



## KITITTAS AUDUBON SOCIETY

# HOOTER

NOVEMBER

HOOTER

EDITOR CRICKET WEBB

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## Thanksgiving Bird Count

Although not as well known as the Christmas bird count, the TBC has been around since 1966. Since that time the number of people participating has grown from a few in Virginia to over 600 participants last year in the US, including Alaska and Hawaii. The best thing about the Thanksgiving bird count is that while it contributes to body of knowledge about bird populations it is really easy to do.

For 1 hour—yeah just one hour, take a break from the holiday insanity and sit at a window or in a park or anywhere you feel comfortable and watch your circle. Your circle can include your bird feeders or bird bath.

The circle should be 15 ft in diameter and think of it as a cylinder, since birds passing through the cylinder can be counted. Don't count the flock of geese or the hawk WAAYY up there, just count the birds you know flew through or stopped. Try to only count each bird once. That chickadee bouncing in and out of the circle only counts as one. Do not count the bird on your table. If you are interested either call me (509) 674-4035 and leave a message if I am not home or contact me by email [idiot@inlandwireless.com](mailto:idiot@inlandwireless.com). I will send you an official count form. Cricket Webb

### NEXT MEETING - Back in the old location

### Ecology of Barred Owls in the Eastern Cascades

**DATE** THURSDAY NOVEMBER 17th **TIME** 7:00 PM  
**PLACE** ELLENSBURG HIGH SCHOOL ROOM - F107 If you did not go to the meeting last month, we have been moved back to the north end of the school. Park on the 3rd Ave side. There is a new sidewalk and lights so it should be much better than last year.

This bird has been in the news a great deal lately so come and learn more about them.

Peter Singleton is a wildlife ecologist with the U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station in Wenatchee, WA. Peter is currently conducting a study of **Barred Owl** habitat selection and landscape use patterns in the Eastern Cascades. While our program regards the Barred Owl, he has also been involved in research on carnivore movement patterns, developing analysis techniques to address

habitat connectivity and landscape permeability, assessing the impacts of outdoor recreation on wildlife populations, and modeling the interactions between elk populations on the ecology of meadow and riparian habitats. Come join us and bring a friend for the latest on Barred Owl research and habits.

All Audubon meetings and field trips are open to the public, so feel free to come and meet us with us. Stay after the meeting for juice, treats and conversation.

## KAS FIELD TRIPS

**Nov. 5th:**

**First Saturday BirdWalk. Meet at 8:00 AM at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park parking lot with binoculars and warm clothes.**

**November 19th (Sat):**

**Ed Malais and Judy Reed of Cle Elum will give a tour of ponds, wet areas, and other habitats in the Upper County. Bring bins, warm clothes, guide books and lunch as we plan to find every bird in the Upper County. If you plan on attending call 933-1558 for more details on car pooling, meeting locations, and times .**

**Dec 5th:**

**First Saturday BirdWalk. Meet at 8:00 AM at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park parking lot with binoculars and warm clothes.**

**Please remember:**

**All Kittitas Audubon field trips are free and open to the public. We encourage:**  
**(1) car pooling to lessen our impact on the environment.**  
**(2) contributing to the cost of gas @ \$.20/ mile divided by everyone in the vehicle.** **(3) bringing binoculars, natural history guide books, and questions on each trip.** **(4) appropriate clothes and shoes for a good time outdoors.**

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The universe is full of magical things, patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper." — Eden Phillpotts.

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## FIELD TRIP REPORT

October First Saturday BirdWalk. Gerry Sorenson lead five other birders to our old haunts at Irene Rinehart River Front Park. With rain the day before and threatening more, we headed into this mild and pleasant fall morning wondering what birds were remaining after migration--or what has arrived because of migration. It seems we usually have a unique event and this Saturday was no different. Near the lake parking lot a little 'sparrow-type' bird was about 15 feet away. Just one lone bird with tail bobbing and white outside tail feathers,



then it would fly a few feet further away. It was an **American Pipit**. We thought we had good looks at Pipits on the road to Wenas Lake last month but

this was much better. Then Joe spotted two

birds in the middle of the lower lake--a pair of **Western Grebes**, and the

first Western Grebes we have found in three years of the First Saturday walks at the park. Being a `first' was

great, but this species is also on the decline in the northwest so we were happy to see them. We had a total of 18 species for the morning walk, and we are so lucky to have such a great natural park so close to our city. Come join the fun next First Saturday, November 5th. Bring a friend, and they don't have to be a KAS members. It is open to anyone wanting to know more about our local birds. Jeb Baldi



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT.

Fourteen years ago Jeri Prater became the Treasurer for Kittitas Audubon Society. She has written many checks, collected monies from any source available, and kept records of all our expenditures. With a yearn to travel without having to consider her duties to KAS's schedule, Jeri decided to resign, and we want to give her a huge thank you. Fourteen years is a long time to dedicate to an organization, and KAS has come through many phases since she began. From infancy through periods of active growth, as well as, times when the organization struggled, and from a small treasury to the receivership of Bea Buzzetti's small house allowing KAS independence from fund raising, Jeri has kept the financial records for us. Jeri, we appreciate so much what you have given us and we just want to say, "Thanks"! Gloria Baldi



## KAS TRAIL MAINTENANCE

For those who have not had the opportunity to go up to see the discovery trail at the summit of Blewett Pass. Here is a picture of the sign giving us credit for the maintenance of that trail. This and other projects get our name and our mission out to the public. Kittitas Audubon wants the publicity because the more people know about the wonderful work we do, the more they will come to ask our opinion about conservation and outdoor recreation. Ultimately that will lead to more and better places for us and the birds we love.

Cricket Webb

## Bird sightings

The white egret that I reported seeing on the way to the September meeting was a Great Egret.

The Clark's Nutcrackers are back on my hill. At least 4 of them this year.

There was a question about the Bullocks Oriole reusing their nest. I was not able to find the answer that specific question. I did find the Baltimore Oriole's do not and in fact House Finches often use them and some indication that all Oriole have a problem with mites. So if you would like to take down an Oriole nest to bring to the meeting for us to look at it, that would not be negative for the birds and would be a positive for us. Cricket.



**EDITORS NOTES.** I really would like feed back (positive or negative.) Please let me know if you would like to see something in the Hooter or better yet submit something.

I have received the same complaint from 2 sources. I don't credit the writer. When I got that feedback from the former editor of this newsletter I took it pretty seriously. But nothing compared to when my mom said something about it. We all know what that is like. I will try to do better.

Would you like to be more involved in KAS. Volunteer. Call any of the board members for ideas. Would you be willing to drive non-drivers to the meetings? How about trail maintenance or building bird houses (actually bat house have the latest project) or would you like to lead a bird walk? All kinds of opportunities, short and long term, occasional or regular.

You will notice very little current news. That is because I am preparing this in advance because I will be on vacation when I would normally be doing this. Since I will be birding while I am gone I will fill you in when I get back.

*Cricket Webb*

There are about 25 ducks that winter in the Pacific Northwest. The American Wigeon is one of the more common, and becoming more so through out North American. They are also rare but regular visitors to Europe , the same way their cousin, the Eurasian Wigeon is here. The black and white picture to the right does not do justice to this beautiful duck. In it's typical male breeding plumage, the white stripe on the head, having earned the bird the nickname "Baldpate", stands out in sharp contrast to the brilliant green on the sides of the head, sweeping back from the eye. They have pinkish-brown breast and sides that are separated from the black undertail coverts by white flank feathers. In flight, the white shoulder patch is obvious and an excellent field ID. The bill is pale blue with a black tip.

The American Wigeon's short bill enables it to exert more force at the bill tip than other dabbling ducks, thus enabling efficient harvesting of vegetation. They consumer a higher percentage of vegetable matter than most dabbling ducks and are the most likely to hop out of the pond to forage on the ground the way Canada Geese do. The Wigeon has also been known to wait around on the surface while other ducks do the work and then grab the food right out of the other bird's beak.

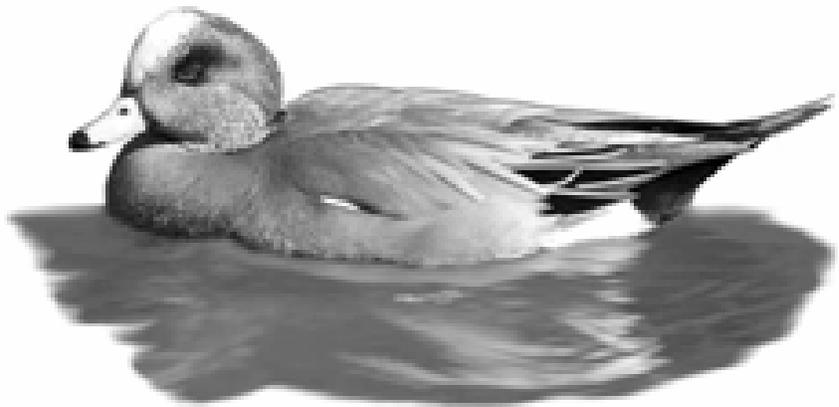


Photo by Mark Whitesell

This is a wary bird, taking flight the instant it is disturbed. Flocks rise straight up from the surface of the water, uttering their whistling calls. They are often seen on marshy ponds in the company of diving birds such as coots, Red-heads, and Canvasbacks. Unlike many dabbling ducks, these birds often spend the night on large open bays, sleeping in rafts well out from shore.

Like many of the birds where the male is brightly colored the male is not an active participant in the rearing of the chicks. The pair bond only lasts through first or second week of incubation. The males success in acquiring a mate is related to persistent aggression, dominance and displaying, especially aerial chases

The nest is usually on the ground and often far from water. Concealed; constructed with dry grass

and plant stems, lined with finer materials. If the young are disturbed, the female feigns injury while the young scatter; when they get hidden, the female flies away.

The Eurasian Wigeon is similar in size and coloring with a dark reddish head and buffy crown. Most of the habits are the same and there is some indication that the Eurasian may be establishing breeding pairs in the US.

These birds are common enough to not worry about where to find them. Find water, Wigeon will follow. Ask Ed and Judy to show you some on the upper county field trip on the 19th of this month.

Cricket Webb.

*Conservation is sometimes perceived as stopping everything cold, as holding whooping cranes in higher esteem than people. It is up to science to spread the understanding that the choice is not between wild places or people, it is between a rich or an impoverished existence for man.*

- Thomas E. Lovejoy

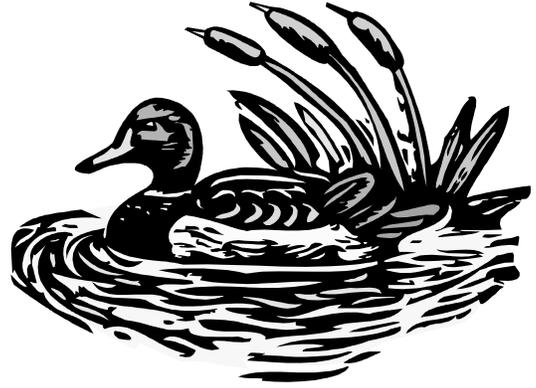
## Lots of excitement at the November meeting

*Think Christmas with a second great opportunity!!*

In the October issue of the Hooter you noticed the announcement that Porter Store in Thorp recently closed their doors and KAS is the benefactor of all of the bird items they had for sale. Although many things were sold at the October meeting, a few items remain. Come find that perfect gift for a friend--or treat yourself. Bird houses and feeders, `birdy jewelry, and CD's of many bird songs are available.

*Kittitas Audubon been given an opportunity*

We have been invited by the Central Washington Parks Foundation to enhance a natural area out of the 3 ponds at the north end of the West Ellensburg Park at the end of 5 Ave. Feel free to go take a look and bring your ideas to the November meeting.



### Tuesday Hikers and Wednesday Wilderness Walkers.

Want more opportunity to get out. There are a pair of "hiking" groups. The Tuesday hikes are 5+ miles in length and more elevation/gain while the Wednesday Walkers are under 5 miles with a more limited change in elevation. Birding is not the object of these hikes but birds are everywhere and you are restricted from looking at them. If you are interested contact Kay Forsythe (forsythe@elltel.net) for the Tuesday hikes or Janet Nelson (rnelson@inlandnet.com) for the Wednesday Walkers.

### NICE WEB SITE.

I try to let you know when I find a good website and this one is a humdinger.

[www.birdwatchersgeneralstore.com](http://www.birdwatchersgeneralstore.com)

Yes they have stuff for sale be the best part is the "Ask the Bird Folks" They answer bird questions with a style all their own. Here is an example. By the way the question was "Do Penguins have knees?"

Ever since that movie "March of the Penguins" came out, we have been getting a load of penguin questions. Are they really birds? Can any of them fly? How fast can they swim? What do they eat? Which came first, the penguins or the nuns? But you are the first person to ask about them having knees. It's nice to know that you guys are discussing birds in your office. Here, where our staff is supposed to be talking about birds, the two most often asked questions are "What's for lunch?" and "What's for lunch?" But not always in that order.

If you actually want the answer to that question you will need to go to the website.



### BAD BIRD JOKES

The Optimist's Constant: Birds have wings, and no one has told them when or where they should be.

The Pessimist's Corollary: When birds use their wings, your timing or location will be wrong

- Q. What do you get when you cross a penguin and a cheetah?  
 R. A polkadot tuxedo -- from Ryan Beuse, 6/12/1998  
 S.  
 Q. What did one baby bird say to the other after finding an orange in their nest?  
 A. Look at the orange marmalade! -- from BettyBoop, 7/9/1998

### Recovery Planning

In 1983, shortly before his tenure as Secretary of the Interior ended, James Watt appeared before a congressional committee to discuss his accomplishments with respect to ESA. Characterizing the recovery planning process as a major thrust of his leadership, Watt sought to distinguish his record from that of the Democratic administration that preceded him. In his first two years as secretary, he asserted, FWS had "approved or reviewed 160 plans," which he hailed as a "160 percent increase over the previous four years."<sup>(12)</sup> Whether those plans provided a reliable roadmap to recovery and whether the government would assiduously implement them were questions no one thought to ask. Yet ultimately, those are perhaps the questions that matter most.

When ESA was passed, nothing in it mentioned recovery plans. It simply directed the government to save imperiled species. FWS, the agency charged with this task, needed some way of systematically organizing its efforts. Recovery plans grew out of this need, a practical and flexible response to the challenge FWS faced.

The first mention of recovery plans was added to the law in 1978. It did little more than direct the government to develop recovery plans when doing so would be beneficial. Subsequent amendments have been increasingly prescriptive. Today, ESA spells out the types of species to which priority is to be given in preparing plans, specifies the necessary elements of each plan, requires cost and time estimates, and mandates planning procedures. (For more on recovery plans, see the box on this page.) The trend toward legislating even more prescriptive recovery planning requirements seems likely to continue. In the just-ended 105th Congress, the major bills supported by rival interests had little in common except a desire to reform the recovery planning process by adding new deadlines, new procedural requirements, and new substantive elements as well. The question of whether that is a useful direction in which to proceed is seldom asked.

A host of problems afflict recovery plans. Nearly 500 listed species still lack them and even for species with recovery plans, the plans are often outdated. Recovery plans also rarely give sufficiently clear direction to serve as a guide for the day-to-day decisions the government must make. For example, few recovery plans provide clear guidance as to when a federal action would have the prohibited effect of jeopardizing the continued existence of the species. Fewer still articulate principles for mitigating the adverse impacts of actions that cause some amount of harm to species but not enough to jeopardize its existence.

When a recovery plan addresses an important issue, it often does so with dazzling vapidness. Take the black-capped vireo, a rare bird that occurs largely on privately owned land in Texas and Oklahoma. Influencing what private landowners do is likely to be vital to the success

of conservation efforts for this species. The recovery plan offers the following trenchant recommendation: "Use various methods to protect vireos and their habitat on private lands. This should be a major part of recovery because little public land occurs in the vireo's range."<sup>(13)</sup> What those various methods might be and how to persuade private landowners to cooperate in their use are left undefined.

Sometimes, the weakness of recovery plans stems from lack of information about basic biology. For example, some songbirds fare best in interior habitats, while others thrive in edge habitats. The recovery plan for the golden-cheeked warbler notes that this fundamental aspect of its biology is unknown:

At present, there is no quantitative evidence suggesting that warblers living along woodland 'edges' are more abundant, more frequently paired with a female, or more productive along edges than in woodland interiors. Conversely, there is also no evidence that the species does best in woodland interior locations.<sup>(14)</sup>

Constructing a rigorous plan in the absence of such basic biological information is nearly impossible.

Recovery plans have also been criticized for setting the bar of recovery too low. One much-noted study concluded that "recovery goals have often been set that risk extinction rather than ensure survival."<sup>(15)</sup> That study's conclusions, however, may have been overstated. Those conclusions rested on the fact that in some plans, the goal of recovery can be achieved with fewer individuals (or fewer populations) than existed at the time the species was listed. According to the study, this meant imperiled species were being managed for extinction. However, recovery plans typically set population (or number of populations) goals on securely protected habitat, whereas no such habitats may exist at the time of listing. Thus, it is in fact possible that a species could be less abundant when it meets its recovery goals than it was at the time of its listing. The adequacy of recovery plan goals therefore remains an open question.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower is reported to have said that "in preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable." In the battle to save species from extinction, the same is almost certainly true. Unfortunately, however, Congress seems increasingly inclined to see the solution to many of ESA's problems in the faster preparation of more detailed recovery plans into which a broader array of interests have had input. The experience to date suggests that a much different approach is needed. A planning process that guides the practical decisions that the relevant agencies will be faced with making over the near and intermediate terms seems more likely to be productive than the increasingly sclerotic long-range plan envisioned by many in the latest congressional debate.

BOARD MEMBERS

President – Gloria Baldi	933-1558	Membership – Keith Johnson	674-7552
Vice President – Gloria Lindstrom	925-1807	Newsletter – Cricket Webb	674-4035
Secretary – Jim Briggs	933-2231	Christmas Bird Count – Phil Mattocks	962-2191
Treasurer – Jeri Prater	968-3230	Programs – Hal Lindstrom	925-1807
Conservation – Janet Nelson	656-2256	Publicity – Gerry Sorenson	968-4857
Education – Beth Rogers	674-1855	Social/Greeter – Karen Johnson	674-7552
Field Trip Chairman- Jeb Baldi	933-1558	Webmaster – Craig Johnson	674-1855
Historian – Marianne Gordon	964-2320	Wildlife Habitat – Joe Meuchel	933-3011
Library – Ginger Jensen	925-5816	Bluebird boxes – Tom Gauron	968-3175

**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**

\_\_\_\_\_ Kittitas Audubon Membership includes a subscription to the monthly Hooter, and the opportunity to support local activities for \$20.00 per year. .

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to Kittitas Audubon Society  
Clip coupon and send with your check to:

Kittitas Audubon Membership  
PO Box 1443  
Ellensburg, WA 98826

**NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP**

\_\_\_\_\_ National Audubon Membership includes membership in Kittitas Audubon and subscription to both the monthly Hooter and Audubon Magazine (published 6 times a year). Membership is \$20.00 for new members. Renewals are \$35.00 per year.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Make check payable to National Audubon Society  
Clip coupon and send with you check to:

National Audubon Society  
Chapter Membership Data Center  
PO Box 51001  
Boulder, CO 80322-1001

Chapter Code Y22  
7XBP

**DONATIONS** are appreciated and give you the opportunity to further support and fund KAS Chapter activities. If you have a National Audubon membership, donations are especially important since KAS no longer receives a portion of your National Membership dues to defray costs for the Hooter.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 American Goldfinch                      \_\_\_\_\_ \$100.00 Great Blue Heron

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 Red-tailed Hawk                      \_\_\_\_\_ Other – Donations in any amount are appreciated

Make check payable to Kittitas Audubon Society

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Clip coupon and send with your check to:  
Kittitas Audubon Society  
PO Box 1443  
Ellensburg, WA 98926

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## KITTITAS COUNTY BUSINESSES SUPPORTING KAS

**Old Mill Country Store**, Ellensburg, provides a discount on bird seed to KAS members and prints our county bird lists.

**Inland Internet**, Roslyn, Donates internet service for our Website: <<http://www.kittitasaudubon.org/>>

### WISE OWL TRIVIA

1. What bird, that is on decline, was seen at Irene Rinehart Park on October 1st?
2. What type of bird moves in after the Orioles have moved out?
3. What advantage does the smaller bill give the American Wigeon?

Two bonus questions this month, an easy one and a hard one.

1. Do Penguins have knees?
2. What Pacific Northwest bird has been on the Endangered Species act for 15 years with no recovery plan?

Answer to last months Bonus Trivia Question. The Rough-legged Hawk, the Ferruginous Hawk, and the Golden Eagle are the only American hawks to have legs feathered all the way to the toes.



**The mission of Kittitas Audubon Society is to develop an appreciation of nature through education and conservation, with a focus on birds. The goal for KAS is a vibrant active organization recognized in Kittitas county.**

**Kittitas Audubon Society**  
**P.O. Box 1443**  
**Ellensburg WA 98926**  
**[Http://www.kittitasaudubon.org](http://www.kittitasaudubon.org)**

