NESTING:** The Great Gray Owl prefers dense forests, often moist and with openings for hunting. The Great Gray begins nesting in March or April. They nest on broken-topped snags or old stick nests of other birds from 13 - 50 feet above the ground. The nest is lined with twigs, moss, feathers, and bark may be added. Eggs are laid at intervals and can number 2 to 5, usually 3. Incubation of approximately 30 days is done by the female. There is only 1 brood. The young fledge at 35 to 40 days.

**DIET:** Small rodents such as voles and pocket gophers. Hunts forest clearings, usually at night but also at dawn and dusk; often hunts by day during the summer in northern part of range.

[Sources: The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds, by John K. Terree; The Birder's Handbook, by Ehrlich, Dobkin & Wheye; Field Guide to the Birds of North America, National Geographic Society; Peterson Field Guide to Western Birds' Nests, by Hal H. Harrison; Dictionary of American Bird Names, Ernest A. Choate; Peterson Field Guide to Western Bird Nests, Hal H. Harrison] - Pam Gortz

**"A man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone."**

**- Henry David Thoreau**



# NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

## CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

YES, I'd like to join. Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send the Audubon magazine and my membership card to the address below. My check for \$20 payable to the National Audubon Society is enclosed.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Send this application and your check to  
National Audubon Society  
Chapter Membership Data Center  
P.O. Box 51001  
Boulder, CO 80322-1001

Local Chapter  
Coeur d'Alene 006

Local Chapter Code  
7XCH8

# COEUR d'ALENE AUDUBON SOCIETY

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| Secretary:     | Bee Finne    | 667-0425 |
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## COEUR D'ALENE AUDUBON SOCIETY

% Pam Gontz  
4301 N. Ramsey Rd., #A2-14  
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Canoe 1800s  
Additional Stamps  
Permitted



Shirley Sturts  
4615 Fernan Lake Rd. E.  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814