COMING EVENTS

BOARD MEETING

DATE: September 9 Tuesday
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Mountain West Bank
125 Ironwood Dr.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

DATE: September 15 Monday
TIME: 5:00 p.m. Starting Time
PLACE: NIC Beach - north end of
Rosenberry Drive
ACTIVITY/PROGRAM:
5:00 p.m. - Picnic! Bring your own place
setting, something to grill and a dish to
share (salad or dessert). Blanket or
chairs recommended.
6:00 p.m. - Program: "A Celebration of
Susan Weller's Life

Visit our website: www.cdaaudubon.org

AUDUBON HAS LOST A FRIEND  SUSAN
WELLER 1954-2003

On July 14 Susan Weller died
peacefully in her sleep. She was
the driving force behind the
founding of our chapter in 1990.
Susan was the chapter’s first
president and she served as
president again from 1999 to
2000. An unforgettable individual,
she possessed an excellent mind,
a generous heart and a love for
birds and animals. She was
passionate and tenacious about
causes in which she believed.
Our chapter has lost an important
member, while hummingbirds and
eagles, grizzly bears and ground squirrels, ponderosa pines and
cottonwood trees have lost a friend and advocate.

Susan is survived by her husband Greg and a brother Steve.
The family recommends memorial contributions be made to: The
Peregrine Fund, 5668 West Flying Hawk Lane, Boise, Idaho 83709
Ph.208-362-3716, Fax208-362-2376 www.peregrinefund.org

Rich Landers wrote an excellent article about Susan which appeared in the "Outdoor Section" of the July 27,
Click on archives, then select a date, then scan through the list of articles. This article is also reprinted by
permission on our website: www.cdaaudubon.org.

Susan was also an author of poems, articles and stories. Our newsletter previously featured, in series form, a
wonderful story, "Mr. Jay Comes to Stay", about the orphaned Steller's Jay Susan adopted and raised until he
flew away, able to fend for himself. We are now pleased to print a story she wrote about her father and how his
love and concern for nature influenced the direction her life would take. In her memory, we’re sharing her story,
"My Fathers Binoculars" which begins on page 2.

Thank you Susan for what you’ve given us.

" Susan Weller left her signature on the Inland Northwest, although it’s not one the casual observer
would notice. Her mark is the cottonwoods still standing along the lower St. Joe River and the old-
growth trees still growing at Farragut State Park and wetlands still providing homes for waterfowl
and the appreciation for birds that she nourished in a legion of people."

MY FATHER'S BINOCULARS
By Susan Weller

Indiana Jones had nothing on my father. Although Dad was not an archaeologist, his considerable knowledge of the outdoors turned our frequent trips into exciting quests for adventure. Like Indy, my father was ruggedly handsome, always wore a hat on our trips, occasionally cracked a slow, Bogart-grin, and was possessed with an insatiable curiosity. A road trip with Dad meant new and interesting places, new experience, and the promise of adventure.

When I was nine years old, my father asked me if I'd like to go on an overnight trip to a town just north of Santa Barbara, called Solvang. Solvang, he explained, is a little village where all the architecture is Scandinavian and where most of the people are too. He promised we would see folks in authentic Nordic costume, and eat ethnic foods and pastries! He added it was also about time we brought Mom home some fish for dinner. Dad seemed to be acting preoccupied as he loaded the fishing rods into the trunk and finished packing the car. As I slid onto the front seat next to him, Mom handed in the thermos for breakfast, we loaded the car and got ready to head for home. Instead of turning onto the freeway on-ramp, Dad headed east away from the lake and into the arid countryside. He slowed the car occasionally and looked up through the windshield into the sky. We drove for what seemed an eternity to an antsy nine year old girl. The only things we saw were a lone coyote and a rattlesnake lying on the warming asphalt. Finally, my father touched the brakes, looked up into the sky and grinned. We had found what he had really brought me all this way to see: the California Condor. We got out of the car careful not to slam the doors, and climbed to a better vantage point. Red-headed and fair-skinned, I tried not to wilt in the mounting afternoon heat. "That," Dad began in a scholarly tone, "is the last of a dying species. I brought you here to see this majestic bird now, because it probably won't be around when you grow up. I knew this would be important to you, that you would want to see it for yourself before it becomes extinct."

Puzzled, because I thought I knew the meaning of the word "extinct", I asked for his definition. Looking at me between the brim of his hat and the top of his bifocals, Dad explained, "It means man has not acted responsibly in regards to this bird. It means man has decided his needs out-weigh the condor's. As a result, this very special bird of prey will probably vanish off the face of the earth."

Continued on Page 4
SEPTEMBER 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: September 3, Wednesday and September 15, Monday
TIME: 8:00 a.m. NOTICE CHANGE OF MEETING DAY AND TIME
MEET: 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: September 16, Tuesday
TIME: 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.
MEET: Tubbs Hill 3rd street entrance
LEADER: Lynn Sheridan (leave messages for Lynn with Kris Buchler 664-4739)
ACTIVITY: We will walk along the trail around the hill, as far as time permits. Come enjoy both fall flowers and birds with Lynn.

SHOREBIRDS

DATE: September 7, Sunday
TIME: 7:00 a.m.
MEET: carpool @ Fernan Ranger Station, Sherman Ave. exit of i-90
LEADER: Lisa Hardy, 682-4808 or basalt@earthlink.net
ACTIVITY: We will check out the fall migration of shorebirds on the Coeur d'Alene River and around Coeur d'Alene Lake. This is a two-thirds day trip; bring water, lunch, and your spotting scope.

PELAGIC TRIP

DATE: September 20, Saturday
LEADER: Kris Buchler, 664-4739
ACTIVITY: This pelagic trip is a commercial birding trip out of Westport, WA. The cost is $90, and you will have to make your own arrangements at www.westportseabirds.com. Contact Kris for carpool information. It is a three day trip Friday-Sunday.
Absorbing that bit of dialogue and the meaning behind it was a tremendous task for me. Peering through my father's binoculars I thought the bird looked like a dignified buzzard. Who cares if this ugly bird isn't around anymore, and who sees it clear out here anyway? Then a thought occurred to me. "Can other animals become extinct?" I asked. "Can and probably will," he replied.

Trying to comprehend the magnitude of his suggestion was as dizzying as the afternoon heat. I thought back to some of our previous outings, and the words "have not acted responsibly" echoed back to me. We had visited zoos and museums where I had learned about early man, animals and their history, and where I had seen the mammoth skeletons of dinosaurs. We had toured a fish hatchery where I learned about the life cycle of a rainbow trout and the importance of unspoiled waters. Dad had taken me to a wild bird sanctuary where I cupped a tiny Mountain Quail in my hands, and felt the bristly soft curl of its top-knot. We had explored a game enclosure where I watched a fawn butting its mother for a meal, and where I got to pet the spots on an elk calf's rump. I thought of our frequent trips to the mountains where my father had taught me to watch, or hunt and fish for these very same species ...responsibly. Lastly, I remembered my father had taken me to a local dairy where the farmer kept two great, shaggy buffalo. Dad had told me how the white man had nearly made this gentle-looking behemoth "extinct", just to tame the American Indian.

A bead of perspiration trickled down between my shoulder blades. The present wavered back into focus through the afternoon heat. The weight of my father's binoculars hung heavily, causing the worn, shiny leather strap to bite into my sunburned neck. Did father mean that the fish, the elk and the birds could go the way of the dinosaur? Would the bleached and worm-eaten bones of these animals on display in some museum be all we would have left of them?

I began to cry. Seeing this, my father seemed well-pleased. He was not a cruel man, he was simply satisfied his message had been well-taken and our trip a success. He moved to put an arm around my shoulder and I snuggled in close breathing the familiar smells of cigarettes and anise essence on my father's fishing coat. We stood there watching the condor rise on the heat of lofty thermals. The mountains shimmered purple through the heat waves, and I felt the lump in my throat evaporate and disappear as the condor's image faded into nothingness over a far ridge.

I knew that day, that experience, had changed me. Dad knew it too. I would never again look at things quite the same way, not the earth, not the forest, not the waters, or the creatures inhabiting these areas. Certainly, I would never look upon mankind or his needs and responsibilities the same. Looking through my father's field glasses that day, I was forever changed and a conservationist metamorphosed.

Ironically, the California Condor is still around, albeit precariously and in captivity. The last free condor was captured several years ago, possibly not far from where my father and I stood that day. My father, however, is gone---lost to cigarettes and cancer---though I have inherited his binoculars.

**A LITTLE QUAIL TALE**

Janet Callen

Mid-morning on June 30, I happened to look out my kitchen window and below me in the back yard was a family of quail-Mom and dad and 10 little ping-pong sized balls of tan and brown fuzz. The parents had dropped in frequently for several months prior to eat under the bird feeders. A little later that morning I went out to set a sprinkler in the lower portion of the yard. My back yard is terraced in three levels with three steps made of timbers connecting each level. Each step is about 5 inches deep. As I walked down the steps I could see and hear the family scurrying under tall plants and flowers on the second level. However, when I reached the bottom level I discovered junior was stuck there, unable to jump the height of the bottom step. It kept trying, but halfway up was its vertical best.

This chick wasn’t about to let me catch it, and frantically continued to throw its little body upward against the bottom step. Quick thinking usually takes me ten minutes, but this time I did think to grab some paving blocks that are part of an ongoing landscape project. I placed one at the bottom of the steps and then one on each successive step. The pavers are about 2 inches deep. Little bird caught
on right away, it hopped on a paver, then to the step, then on to the next paver and on up to the second level where it scurried under the flowers to join the rest of the family. There was chirping and cheeping and soft bird noises as they settled down for the night near the honeysuckle. I have no idea how they got into my yard, certainly not over the fence, and could find no signs of a nesting place in the yard. Under the fence access is from the front. The little family was gone in the morning and I worried about how they would stay safe traversing backyards and crossing streets. I saw none of them until today, July 7, when two families, one with 9 chicks and another with 10 appeared in the back yard. Hopefully junior is one of them.

THE VALUE OF KEEPING FIELD NOTES
Chuck Trost
Reprinted from the PVAS Newsletter February 2002

I want to discuss the value of keeping field notes on bird sightings, if only for your personal edification. As the Christmas counts, feeder watches etc. are demonstrating, we are all citizen scientists and our observations are valuable data. I have the notes of my predecessor at Idaho State University, Dr. Victor Jones. He recorded over 80 House Finch nests on the ISU campus in the mid-1950’s. This was before the fox squirrels were introduced to Pocatello. I defy you to find a tenth that many nests on campus now. Edson Fichter used to keep meticulous notes in spiral bound stenographer’s pads of birds in his back yard on South 11th Ave., in Pocatello. He would fill a notebook in one direction, then flip it over and fill all the back pages. His notes, which fill over 20 pads, are now in the museum’s collections, and make fascinating reading. It is possible to measure a significant decrease in migrant birds between the 1970’s and 1980’s just by analyzing his one backyard. His observations of a resident Sharp-shinned Hawk over the course of three winters are amazing, and I think he was heart broken when it didn’t return for the fourth year. My point is that each of us makes valuable sightings and all it takes is a little discipline to keep these records in a useful format. When skiing on Scout Mountain there are so few birds that I can wait until I get home to record them. Even so, I mentally count the number of species, and always have a small note pad to describe rare birds or unusual events. On a field trip I usually keep a running checklist because there are too many species to remember. I always record date, time, weather, participants, location, and try to estimate numbers of each species. When I get home, I just clip the checklist in a loose-leaf notebook in which I keep a personal diary and summaries of events and exciting observations. When I go on a trip I often use the Idaho checklist and the “write-ins” give me an instant view of the non-Idaho birds I’ve found.

Another, and probably more efficient way to record data is with commercially available software, such as AviSys, BirdBase, or Birders Diary by Thayer Software on your home computer. These programs will allow you to print out a checklist for anywhere in the world, keep detailed field notes, or analyze sightings, species, date ranges, locations, etc. There is an excellent review of these programs in its “tools of the trade” article in the Feb. 2002 issue of Birding magazine. You can also purchase a palm pilot to keep field observations, and then transfer your field information to your computer. Please resolve to start keeping more organized notes!

(Editors note: Dr. Charles Trost is a retired professor from Idaho State University where he was head of the Biology Department. He is currently the chairman of the Idaho Rare Bird Committee)

WORLD’S LARGEST WOODPECKER BELIEVED EXTINCT
Reprinted from The Birder Conservatist, V. 2, August 2003

The world’s largest woodpecker, the Imperial Woodpecker, previously found through much of the Sierra Madre Occidental in Mexico, has, once again, been undetected in a recent serious search. No trace of the black and white Imperial Woodpecker was found during an expedition to the Sierra Madre Occidental mountains of northwestern Mexico, the last area where the bird was seen.

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WORLD’S LARGEST WOODPECKER
Continued from Page 5

While the Imperial Woodpecker was hunted for food and for
medicine in the early 1900s, it was not historically a rare species within its habitat of high altitude pine forests. But the last confirmed report of the species was in 1956, although there have been about eight local reports in two remote areas since that date.

David Wege, America’s Program Manager for BirdLife International, said last month that targeted searches over the last decade, "have failed to find convincing evidence that the species still exists... Few people can imagine a bird more impressive than the much publicized, and closely related Ivory-billed Woodpecker, but the Imperial Woodpecker was 20 percent bigger."

A joint expedition by BirdLife International and the Mexican conservation organization, Prosimá, spent 16 days in an isolated part of Durango state, where in 1996, the woodpecker had been sighted in a pristine canyon. The site that was explored was close to an area where two years before, on an extensive expedition lasting 11 months, researchers had found some evidence of the species, but they were unable to see any woodpeckers.

The Imperial Woodpecker’s decline has occurred largely through the loss of its habitat, mainly the deforestation and clearance of the old growth pine and oak woods. The birds require areas as large as 10 square miles of continuous open and untouched pine forest for each woodpecker pair, with dead trees for feeding and nesting. Although large areas of pine forests remain in the Sierra Madre Occidental, they are logged, and the dead trees with their insect inhabitants have been removed.

The Imperial Woodpecker will now be listed in the 2004 IUCN Red List of endangered species under the new classification of Critically Endangered Possibly Extinct.

HOODOO VALLEY
Dick Cripe
May 3, 7:30 am.
Five hardy souls report for the Hoodoo Valley Bird Trip--Ed & Kris Buchler, Lisa Hardy, Shirley Sturts, Roland Craft, and Dick Cripe. This was a high tech scientific expedition aimed at eliciting songs and calls from the otherwise elusive marsh birds—specifically the Virginia Rail, American Bittern and Sora. The Buchlers brought along a CD player and an amplifier rig that broadcasts the desired call over a bullhorn type thing. The first few tries brought no response, however, persistence prevailed as we got two response songs of the Virginia Rail at the next marshy area. It was worth the price of admission to see Kris silently jumping and gesturing as one rail responded a few feet away from her. In spite of the closeness the rails were never seen. Not so with the Sora who, shortly thereafter, not only called back, but came out to see what was making all of the racket, and, thus, we all saw him. We didn’t get any response from the bittern call all morning, but we were happy with two out of three.

A secondary goal of the trip was to check the bluebird boxes along the Hoodoo Valley trail. We found 10 pair of Western Bluebirds occupying boxes. Five boxes had eggs in them and the other five did not. In addition, there was one pair of Mountain Bluebirds nesting in a box, but with no eggs yet. Shirley found one bluebird in a box that was banded, so she took it out and recorded the banding number. She had banded the bird two years earlier at that same box.

We saw 57 species, including the first sightings this year of some of the warbler species.

STEVEN’S PEAK
Dick Cripe
Ten intrepid folks made the trip on Saturday, July 19, to the top of Steven’s Peak. While the valley sweltered in the high 90’s, on the ridge we enjoyed a cloudless, but breezy day with 80 degrees as the high. Shirley’s unerring guidance got our two 4-wheel drive vehicles within three miles of the peak, so the hike was short, although fairly steep.

Birds? Yes, we saw a few birds, although the numbers were quite small. Dark-eyed Juncos--4; Townsend’s Warbler-1; Mtn Bluebird--1, maybe 2; Blue Grouse-1.

Highlight of the trip? Lying in the snow bank at the top of the peak.

Participants--George and Helen Neuner, Ronn and Roberta Rich, Lynne Sheridan, Judy Waring, Jan Severtson, Shirley Sturts, Roland Craft, and Dick Cripe.

"Nature is not in competition. It doesn't really matter, when you go out, if you don't identify anything. What matters is the feeling heart"

Richard Adams B. 1920
British Author

February-May Newsletters or go to our Website to see bird species seen

OERVATION POST
THE FISH HAWK HERALD
so far this year in Kootenai County - Current total 176
American White Pelican 1 Cave
Lake May 30 (BBRO as reported to CLAN)
Virginia Rail Killarney Lake April 30 (LHAR)
Sora Fernan Lake April 30 (KBUC)
Greater Yellowlegs Cataldo area April 22 (DSCH)
Solitary Sandpiper Hardy Loop Road on of Canyon Road near Cataldo July 28 (SSTU,DSTO)
Spotted Sandpiper Higgins Point, CDA Lake May 9 (KBUC)
Caspian Tern 3 Wolf Lodge Bay, CDA Lake June 28 (JTAY,KBUC)
Black Tern CDA River Delta near Harrison May 19 (LHAR,SREA)
Long-eared Owl 1 Black Lake Road near Lane March June 7 (GSHE)
Common Nighthawk Post Falls June 1 (SLIN)
Vaux's Swift Skookum Saddle June 17 (LHAR,SREA)
Black-chinned Hummingbird Fernan Lake April 29 (SSTU)
Rufous Hummingbird Harrison April 20 (MPAT)
Three-toed Woodpecker 1 Mokins Bay, Hayden Lake April 21 (EHIC)
Black-backed Woodpecker 1 Coeur d'Alene Mt. Road May 1 (KBUC, SSTU)
Olive-sided Flycatcher 1 Skookum Saddle June 17 (LHAR,SREA)
Willow Flycatcher Rose Lake Jct. May 28 (LHAR,SREA,KBUC,SSTU)
Least Flycatcher 1 Black Rock Road June 8 (GSHE)
Hammond's Flycatcher Killarney Farms May 8 (LHAR,ESCI)
Dusky Flycatcher Cottonwood Creek Road May 19 (SREA)
Western Flycatcher Mica Bay Survey May 19 (BGUN,SSTU,RCRA, JREX,COGL,HJAL)
Western Kingbird near the CDA Air Terminal May 19 (CLAN)
Eastern Kingbird Dalton Gardens and River Road near the Cataldo Mission (HSEV,CCAM,CLCAM)
Cassin's Vireo Blue Creek Bay, CDA Lake April 24 (KBUC)
Warbling Vireo Cottonwood Creek May 19 (LHAR,SREA)
Red-eyed Vireo Trail of the Coeur d'Aenes between Cataldo and Harrison May 29 (SSTU,JWAR)
Northern Rough-winged Swallow Mica Bay Survey (RCRA,SSTU,KBUC, BGUN)
Bank Swallow Appleway and Ramsey gravel pit May 14 (JCAL)
Cliff Swallow Blue Creek Bay, CDA Lake April 25 (KBUC,LHAR)
Barn Swallow Blue Creek Bay, CDA Lake April 25 (KBUC,LHAR)
Canyon Wren 1 heard Quemilin Park, Post Falls May 18 (KBUC) confirmed May 23 (KBUC,SSTU,JSEV) A Kootenai County (confirmed) first.
Veery Tubbs Hill May 23 (DCAM)
Swainson's Thrush Cottonwood Creek May 19 (SREA,LHAR)
Hermit Thrush Skookum Saddle June 17 (SREA,LHAR)
Gray Catbird Mica Bay Survey (BGUN)
American Pipit Flooded fields west of Cataldo Mission along River Road May 22 (LCAM,CCAM)
Cedar Waxwing Armstrong Hill May 22 (EBUC)
Orange-crowned Warbler Armstrong Hill April 21 (KBUC)
Nashville Warbler Tubbs Hill May 14 (KBUC)
Yellow Warbler Fairmont Loop Road May 5 (KBUC)
Yellow-rumped Warbler Higgins Point, CDA Lake April 28 (KBUC)
Townsend's Warbler 1 Farragut State Park April 29 (TDAV)
American Redstart Kidd Island Bay, CDA Lake May 18 (SJOH)
Northern Waterthrush Shady Lane south of Rose Lake May 23 (SREA,LHAR)
MacGillivray's Warbler Buckles Mountain May 7 (KBUC)
Common Yellowthroat Cougar Bay, Coeur d'Alene Lake May 11 (TGRA)
Wilson's Warbler Skookum Saddle June 17 (LHAR,SREA)
Western Tanager Beauty Creek Bay May 2 (KBUC,SSTU)
Chipping Sparrow 1 Armstrong Hill, Coeur d'Alene April 29 (KBUC)
Vesper Sparrow near Coeur d'Alene Air Terminal May 24 (CLAN)
Fox Sparrow Skookum Saddle June 17 (LHAR,SREA)
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Accidental in our area) Cougar Gulch Feeder May 21 (TCOO,PCOO)
Black-headed Cowbird 2 Mica Bay Survey May 5 (KBUC)

OBSERVERS Bob Brown (BBRO) Ed and Kris Buchler (EBUC, KBUC), Janet Callen (JCAL), Del Cameron (DCAM), Cliff Cameron (CLCAM), Corinne Cameron (CCAM), Tom and Priscilla Cooper (TCOO,PCOO), Roland Craft (RCRA), Tom Davenport (TDAV), Terry Gray (TGRA), Bill Gundlach (BGUN), Jerry Hanson (JHAN), Lisa Hardy (LHAR), Eula Hickman (EHIC), Holly Jaleski (HJAL), Stephen Johnson (SJOH), Cindi Langlitz (CLAN), Steve Lindsay (SLIN), Nancy Mertz (NMER), Carol Ogle (COGL), Mike Patterson (MPAT), Theresa Potts (TPOT), Scott Rea (SREA) , Jean Rexler (JREX), Doug Schonewald (DSCH), Ellen Scriven (ESCR) Herb and Jan Severtson (HSEV, JSEV), Gina Sheridan (GSHE), Stoecker (DSTO), Shirley Sturts (SSTU), Jenny Taylor (JTAY), Judy Warrin (JWAR)