



THE HOOTER

Hooter

EDITOR CRICKET WEBB

YOU ARE INVITED!

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WENAS CAMPOUT, May 25-28, 2007

www.wenasaudubon.org

For over 38 years Audubon families have been camping at the Wenas Creek Campground officially named the Hazel Wolf Wenas Creek Bird Sanctuary. The location, SW of Ellensburg, is now in an "Important Bird Area" which Auduboners have been assured will be in protective status soon. The free, "primitive" campground along the north fork of Wenas Creek has exceptional opportunities for birding, botanizing and enjoying spring in the eastern foothills of the Cascades.

* The campground is about 2,500' elevation, can be quite cold at night, hot during day.

* Bring water for drinking (the creek is beautiful and bountiful but not potable).

(Continued on page 5)

NEXT MEETING

Department of Natural Resources in Southeast Region:

DATE	THURSDAY APRIL 19	TIME	7:00 PM
PLACE	ELLENSBURG HIGH SCHOOL ROOM - 232		

The program will begin with a brief review of the origin of DNR lands, the mission, and the mandates it operates under. We will cover policies and practices concerning timber harvest, wildlife, habitat protection, public recreation, and preservation of Natural Areas. There will be an emphasis on the evolving challenge of balancing increasing uses and values. We'll touch on how we interact with other agencies such as Wa. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife.

There will be an over-view of the pending land exchanges that will block-up DNR lands in Central Washington mainly into large tracts of State Forest. This is the largest land exchange in DNR history and has major implications for public recreation and resource protection. There will be an opportunity for questions and answers.

Presenters:

Charlie McKinney – Management Forester for Southeast Region. Has been with DNR for 12 years. Charlie has also been a coordinator in the Forest Practices program and conducted Watershed Analysis. He has also worked in the water quality program for Wa. Dept. of Ecology and for WSU Cooperative Extension. He has been an Ellensburg resident for 29 years.

Jeanne Williams – Transaction & Asset Manager for Southeast Region. Jeanne has been with DNR for 16 years she was the Natural Areas Manager for the region for 12 years and worked as a cartographer in Forest Practices prior to that. Jeanne has been an Ellensburg resident for 41 years.

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

April 7th First Saturday BirdWalk at 8:00 at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park. Meet at the bridge parking lot, wear clothes/shoes for the weather, and bring optics. It usually takes two to three hours of walking on uneven ground. The general public is always welcome, so bring a friend.

April 28th (Saturday) Lower Crab Creek and Columbia National Wildlife Refuge. This is mostly an auto tour and in the past, has had as many as 76 species. Marianne Gordon is leader; call for details and sign-up 964-2320.

May 5th First Saturday BirdWalk at 8:00 at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park.

May 19 & 20th (Saturday - Sunday) Golden-dale/Bickleton/Klickitat River

Campout with a fair amount of driving but we

should see a great variety of species. Steve Moore & Jan Demorest leaders.

June 2nd First Saturday BirdWalk at 8:00 at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park.

June 9th (Saturday) Kayak up the Columbia River. Paddle north from Vantage along the west shoreline, then return. Leader Mark Benedict. Limited number so sign up early. Call 933-1558.

June 16th (Saturday) TBA Steve Hall leader
Usual meeting location is west end of Super One parking lot to car pool. Car pool fee is 20 cents per mile divided by the number of people in the car. We save gas, have less impact on the environment, enjoy one another, and have a good time. Jeb Baldi

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

First Saturday Birdwalk

on March 3rd was a chilly but pleasant morning at 28 degrees with some overcast. Seventeen people arrived to see the birds of Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park. Along with warmer weather, the bird activity level is increasing, a sure sign of spring. But even with the prospect of spring, nothing unusual was spotted. Many Black-capped Chickadees, Downy Woodpeckers, Red-winged Blackbirds, along with three Killdeer were among the 21 species seen. The lower lake is still about 95% frozen, but the upper is completely clear of ice. There was a beautiful mature Bald Eagle perched low next to the lake looking for fish--or maybe the one lone Coot. Three pair of American Wigeon were making a wake on the smooth water. The river is running high with many fishermen entering the river at the bridge launch. Some ice and mud still remained on the river trail. Not much new, but the wonderful people made it a good morning to be outdoors. Jeb

Wentachee Confluence Park

When we set out from Ellensburg, March 24 looked like it was going to be a dreary day. "If you don't like the weather wait 10 minutes or go 10 miles." True on this day, the weather in Wentachee was greatly improved. By the end of the day we got a great view of a Say's Phoebe in bright sunlight.

Particularly exciting were the Green Wing Teal pair and the Hooded Mergansers. The surprise was the 1 Dunlin on the beach, usually seen on this side of the mountains only during migration and rarely any where alone. Other birds of note were both Greater and Lesser Scaup, very helpful in learning how to tell them apart. In exactly the environment you would expect to find it, bingo, there was the Spotted Towhee. Violet Green & Northern Rough-Wing Swallows, Yellow Rump Warblers and a Horned Grebe are included in the 40 species we saw. No Osprey yet, that would have made it the perfect field trip, but even without it I had a great time. Thank you all for going with me. Cricket

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring is here and with it the wonderful migration of birds. With one-third of Washington State's migrating and/or breeding birds in serious decline the concern brings to mind some of the various actions we can take to possibly reverse that trend. We have choices and if enough people care, environmental policies can change. Some choices are simple and save money, while others have a minor monetary expense. Listed are a few.

Drink shade-grown coffee. Seattle Audubon has for the past several years run a campaign to educate people on the importance of buying shade-grown coffee. From their information "coffee is the second most highly traded commodity in the world behind petroleum and therefore gives consumers the greatest chance to affect the lives of farmers, forests, and birds that depend on the coffee trade. Research confirms in Costa Rica that the same tropical forests that provide wintering grounds to migratory birds also provide hollow nesting trees for bees that add pollinating services to coffee plants. Preserving these tropical forests protects habitat for bees, birds, people, and quality coffee, while cultivating shade-grown coffee promotes the preservation of these forests". In Ellensburg, shade-grown coffee can be bought at Super One in the organic section under the brand of **Cravens**. It is more expensive, but it also tastes better.

Keep cats indoors. Cats kill literally millions of song birds every year. A previous article in the Hooter (Feb '06) detailed the natural instinct of the cat, an introduced species to our continent, to hunt whether it is hungry or not. Cats kept indoors are more healthy and live longer—and birds are kept from being killed.

Avoid use of pesticides and herbicides in your yard. The use of lawn pesticides by homeowners accounts for the majority of wildlife poisonings reported each year. Birds are particularly vulnerable, as they feed on the ground and often mistake pesticide granules for food. It is estimated 7 million wild birds are killed each year due to the aesthetic use of pesticides by homeowners. A second concern is the amount of these pesticides being washed into lakes, rivers and streams posing health risks to humans, as well as wildlife. So enjoy the dandelions, the violets, and controlled untidiness. For a real problem, a safe alternative solution is almost always available.

Create natural yards with a variety trees, flowers, pests, predators, weeds, native plant species, and wildlife, a real habitat for wildlife and birds.

Now—if only enough of us can take these actions.

Thank you

There are people who make this newsletter possible that never get any recognition. I would like to change that.

All the people who send me articles and jokes are the biggest part of the newsletter.

The Copy Shop does our printing—not for free but faithfully and correctly.

Ginger Jensen, picks them up, folds them stamps them and get them into the mail.

Dianne Gauron is the one who catches all my mistakes, when I get this done early enough to send it to her for proofing.

Keith Johnson who really tries to make sure I get the Hooter to you at the right address in spite of me being address challenged.

Thank you all. The Editor.



One of the birds we saw at the Wenatchee Confluence State Park. One of the folks on the trip who has a good command of birding and identification has a mental block about this bird. Maybe see this will break it.

A bird of open country like Kittitas county, Say's Phoebe is similar in behavior and size to the Black and Eastern phoebes.

The drab gray brown back, black tail



SAY'S PHEOBE

and cinnamon-colored belly fade into the sage brush plains, barren foothills, and rocky canyon country where this species resides. Uncom-

mon all over it's range from arctic tundra to central Mexico.

Spring migration begins early for this bird, compared to

other western flycatchers. It contends with cold weather and the scarcity of flying prey by hovering and gleaning insects from the ground. Primarily insectivorous, it captures wild bees and wasps most frequently, but also flies, beetles, and grasshoppers, generally foraging from perches within 1–2 meters of the ground.

Phoebes show strong nest-site tenacity. Typically monogamous and frequently double-brooded, it builds its nest (under a protective ceiling) on a rocky ledge or other supporting shelf, which often includes human-made structures. It frequently nests in abandoned buildings among prairie farms and western ranches. Its nest, typically constructed of grass, stems, moss, and other fibrous plant materials.



BLACK PHEOBE

Wanted: Since birders are constantly upgrading their optical devices, are there any good binoculars out there someone would consider selling for a reasonable fee? Am looking for a center focus, perhaps 8 x 42 range optic. Thanks! Joe Meuchel meuchel@ellensburg.com or 933-3011.

Once again it is that time of year when the KAS bylaws require us to prepare a slate of officers for the elections coming up in May. The nominating committee is Jeb Baldi, Chris Caviesel and Cricket Webb. Nominations are now open for all offices: president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. If you would like to be taking a more active role in the operations of KAS, please contact one of the members of the nominating committee.

JEB BALDI (509) 933-1558

CHRIS CAVIEZEL (425) 434-0899

Cricket Webb (509) 674-4035

WENAS CAMPOUT CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

- * We set up tents or use "pick-up" type campers.
- * We all share in the rent of portable toilets for four days.
- * Bicycles and Frisbees are fun, telescopes and cameras standard gear.
- * Please leave pets at home.
- * There are organized field trips throughout the Wenas drainage and WA DF&W management areas and some on private property at owners' requests.
- * In camp we have natural history workshops with some of the state's top birders, WNPS botanists, entomologists etc.
- * There is an old-fashioned campfire in the evening with singing, story telling and recapping the sightings of the day.

Visit the new Wenas Website, by Webmaster Michael Hobbs, to see a familiar smiling face and get lots of downloadable information about our campout. www.wenasaudubon.org. There's a bird checklist, wildflower checklist, outline of field trips and program, directions to the campground, and more. If you don't do websites, contact me and I'll send you printed information.

Bring friends, family, and join us at Wenas Memorial Day Weekend - May 25-28, 2007!
See you there, Helen Engle, hengle@iinet.com, 253-564-3112.

The Ellensburg Capital dated May 11, 1911

From Joe Meuchel's research at the Archives in *The Ellensburg Capital* dated May 11, 1911, the following article captures the attitude of the past. Today it is interesting to note that the first bird visitors to eastern Washington inquire about is the name of that beautiful 'black and white bird'.

County Should Help to Kill off Magpies

"Relentless war on magpies in the vicinity of North Yakima is being waged by boys and men as the result of the proffered bounty of 7 1/2 cents per head which the auditor's office is paying for the scalps of the birds, and 285 birds old and young, fell Saturday as a result. The county auditor was kept busy counting the birds brought in by Ed Slavin, whose efforts in the Ahtanum yesterday brought him a net profit of \$7.12 for 95 of the birds; by N.F. Kleyn, who registered with 35 from the Nachez.

This item is from the Yakima paper and it offers a good suggestion to our county commissioners. This bird is an all around pest here, as it is everywhere and there are thousands of them in this region. It would be a great benefit if they could be exterminated."



Disclaimer: I am an employee of GE. They are the largest manufacturer of Wind Power turbines. I do not work in that division and did not use any inside information for this article.

I believe that bird watchers have a reputation as a pretty bland bunch. OH BOY is that image a mistaken generalization. If you want proof, bring up the subject of wind power in any group larger than 3 and you will get an idea of what the term "fired up" means.

The question behind all this hubbub — Is wind power green power? I have been researching this issue for over a year and I still can not say which side of the argument is correct.

From a global warming stand point it is a great deal greener than most. The amount of energy to build, install and maintain a wind farm is only a small portion of the energy a wind farm is capable of generating in its usable life. That said, real data on this is hard to pin down because very few wind towers continue to be used through their "usable life."

The technology has changed so much, so fast that older obsolete towers are either shut down, up-graded or replaced long before the end of life. From a taxpayers point of view, this is an expensive proposition since most of this ends being subsidized. From a birders point of view this has been a good thing. The newer towers kill a lot fewer birds.

But, they still kill some birds. On this issue it is really a real estate question.

My conclusions on this whole energy issue is that no one thing is the magic bullet. That seems obvious but to hear the media talk you would think that it has not crossed the mind of anyone. Biodiesel, ethenol , hydrogen fuel cells combined with smaller lighter efficient Hybrid technology can go a long way to reducing our non-point carbon pollution. Buy local foods that have not been shipped across the country or half way around the world can reduce the shipping industries carbon footprint.

Using all electric vehicles may be practical for many people but will increase the amount of electricity we need to generate. We MUST get coal, gas and oil out of as many power plants as we can. More Hydro power eliminates enormous tracts of habit for both bird and mammals, not just the fish are impacted. Only a very small portion of that can come from wind power. One of the most encouraging methods I have learn about is Solar. Solar farms under the wind farms can increase what can be generated in that space. I have been stuck lately with so many images of other countries where every house has a solar panel.

All of that will not be enough. Research into carbon sequestration is promising but not ready to save us yet. Conservation has always been the most powerful tool we can use.

All I can control is what I do. Since starting this series of articles, we have purchases a Prius, switched our truck to biodiesel, invested in our local biodiesel plant, changed our eating and buy habits, as they burn out the few remaining incandescent light bulbs in my house are being changed over to fluorescent and we are looking into installing enough solar panels at our home to end up with the power company owing us money most months. I am doing my part.

Are you?

LOCATION - LOCATION - LOCATION

The best places for wind are also the best places for lift, the energy saving technique used by all large birds on a daily basis and by migrating flocks of all kinds. The worst example is the early years at Altamont Pass. The early wind farm there killed hundreds of Eagles, Hawks and many other birds. The lattice towers and smaller fast moving blades were a lethal combination.

Today's pole towers kill a lot less of those birds because without the likely looking perches the raptors are less attracted to them. The issue now is that the larger blades are at such a height that they reach up to the elevation of song bird migration. Those migrations occur at night and not observed by people. Doppler radar can be used over long periods of time to map those migrations.

One of the other concerns is that in order to provide any large percentage of the power needs, wind farms will need to huge and can fragment critical habitat. In cases where the birds affected are already in a stressed state, like the Sage Grouse this could be enough to push them over the edge.

As the threat of global warming continues to increase, more clean non polluting methods to generate energy will be needed. As the technology continues to make the generators and the blades safer, we need to focus our effort on helping to design and site wind farms in area that minimize the negative impacts on birds and other wildlife.

HOOTER

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National Audubon Society Chapter Code Y22
 Chapter Membership Data Center 7XBP
 P.O. Box 51001
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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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Membership forms are also available on our Web site Kittitasaudubon.org.
 Webmaster – Mark Whitesell Email markwhitesell@hotmail.com

KITTITAS COUNTY BUSINESSES SUPPORTING KAS

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



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

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)**

