



# THE HOOTER

EDITOR — CRICKET WEBB

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**Thanksgiving Bird Counts** are to take place on Thanksgiving Day. The counter chooses the time that best fits his/her holiday schedule. The Count lasts for only ONE HOUR, and is made in a count circle only 15 FEET in diameter. The location of the circle is determined by the counter. Actually, the circle can be considered a cylinder, since all birds seen on the ground (or water), in vegetation or flying over or through the circle can be counted. Individual birds are to be counted only once during the hour, even if they continue to pay visits. Flocks should be estimated or counted and just the highest number at any one time used. Count circles are usually located around whatever attracts birds-- feeders, baths, cover, etc. Most participants establish a count area visible from a comfortable spot near a window. Some participants select water areas or choose a favorite birding area and make an outdoor count. The same count circles should be used each year. For more information, call me at 674-4035 or email KASHooter@kittitasaudubon.org. *Cricket Webb*

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## VOTE NO ON I-933

**This is the initiative that has the potential to bankrupt Washington State at taxpayers' expense by creating loopholes for irresponsible development that will result in the destruction of farmland and damage zoning regulations that protect our clean water and air environmental laws. Think what will happen to habitat that sustains our wildlife.**

Please explain to your friends and neighbors what this vote will mean. The taxpayers will be forced to either pay developers to not destroy the habitat or lose it. Can you afford it?

## NEXT MEETING Patagonia

<b>DATE</b>	THURSDAY November 16th	<b>TIME</b>	7:00 PM
<b>PLACE</b>	ELLENSBURG HIGH SCHOOL ROOM - 232		

Catherine Stephenson will discuss and show photos of her travels in Patagonia, Chile. She has made two trips to the area to camp, fly fish, and explore the remote countryside. Catherine is retired Cle Elum District Ranger, having served the Forest Service in various capacities for over 33 years.

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

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## KAS Field Trips

### November 4th ~ *First Saturday BirdWalk:*

Meet at 8:00AM at Irene Riverfront Park parking lot and join us for about a two and a half hour walk. Since the gate to the lake should be closed we may start seeing more waterfowl.

### November 18th ~ *Location to be deter-*

*mined.* Yakima County or the Columbia Basin. Mark the calendar for we will see birds! Or if you have an idea for good birding, please let me know by calling 933-1558.

## Field Trip report

**First Saturday BirdWalk** in October was the mark of four years that we have walked the trail and tallied the birds at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park. The first Saturday in 2002 was a cold eleven (11) degrees--and only Jeb and I showed for the event. (We always wondered why?) Unlike that Saturday this October was just perfect weather, 43 to 60 degrees, sunny, no wind, and an extremely low-water Yakima River. With twelve pair of eyes we found 23 species of birds, plus one deer. A number of new peo-

ple were definitely 'good-lookers'.

Most unusual was a Double-crested Cormorant perched at the top of a cottonwood snag with outstretched wings drying in the morning sun. Although Cormorants have been spreading up the Columbia and its tributaries, Kittitas County does not have many, and it was a spectacular sight against the blue sky.

The rarest of finds, however, was a Greater Yellowlegs, sun-

ning and preening along the riverbank. The very low depth and flow of water in the river may have lured the bird to river's edge. This was the first time we have had a Yellowlegs on the BirdWalk.

At the end of the walk we always look for the American Dipper, and there he was doing what Dippers do--looking plump while 'dipping". Just a very delightful morning with great company.

## South Ellensburg Ponds, Umtaneum and Wenas Road/Lake.

With ten people in two cars the Sunday, October 8th, field trip was a long but fun day. We began at the ponds south of town and found good numbers of a variety of birds. The best species on Sorenson pond was a **Western Grebe**. Then with coffee in hand we headed up Umtaneum Road to the patch of Ponderosa Pines where in the past we found a Great Horned Owl. And there it was again. Sack lunches were eaten along the Umtaneum Creek Trail with a pair of Steller's Jays before we went on to the Wenas Campout area. Not much was in either transitional forest except numerous Ruby-crowned Kinglets. On to Wenas Lake where at this time of year not much water is in the lake, but lots of ducks and shore birds are found. The resort is now closed and in need of repair, but the caretakers allowed us to park and walk the shoreline. **Killdeers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Greater Yellow-legs, Mallards, Green-winged Teal, Ruddy Ducks, Great Blue Herons and Canada Greese** were plentiful. The wind was picking up with darkness coming, and it was getting cool so we headed to the Mexican restaurant in Selah for a nice warm 'South of the Border' meal. Thirty nine species were tallied. Join us on the next trip!

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*This month's message is a book review for all those who read to young children, whether they are children, grandchildren, or a school or library group--or for anyone who gives books to a young child who reads.*

**She's Wearing a Dead Bird on Her Head** by Kathryn Lasky is a delightful book about how the Audubon Society was formed by people concerned about the desecration of birds. Illustrations by David Catrow are extremely colorful with exaggerated expressions and humorous postures of the characters, and add immensely to the book. Although based on fact, some events had to be imagined in order to construct the documented records.

Around the turn of the twentieth century it was fashionable for wealthy women to wear bird feathers and plumes, and sometimes the entire bird, on their hats. Not only was this considered ridiculous by many people but it was the killing of birds while making women appear senseless that upset some individuals.

Two Boston women, Harriet Hemenway and Minna Hall, were two of those individuals and they decided to form a bird club. Inviting other socialite women to join the club, they convinced them to put aside their feathered fashions.

Slowly the ideas to protect birds in other ways were accepted, and eventually men who were doctors, lawyers, and ornithologists joined the group adding political power. Thus was born the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Together everyone began pushing for laws to protect birds. In 1903 an act was passed to protect herons and bitterns, and in 1904 a law was passed for the shore, marsh, and beach birds. Laws against hunting birds during their breeding seasons, and against importing feathers from Europe and the tropics were passed. As these laws were enforced, the feather trade vanished increasing the chances for species survival. Harriet and Minna's determination in this process shows the power of a few to change conditions for the better.

One bird species to benefit was the Great Egret whose lovely elegant white plumes were especially sought after for hats. In 1953 it became the symbol for the National Audubon Society.

*Gloria Baldi*

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## On Geese

Where we live, on the Eastern shore of Maryland, the gentle waters run in and out like fingers slimming at the tips. They curl into the smaller creeks and coves like tender palms.

The Canada geese know this place, as do the white swans and the ducks who ride an inch above the waves of Chesapeake Bay as they skim their way into harbor. In the autumn, by the thousands, they come home for the winter.

The swans move toward the shores in a stately glide, their tall heads proud and unafraid.

They lower their long necks deep into the water, where their strong beaks dig through the river bottoms for food. And there is between the arrogant swans and the prolific geese, an indifference, almost a disdain.

Once or twice each year, snow and sleet move into the area. When this happens, if the river is at its narrowest or the creek shallow, there is a freeze, which hardens the water to ice.

It was on such a morning, near Oxford, Maryland, that a friend of mine set the breakfast table beside the huge window, which overlooked the Tred Avon River. Across the river, beyond the dock, the snow laced the rim of the shore in white. For a moment she stood quietly, looking at what the night's storm had painted.

Suddenly, she leaned forward and peered close to the frosted window. "It really is," she cried out loud, "there is a goose out there." She reached to the bookcase and pulled out a pair of binoculars. Into their sights came the figure of a large Canada goose, very still, its wings folded tight to its sides, its feet frozen to the ice.

Then from the dark skies, she saw a line of swans. They moved in their own singular formation, graceful, intrepid, and free. They crossed from the west of the broad creek high above the house, moving steadily to the east.

As my friend watched, the leader swung to the right, then the white string of birds became a white circle. It floated from the top of the sky downward.

At last, as easy as feathers coming to earth,

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Sheldrake, Goosander, Sawbill or Fish Duck are names that the Common Merganser has been called. This is a hardy, large diving duck that nests near and fishes large lakes and rivers in northern forested habitats virtually world-wide. In North America, this species winters on large lakes, rivers, and reservoirs of the central United States and along the coasts. Breeding though out the Boreal forest of the Holarctic region

Females select nest site, build and maintain nests. It nests in tree cavities (or nest boxes) but will nest on the ground. The females breed in their second year, generally lay one clutch per year, and will lay their white eggs in the nests of other cavity-nesting ducks such as Common Golden Eye and Hooded Merganser. Often the females will band together to rear the young. Males, as is typical of species where the male is much flashier than the females, have little to do with incubation and do not remain in the nest area very long after incubation.

Because this merganser was thought to threaten salmon and trout stocks, its diet has been rigorously scrutinized. As a top predator in aquatic food chains, they serve as an indicator species, reflecting the environmental health of the habitat.

In flight, holds head, belly, and legs in flat line; in vernacular, said to resemble a "lawn dart." Flight is

fast and when spooked can commence directly, at a steep angle, from the water with out the usual "pattering" across the water.

Flights are often individuals or pairs up to small flocks. In spite of my photo of the male on land, this is not common; birds spend most of the time on the water.

Often sleeping on open water and moving toward shore to feed during the day. Small groups swim together, dipping heads underwater deep enough to search for prey. Diving easily, with a slight leap. Diving is not as frequent as grebs but often. In larger rafts, one bird may dive, followed in rapid succession by others in a "follow-the-leader" pattern. In smaller groups, individuals dive independently of one another. Upon surfacing, may thrash with feet and wings while juggling fish into a head-first position for swallowing. *Cricket Webb*



FEMALE COMMON MERGANSER



MALE COMMON MERGANSER

## MANASHTASH RIDGE BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT by *Charles Hawkins*

After the birds had stopped using my nesting boxes on the northern side of Manashtash Ridge, Ginger (Jensen) and I inspected and cleaned them. Based on their contents, I inferred the species that had used them:

### **Contents**

Large, woven cup of grass stems  
Filled with twigs and a small cup on the top  
Low, flat layer of moss, fur, and/or bark  
Low, flat layer of grass blades  
Other

### **Species**

Bluebirds  
House wrens  
Chickadees  
Mice or chipmunks  
None

### **Number %**

10 16.4%  
19 31.1  
12 19.7  
8 13.1  
12 19.7

Total

61 100.0%

Over the years since 1988, bluebirds were gradually increasing the proportion of boxes that they used. More chickadees than usual nested. The use by wrens was down. However, rodents were up. Some certain boxes or even all the boxes in certain areas have been taken over by a species. I infer that babies from a prior year return to the area where they were born to breed.

(Continued from page 3)

the circle landed on the ice. My friend was on her feet now, with one unbelieving hand against her mouth.

As the swans surrounded the frozen goose, she feared that the life he still had might be pecked out by those great swan bills.

Instead, amazingly instead, those bills began to work on the ice. The long necks were lifted and curved down, again and again, it went on for a long time. At last, the goose was rimmed by a narrow margin of ice instead of the entire creek. The swans rose again, following the leader and hovered in that circle, awaiting the results of their labors. The goose's head lifted. Its body pulled. Then the goose was free and standing on the ice. He was moving his big webbed feet slowly. And the swans stood in the air watching. Then, as if he had cried, "I cannot fly," four of the swans came down around him. Their powerful beaks scraped the goose's wings from top to bottom, scuttled under its wings, and rode up its body, chipping off and melting the ice held in the feathers.

Slowly, as if testing, the goose spread its wings as far as they would go, brought them together, accordion-like, and spread again.

When at last the wings reached their fullest, the four swans took off and joined the hovering group. They resumed their eastward journey, in perfect formation, to their secret destination.

Behind them, rising with incredible speed and joy, the goose moved into the sky. He followed them, flapping double time, until he caught up, until he joined the last end of the line, like a small child at the end of a crack-the-whip of older boys.

My friend watched them until they disappeared over the tips of the farthest trees. Only then, in the dusk, which was suddenly deep, did she realize that tears were running down her cheeks and had been for how long she didn't know.

This is a true story. It happened. I do not try to interpret it. I just think of it in the bad moments and from it comes only one hopeful question: "If so for birds, why not for man?"

*Written by Eva Tatum. Sent to me, courtesy of my mom's friend Lou Yabrof - Thank you.*

## Bird Sightings

A Snowy or Cattle Egret was reported flying across Hiway 10 about 2 miles SW of the junction with Hiway 97. Either bird would be very rare for our county but the person was very sure that the bill was black. If you have seen this Egret, please let me know, I would love to confirm this sighting.

Manastash Ridge - Clarks Nutcrackers and Chestnut Backed Chickadees.

Vantage - Clarks Grebe 10/28

Cle Elum - Hansen Ponds—Clarks Grebe 10/27

A couple of weeks ago, the tree outside my office window was just trembling with Juncos and 2 other kinds of small and smaller birds. Grabbing my binoculars I saw that the small birds were Chestnut Backed Chickadees, one of the regular winter lunch bunch at my feeders but never in these numbers. There must have 30 or 40 of them. I could not get a good look at the smaller birds until one popped out into the sun and nodded his head just long enough to show me the bright golden crown. About a dozen Golden-Crowned Kinglets—a first for my yard. If that was not enough excitement for one day, less than an hour later I spotted a small flock of MacGillivray's Warblers. - *Cricket Webb*

SUBJECT	COLLECTIVE TERM
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<b>cormorants</b>	A flight of cormorants
<b>cranes</b>	A sedge of cranes
<b>crows</b>	A horde of crows
<b>crows</b>	A hover of crows
<b>crows</b>	A murder of crows
<b>crows</b>	A muster of crows
<b>crows</b>	A parcel of crows
<b>crows</b>	A storytelling of crows
<b>curlews</b>	A head of curlews
<b>dotterel</b>	A trip of dotterel
<b>doves</b>	A dole of doves
<b>doves</b>	A dule of doves
<b>doves</b>	A flight of doves
<b>doves</b>	A piteousness of doves
<b>doves</b>	A pitying of doves
<b>doves</b>	A prettying of doves

## Alternative Energy - How to power our homes.

### Coal

Virtually every power plant built in America between 1975 and 2002 was fired by natural gas. However between 1970 and 2000, the amount of coal America used to generate electricity tripled.

Now with natural gas prices rising steeply, U.S. power utilities are expected to build the equivalent of 280 500 megawatt coal-fired electricity power plants between 2003 and 2030. With China already bringing one coal fired electric plant on line each week.

If all these new coal plants are built, they will add as much carbon dioxide to the atmosphere as has been released by all the coal burned in the last 250 years. The price of coal may be low, but the true costs of its extraction, processing and consumption are high. The extraction of coal leads to disappearing mountains, air pollution from acidic and toxic emissions and fouled water supplies. Coal mining is far more invasive than oil or gas drilling. Coal burning power plants account for more than two-thirds of sulfur dioxide, over 20% of nitrogen oxides, and nearly 40% of carbon dioxide emissions in the United States.

While it will only deal with one of the problems, techniques for addressing CO2 emissions exist, although the will to quickly implement them lags. The techniques electric utilities could apply to keep much of the carbon dioxide they produce from entering the atmosphere are known as CO2 capture or geological carbon sequestration. This involves separating the CO2 as it is created and pumping it underground to be stored.

I was not aware that all the technological components needed for carbon sequestration are commercially ready. I had seen it done on a show about ways to combat global warming but according to an article in September's Scientific American magazine they have already been proven in applications unrelated to avoidance of climate change. However integrated systems have yet to be built on a commercial scale.

Capture technologies have been deployed throughout the world both in the manufacture of chemicals (e.g. fertilizer) and in the purification of natural gas. Industry has gained experience with CO2 storage in operations to purify natural gas, principally in Canada, as well as using carbon dioxide to boost oil production, mainly in the United States.

Studies indicate that 85%-95% of the carbon in coal could be sequestered using existing power generation technologies.

A key point is that fundamentally different approaches to carbon capture would need to be pursued for power plants using the old pulverized coal technology as opposed to the newer integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC). IGCC plants use heat and pressure to cook off impurities in coal and convert it into a synthetic gas, this gas is then burnt in a turbine. These plants are 10% more efficient than conventional plants, consume 40% less water, produce 50% less solid waste and burn almost as cleanly as natural gas plants.

However electricity producers are rushing to build conventional coal pulverization power plants, just as they rushed to build coal plants without sulfur scrubbers prior to legislation coming into force. This is short-sighted as it is more expensive, more energy intensive and less effective to attempt to capture carbon from conventional coal power plants. It is highly likely that having built these plants, that the coal industry would expect the taxpayer to foot the bill for the additional expense. Of the one hundred or so plants being planned or under construction in America only a handful use IGCC technology.

Future Gen is the Department of Energy financed one billion dollar zero emissions plant intended to turn coal into electricity and hydrogen. Proposed in 2003 and backed by a consortium of coal and electric companies, it is not due to come online until at least 2013. Many in the industry consider this date to be dubious nicknaming the project NeverGen. It is intended to make it look like the coal industry is doing something, while actually doing very little and in the process putting off changing how coal plants are built for a decade or two. Indeed in its Coal Vision Report, the industry does not plan on building "ultra-low emissions" plants on a commercial scale until between 2025 and 2035. According to the report "there is considerable debate about the need to reduce CO2 emissions". The report also states that "achieving meaningful CO2 reductions would require significant technical advances".

From [www.alt-e.blogspot.com](http://www.alt-e.blogspot.com)

President – Gloria Baldi	933-1558	Newsletter – Cricket Webb	674-4035
Vice President – Gloria Lindstrom	925-1807	Membership – Keith Johnson	674-7552
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Field Trip – Jeb Baldi	933-1558	Bluebird boxes – Tom Gauron	968-3175

**NON-VOTING CHAIRS**

Social/Greeter – Karen Johnson	674-7552	Christmas Bird Count – Phil Mattocks	962-2191
Librarian	Ginger Jensen	925-5816	

**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**

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

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Make check payable to Kittitas Audubon Society      Clip coupon and send with your check to:      Kittitas Audubon Membership  
P.O. Box 1443  
Ellensburg WA 98926

**NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP**

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

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Chapter Membership Data Center 7XBP  
P.O. Box 51001  
Boulder CO. 80322-1001

**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 cost 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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## 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/>>



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

