



KITITTAS AUDUBON SOCIETY

THE HOOTER

February 2006

EDITOR CRICKET WEBB

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www.kittitasaudubon.org

If you have not checked out our website lately—do it now. We have just had a redesign including pages with the programs, field trips, contact information for the board members and copies of the Hooter (current and past issues.) Photos by Ken Bevis, Gloria Lindstrom and George Vlahakis.

We have some links to other web sites, conservation issues, events and membership forms. Still under construction is a map of birding locations in the county. If you have any suggestions please let one of the board members know.

One more perk of the web, THE HOOTER IS IN **COLOR** Cricket

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT Feb. 17-20. We have a lot of members that do not go out on field trips or the big Christmas Bird Count, but you too can contribute to the Citizen Science. "This project has become a major source of scientific information about North American bird populations," said Dr. John Fitzpatrick, director of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. "It is a classic example of the vital role citizens and the Internet now play in understanding our planet."

If you have access to the internet you can download printable tally sheets from the website www.birdsource.org/gbbc/ (also a link on our website. If you do not have internet access, please call me 674-4035. I will be happy to print off what you need and send it to you.

NEXT MEETING

A LIFE HISTORY OF THE SPOTTED OWL

Stan Sovern

DATE THURSDAY February 16th **TIME** 7:00 PM
PLACE ELLENSBURG HIGH SCHOOL - North end in the Library Building

After graduating with a Bachelors degree in wildlife science from OSU and 2 1/2 years with Old Growth Wildlife Habitat Research Program on the Olympic Peninsula. Stan came here to Cle Elum to research our mascot, the Spotted Owl.

His program will be a basic overview of the life

history of the Spotted Owl and a summary of his research findings.

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

February 4th ~ **First Saturday BirdWalk** ~ Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park.
Umtaneum Bridge Parking Lot ~ 8:00 AM. Walking on uneven ground 2 to 3 hours, dress for the weather (should be getting better), and bring binoculars. Leader will be Cricket Webb.
February 11th ~ **Winter Feeder Tour** ~ Visit the

homes of five local Audubon members (3 in the lower county and 2 in the upper county) to observe how they feed and what birds are attracted to the feed. Call Jeb 933-1558 to register. Space is limited.

March 4th ~ **First Saturday BirdWalk** ~ Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park at 8:00 AM

OTHER THINGS TO DO LOCAL

West Ellensburg Park Natural Area Meeting

Several members have volunteered to help on the creation of the Audubon Natural Area in the northwest section of the new West Ellensburg Park. Because the city is in the throes of planning the surrounding area, it would be beneficial to attend the public meeting of the Ellensburg's Planning Commission on February 2nd at 5:30 PM at the City Council Chambers (Old Wash. School). Contact Mike Smith 962-7108 for confirmation. The outcome of that meeting will help us in our first planning session which is to be **Feb. 9th (Thursday) at 7:00 PM at Jeb Baldi's home**. If you would like to participate in the planning stage in this wonderful opportunity, please call Jeb at 933-1558 for details.

EYES IN THE WOODS. Crime Observation and Reporting Training Wednesday February 8th 7 -9 PM Days Inn

Kittitas County Field and Stream hosts this FREE training. WDFW Enforcement Officers will teach you how to identify, document and report natural resource crimes you may observe being committed on public lands.

"Eyes in the Woods" is a non-profit group aiming to create a network of citizen willing to use this non-confrontational training to report abuses, poaching and other crimes.

"People need to believe that reporting a wildlife crime is the right thing to do," says Bruce Bjork, Asst. Director of Enforcement.

www.eyesinthewoods.org & www.kittitasfieldandstream.org

OUT OF TOWN

February 5th ~ **Eagle's Nest Viewing Cruise** Venture Charters and Central Kitsap Community Schools are offering an Eagle's Nest Viewing Cruise from the Port of Brownsville to Point No Point and return to Brownsville. Contact: Rich Glynn - 360.662.1638 www.cksd.wednet.edu/commschool/

February 25-26th ~ **Port Susan Snow Goose Festival** ~ Stanwood (360) 629-0562 www.snowgoosefest.org

March 5th ~ **March of the Sparrows**. A DAY FOR BIRDERS in the TriCities! The Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society (LCBAS) will be hosting a Birders Social that includes an 8am bird walk on Bateman Island, a 1pm viewing of WATCHING SPARROWS. After the film refreshments will be served in then lobby and WATCHING WARBLERS will be shown at 3pm. For information call 547 9087 or 627 3695. www.lowercolumbiabasinadubon.org

March 24 -26th ~ **Othello Sand Hill Crane Festival**. Othello 866-SANDHIL (866-726-3445)
www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org/

First Saturday Birdwalk was so foggy I am still fuzzy. There were a total of 11 birders out in the 32 degree morning. The walking was tricky enough to keep us all looking down at our feet most of the time but even with that we still saw some great birds like the Bald Eagle (seen by the first four people who arrived as it flew just above the trees and up the river), Red-tailed Hawks (pair), one of which was the subject of much discussion. Was it a Red Tail or a Rough Leg. Song Sparrow, Black-capped Chickadee, Common Merganser (four drakes flying over the golf course), Canada Geese, Black-billed Magpie, Rock Pigeons, Great Blue Heron, Downy Woodpecker (four at one time), European Starlings, Kestrel (pair), Ring-necked Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Widgeon, and Rough-legged Hawk. 16 species is not a record but respectable for the conditions. *By Cricket Webb*

CWU Bird Preservation Archives ~ Twelve Kittitas Audubon Society Members had the privilege of a tour of the Central Washington University bird preservation archives. This very informative tour was led by Ornithologist and Kittitas Audubon member Phil Mattocks.

CWU's collection is the 4th largest in the state and is always looking for additional specimens to add to its collection. Adding to the collection, as big as it already is, is important because the University wants to collect specimens across time in a variety of categories. For example, Mattocks stated, we would like a Robin of each gender, the different molts, different geographic areas, and different ages.

Phil Mattocks began the tour with a thorough explanation of how a DEAD bird is skinned for the purposes of preserving the specimen for the collection.

Next we went up stairs to a series of rooms. First, we checked out the freezer. There were a number of small and large birds, some that had been stored for a few years, all waiting to be processed. Some of the smaller birds require someone with a lot of expertise and a delicate touch. The person that did a really good job with the smaller birds no longer works with CWU.

We visited the preparation room. I had the opportunity to see my very first Black Chin Hummingbird! Additionally, I got to see a calliope hummingbird, which I have probably seen in the past, however, was not able to make a positive identification. Viewing the specimens will probably help me to better identify birds when I am in the field or at my house.

Next we saw the collection room. This is where the specimens are stored. They are stored in drawers (with mothballs) and the drawers are labeled by general species. My favorite, the hummingbirds, had a variety, some that were non local and came from such places as Columbia and Mexico. "The university sometimes trades for non-local species", stated Mattocks.

Overall, the birds of all species were preserved pretty well. We saw a 50 year old bird that looked in really good condition.

Finally, we visited the laboratory where Professor Mattocks tested us. "No fair looking at the labels," he explained. Using our field guides we were then instructed to identify the birds. My table had a Song Sparrow and a female Red-Wing Black bird. Still rather new at Birding (my interest is more with hummingbirds!) this helped me because I have had both Song Sparrows and female Red-Wing black birds at my Snoqualmie Pass House. They look very similar with the main difference that the Song Sparrows are almost 3 inches shorter. When observing the lab setting I noted that the Song Sparrow had more solid color on the back, whereby the female red-wing black-bird was more spottish around the chest and the back. In looking at my field guides, it is still difficult to see distinct differences between the two birds. Looking at the specimens was very helpful.

All in all it was a pretty good tour. While the collection is not routinely open for viewing to the public, you can certainly call the CWU Biology department to schedule a time to come and view.

CWU is limited in how it can obtain species because it has to rely on birds that die of natural causes, hit windows, hit cars and/or similar means. **HOW YOU CAN HELP-** Whenever you find a dead bird, give it the "sniff test", stated Mattocks. "If you don't want to handle it, neither does CWU." In any event, when you come across a dead bird, carefully pick up the bird by picking it up in the middle portion of the body, label it with the date, location, your name, and how you think it may have died. Wrap it in a plastic Ziploc bag and store on its back. Smaller birds can fit inside a Toilet Paper tube to help preserve it. Bring to an Audubon meeting so that the bird can be connected up with CWU.

by Chris Caviezel

Around our enclosed courtyard in which we hang several birdfeeders is a six-foot fence. Two days ago there was evidence of a birdkill, most likely by a cat, as noted by the pattern of the feathers. Jumped right over the fence!

Sources from the American Bird Conservancy to the Humane Society estimate **hundreds of millions of birds** (from common song birds to endangered birds) are killed by cats each year. Experts say that worldwide avian mortality could be in the billions.

But it is not the cat's fault. Domestic cats were introduced in North America by European immigrants only a few hundred years ago. It is a descendant of a wild cat of Africa and southwestern Asia, and thus it instinctively hunts and captures prey. Our wildlife in the western hemisphere, however, did not evolve in the presence of such a numerous predator, so the wildlife is easy prey.

Cats are endeared by their owners. They are lovable, graceful, and playful. But owners face an important decision: "Should I keep my cat indoors?" For the birds and other wildlife (snakes, frogs, etc)--and the cat's sake--the answer must be "yes!"

For the cat's sake? It has been shown that indoor cats live longer (12-15 years versus 3-5 years) because they are no longer in danger of being hit by a car, of suffering injuries and diseases from other attacking animals, of being poisoned by pesticides or antifreeze, or of over-

populating to produce cats for whom there are no homes.

Myths perpetuate to sooth our concerns. Contrary to belief, 'belled' cats do kill birds. Cats learn to stalk to eliminate the ring of bell, and the last sound a bird hears before it is pounced upon is 'ding'. It is also known well-fed cats do kill wildlife. The urge to hunt and the urge to eat are controlled by different portions of the cat's brain. Additionally, although we may at times believe a bird has escaped unharmed, infection from the cat's teeth or claws or the stress of capture usually results in death to the bird.

Some will believe their cat will not adapt to being inside. However, with knowledge, time and patience, most cats can be changed. Some tips that may help: (1) provide a safe outside enclosure such as a screened porch; (2) provide window shelves to allow cats to monitor the outdoors from inside; (3) play with your cat (paper bags, cardboard, toys); (4) plant kitty grass (from pet stores) in indoor pots so your kitty can graze; and (5) clean litter boxes regularly. Kittens beginning life inside show no desire to venture outdoors.

Thus, for the birds--and the cats, please encourage everybody to keep their cats indoors!!! Gloria Baldi

What do you get when cross a woodpecker with a carrier pigeon? A: a bird that not only delivers, but knocks when he gets there. -- from *steven*, 3/27/1999

Why do hummingbirds hum? because they don't know the words! -- from *taylor sturm*, 7/30/1999

How do you wash a hawk? answer: With Dove -- from *Joe Knasinski*, 3/5/1997

Exciting Sighting ~ TUFFY, The ANNA'S HUMMING BIRD

Who would believe it??? On January 19th, 2006, about 8:00 AM in south Ellensburg, Gloria Lindstrom snapped this photograph. This little guy has been in the neighborhood since mid-October. We know the Anna's Hummingbird is expanding its range, being fairly common during the winter in the Puget Sound region, and reported in Yakima this winter. But Ellensburg in winter?

The homeowners where Tuffy is feeding bring the sugar nectar feeder inside each night and put it out at

about 7:15 AM each morning. They heat the feeder during the day with a food dehydrator located under the birdfeeder. In the 45 minutes the three of us were present, Tuffy returned about four times and after each 'meal' would sit in a freeze-dried domestic clematis near the feeder. He was named 'Tuffy' because he has been through some pretty tough temperatures, as low as 3 degrees Fahrenheit.

by Jeb Baldi



Photo by Gloria Lindstrom

BIRD OF THE MONTH - HAIRY AND DOWNY WOODPECKERS



Photos by Cricket



We are looking at these 2 birds at the same time because they are so similar. For a new birder can be hard to tell apart.

The picture to the left is the larger Hairy Woodpecker, the one in the picture to the right is the smaller one, the Downy Woodpecker. With them both on the same size suet feeder it is easier to see the size difference. One of them by themselves out in the woods is a lot harder.

Besides the size difference there a couple of ways to tell them apart. One is, not by any means, fool proof. The Downy's generally prefer the smaller branches often in deciduous trees or even on weeds and the Hairy prefer to remain on the trunks and bigger branches usually, in our area, on conifers. Both of these pictures were taken in my yard of Pines and Firs. So not a good way to identify which bird is which.

One of the tricks in Sibley's Birding Basics is beak length. Specifically the beak length as compared to the size of the head. Look at the 2 smaller picture above and you can clearly see that the Hairy has, in comparison to the size of his head a much longer bill than the Downy. There are other differences as well but that is easiest for me.

Where can you see these birds. Best place for Downys is Irene Reinhart park, we see them almost every First Saturday. Both can be seen along the Yakima River, upper county for Hairy and from Thorp east for the Downy. Downy are also seen in the cottonwood riparian area in the Taneum Canyon. Hairys on the Cle Elum river in the Suncadia Resort and on the west fork of the Teanaway River.

Cricket Webb

Hairy Woodpecker

Size: 18-26 cm (7-10 in)

Wingspan: 33-41 cm (13-16 in)

Weight: 40-95 g (1.41-3.35 ounces)

Medium-sized woodpecker.
Black and white plumage.
Plain white back.
Bill thick and rather long.
Mostly black upperparts.
Center of back white.
Extension of black line down neck reaches onto shoulder.
White stripes on face above and below black ear covers.
White spots on wings.
Tail black in center with white outer tail feathers.
Outermost tail feather on each side usually pure white.
Bill nearly as long as head.
Bill grayish, with whitish tip.
Eyes deep reddish brown.

Feet dark grayish, tinged blue or olive.

Sex Differences

Male with red patch on back of head, female with black patch.

Downy Woodpecker

Size: 14-17 cm (6-7 in)

Wingspan: 25-30 cm (10-12 in)

Weight: 21-28 g (0.74-0.99 ounces)

Small woodpecker.
Black and white plumage.
Plain white back.
Small, pointed bill.
Mostly black upperparts.
Center of back white.
White stripes on face above and below black ear covers.
Black line down side of neck.
White spots on wings.
Tail black in center with white outer tail feathers.
Outermost tail feather on each side barred with black.

Sex Differences

Male with red patch on back of head, female with black patch.

Q: What did the woodpecker say when it ran into a bar? A: Ouch! -- from Dave Diehl, 8/25/1997

Conclusion: What Lies Ahead?

Since 1992, Congress has been deadlocked over what to do with the Endangered Species Act. One camp, consisting of regulated interests, insists that the law is too onerous, particularly for landowners. Many in that camp advance a constitutional claim that every diminution in property value from governmental regulation must be fully compensated. No court has ever agreed with that argument, so partisans endeavor to sell it to Congress instead. Others in that camp appear satisfied to tie the administrators of ESA in a morass of new procedural requirements regarding the listing of species, the development of recovery plans, and other actions. Like Gulliver tied down by Lilliputian ropes, a government that is believed to be untrustworthy can be restrained through these new procedural manacles.

Another camp, mainly composed of environmentalists, insists that ESA has been too ineffective and must be strengthened. They would also like to forge a set of procedural chains for a government that they too distrust, but for quite different reasons. This camp would strengthen ESA by tightening the screws on landowners and others. In their view, more aggressive enforcement, less agency discretion, more independent oversight, and far more money will fix the current problems with ESA.

Neither camp sees much legitimacy in the other's position, and in the sharply polarized Congress that exists today, the result is total impasse, particularly given the lack of any major change in congressional makeup in the most recent election. There is little prospect for that impasse ending, at least not until more members of the two camps acknowledge that both sides have legitimate concerns. The Endangered Species Act has often been too much of a burden for landowners and others, but it has also been much too ineffective for many of the species it seeks to conserve. Crafting new ideas, even experiments, that aim to reduce the burdens of ESA while increasing its effectiveness is the key to breaking the impasse.

For the immediate future, the likely venue for most of these new ideas will continue to be the executive rather than the legislative branch. The key need for a more effective and less onerous Endangered Species Act is the creation of positive incentives for conservation. For that, congressional action is nearly essential. But the job of experimenting with new approaches to conservation has not been stymied by the legislative impasse. Safe harbor agreements and similar agreements for private landowners willing to make significant commitments to benefit species even before they become listed are two conspicuous examples. Another with considerable potential is the use of novel mitigation banking concepts that offer more than just the preservation of the current, unsatisfactory status quo but the opportunity to improve the status of rare species. Under these arrangements, landowners who successfully restore or enhance habitat for rare species may be able to earn credits for doing so that they can sell to others who need to mitigate for adverse impacts to those species from other projects. Still a third is a novel "landowner incentives program" funded by FWS and implemented by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. It pays landowners for part of the cost of implementing practices beneficial to imperiled species.

For these and other ideas, resources commensurate with the challenge are indispensable. The administrators of the Endangered Species Act have been easy targets for ridicule because they have been given a Brobdingnagian task and Lilliputian resources with which to accomplish it. Perhaps, however, the real progress that can be made from new approaches that benefit both species and landowners can turn the trickle of resources for one of the nation's most important environmental problems into a respectable torrent.

Thank you for reading through all of this. I hope your understanding of our need to defend this piece of legislation has been fortified.

Editors notes.

Please send any articles about alternative fuels to me this next month, I would like to start a series on that subject in March. I am always looking for your bird sightings.

So that more people can contribute to the bird of the month, funny stories or places to see them, I will be announcing the bird a month in advance. The bird of the month for March will be the Bald Eagle.

The deadline for submission to the Hooter is the 21st of previous month. This is your newsletter, if you would like to see something in the Hooter, please let me know. I am usually at most of the field trips and meetings. You can either email me or call.

Cricket Webb.

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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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 _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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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

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

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 is the website address for KAS?
2. What is the goal of Eyes in the Woods?
3. How did Central Washington University add non local birds, like the Lilac Breasted roller to it's bird preservation archive?
4. Name 2 field marks that distinguish the Hairy from the Downy not mentioned in the bird of the month article?
5. Where in Kittitas County can you see Bald Eagles in the spring?



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.

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[Http://www.kittitasaudubon.org](http://www.kittitasaudubon.org)

