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# The Hooter

Kittitas Audubon Society

October 2009

## OCTOBER PROGRAM : "Grizzly Bears in the Cascades"

Presented by David Knibb

THURSDAY, October 15th @ 7:00 PM ~ Hal Holmes Center



**Attention! Change of meeting location!** Hal Holmes Center

209 North Ruby St. (next to the Library)

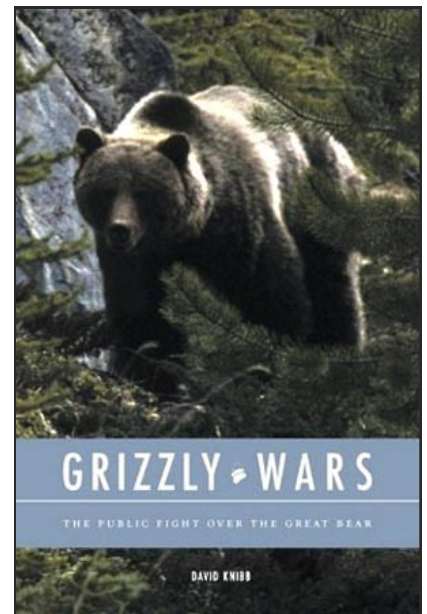
David Knibb, author and former activist, will discuss grizzly bears in the North Cascades, and his new book, Grizzly Wars: The Public Fight over the Great Bear.

The North Cascades is one of six areas designated under the Endangered Species Act for recovery of grizzly bears in the lower 48 states. The Cascades area lags behind other areas, all in the northern Rockies, lacking a plan for how to save the few grizzlies that may still live there. Scientists warn that the current Cascades grizzly population will "wink out" unless steps are taken to bolster their numbers and introduce genetic freshness. Discussion will include: how many grizzlies still live in the Cascades, where they are, and the current status of recovery efforts.

Long a symbol of the wild, the grizzly bear is perhaps the most controversial species in North America. In Grizzly Wars, David Knibb explores policy and political issues involved in managing and attempting to save the great bear. He highlights the critical role of public attitudes, the part that state governments play in the recovery process, the importance of providing habitat links and of cooperation with Canada on grizzly bear management near the border.

David Knibb has a background in forestry, law, and wildlife management. He is also the author of Backyard Wilderness, a chronicle of the political struggle that led to the creation of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness in Washington's Central Cascades. For many years he was active in the Alpine Lakes Protection Society.

**All Audubon meetings, held on the 3rd Thursday of each month, September through May (except December), are open to the public, so feel free to come and meet with us. A brief business session precedes the program. Stay afterwards for juice, treats, and conversation.**



### **Future Programs** (mark your calendar!)

November 19th: To commemorate the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth, a program titled "Charles Darwin: His Life & Times" by Dave Darda

December: The general meeting is replaced by the Christmas Bird count.  
All the details will be in the November Hooter.

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\*NON-VOTING VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

**KAS Board Meetings are held at 4:30 PM on the 1st Thursday of each month on the third floor of the CWU Science Bldg, Room 301 (above the elephant desk). These meetings are open to the public and all Audubon members; please come and join in the discussions. Meetings adjourn by 6:00 or 6:30, after which we all go out for a sociable dinner ~ NO business discussion allowed!**

**Send in your stories & photos!**

*The Hooter is the newsletter of the Kittitas Audubon Society, published monthly except for July.*

Submissions  
from readers are most  
welcome and encouraged!

*The editor reserves the right to edit for space, grammar, and/or suitability. Email text and/or photos to [bob-cat@kvalley.com](mailto:bob-cat@kvalley.com) or snail mail to Jan Demorest, Hooter Editor, 712 E 2nd Ave, Ellensburg, WA 98926. Submissions need to be in by the 15th of the preceding month.*

**Concept Plan for City-to-Canyon Trails**

A small group of community partners and public land owners have been meeting over the course of two years with assistance from the National Park Service River and Trails program to create a concept plan for connecting local and regional trails to the Yakima Canyon. The Committee is now seeking comments on this Draft Concept Plan. We hope you will review the draft plan and share your thoughts and comments with us.



An approximately ten-mile-long route is proposed. It takes advantage of publicly owned parcels, as well as a trail section with cooperating private landowners. Eight distinct trail segments are recommended for connecting the north and south anchor points—John Wayne Pioneer Trail at Faust Road and Helen McCabe State Park, respectively-- with several local, regional and state recreation sites along the route. The City-to-Canyon Trails network will also provide a direct link to Ellensburg neighborhoods, the Central Business District, the Central Washington University campus, the John Wayne Pioneer Trailhead north of the County fairgrounds via the River to Rodeo Trail connection at Rotary Park, and to the John Wayne Pioneer Trailhead near Faust Road via the West Interchange retail area and neighborhoods.

The Draft Plan is available at <http://www.shapeupkc.org/> and at <http://www.ci.ellensburg.wa.us/forms/recreation/8.13.09DraftCity-to-CanyonTrailsPlan.pdf>. Copies are also available from Sarah Bedsaul, Shape Up Kittitas County, 962-7680, [sarahb@co.kittitas.wa.us](mailto:sarahb@co.kittitas.wa.us), or Brad Case, City of Ellensburg Parks and Recreation, 925-8639, [caseb@cityofellensburg.org](mailto:caseb@cityofellensburg.org). Comments and questions may be directed to either Sarah or Brad.

**GET YOUR HOOTER ONLINE**

*Save paper, printing, postage. If you would prefer to receive the electronic version, send your name, mailing address, & email address to:*  
[info@kittitasaudubon.org](mailto:info@kittitasaudubon.org)

*At the beginning of each month we'll send you an email with quick link to the new Hooter.*

**Third Saturday – Birding by the map.**

**September 19<sup>th</sup> 2009** Location #17: Swauk Discovery trail. The highlight of the drive up to the top of Blewett Pass was a fairly close view of a big 5-point bull elk. The hike around the trail gave us a beautiful, although breezy day, a lot of plant knowledge, a nice walk, and a reasonable if not overwhelming number of birds. It was a bit too breezy for the migrating raptors but the dependable Red-tailed Hawk and Turkey Vulture showed up, and a kestrel was spotted on a wire along the road on the way to the trail.

A Hermit Thrush gave us a good view, and we flushed a small covey of Ruffed Grouse. A couple of trees had the thin bell-like sound of kinglets but no amount of hunting, *phissing*, and impersonations of a Northern Pygmy Owl was able to bring them out.

The trail has a short loop and long loop. After I learned what birds Doug Keuhn found and photographed on the short loop, I wished I could have gone around both ways. There was a Townsend's Warbler at the summit and what sounded like a 10-foot tall woodpecker (turned out to be trees knocking together) on the long loop, but the short loop yielded Brown Creeper, Chestnut-backed Chickadees and a Black-backed Woodpecker.



*Cricket Webb & Marianne Gordon*

**Black-backed Woodpecker**

*Photo by Cricket Webb*

**Cle Elum Fish Hatchery – September 15<sup>th</sup> 2009**

The trip to the Yakama Nation Hatchery was a success before we even arrived! Being a chapter of the Audubon Society, we absolutely could not pass through the habitat around the hatchery without checking out the birds. We were well rewarded for our efforts. While we were searching for Pygmy Nuthatches (which we

never did find) we found White-breasted instead. This was a life bird for a couple of folks so we spent some time checking them out, but only until the Red-naped Sapsuckers flew behind them. Yes - plural, as in 3, who seemed to be keeping company with a Downy.

After we checked out the abandoned Pileated nest hole, the drivers went back to get the cars. There is a joke about the further you search for the rare bird, the more likely you are to find it sitting in the parking lot when you get back to the car. There were Western Bluebirds flying over our cars!

The hatchery itself is a marvel of modern technology, designed to insure the hatchery does not weaken or diminish the survival of wild salmon, while trying to increase the number of fish. It starts at Rosa Dam where all the salmon headed upstream are counted. Those that fit the criteria are captured and brought to the hatchery. Only a small percentage of the wild and hatchery-reared fish are captured, the rest pass through to spawn naturally. Each fish is tagged and numbered, and tested for diseases, virus and bacteria. The eggs are combined with at least 3 different batches of sperm to increase the genetic diversity.

The fry are kept in pens until ready to be released. To keep them safe, the pens are under nets. Since surface feeding teaches the fish to feed at the surface, they are fed underwater. Behavioral tests are done to track which are more aggressive: wild or hatchery-raised. Once they have matured, the fry are moved to three release sites where they are allowed to enter the river on their own schedule.

*Jeb Bald & Cricket Webb*

**First Saturday BirdWalk - September 5<sup>th</sup> 2009**

Diane and I were joined by Tuck Forsythe on this wet, cool morning. Apparently, those stout enough to brave the elements, chose to go to the Labor Day Rodeo parade. We identified 18 species as follows:

Mourning Dove, starling, Steller's Jay, flicker,  
 WW Peewee, robin, B-C Chickadee, Downey WP,  
**Cassin's Vireo (COOL!)**, Song Sparrow,  
 Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Canada Geese,  
 Magpie, raven, Belted Kingfisher,  
 American Coot, GB Heron, California Quail

We were unable to identify a duck. Conspicuous in their *absence* were the hawks. Thanks to Tuck for returning to the parking lot to check for readers of the Wednesday newspaper which had reported the wrong start time.

*Tom Gauron*

*Note: If anyone would like complete bird lists for these field trips, contact the leaders.*

**August 30th:** Hello Hal — Thanks so much for your inquiring into our 'bird' situation. I will ask our neighbors tomorrow where the NP ponds are as they moved here from Peoh Point a couple of years ago - sounds like a possibility for mr/miss cedar waxwing. I told you I didn't want to set him/her free until he/she was eating on it's own - well yesterday we had a big break through. My wife and I walk every morning and along our walking route there are a variety of wild berry bushes laden with berries. I picked a few small branches with berries from three different varieties and hung them from the top of the glass aquarium that is home for "Bird". Within seconds he/she was ripping and tearing at those berries. Had trouble at first freeing the berries but soon managed by grabbing a berry in its mouth and twisting and shaking its head. I had also been feeding water prior to each food feeding but that is not necessary anymore now either. I placed a shallow ceramic 4-inch dish with water in the bottom of the cage and he/she immediately found the water and jumped in and took a grand bath - splashing water everywhere. He/she would also drink between splashes. I changed out the water and cleaned the dish and he/she is drinking at will. We had a flying lesson, or I should say, he/she had a grand time flying around inside our garage before being caged for the night. So now that he/she is eating and drinking and flying we will hopefully find friends in the wild and turn him/her loose. I will let you know the end of the story - Hal, thanks for your help.  
*Bob (Berthelote)*

**September 5th:** I scouted the NP Ponds one evening last week for Cedar Waxwings and found a bunch. They were 70-90 feet up in the tops of dead snags, snagging insects before sundown. I had read up on the eating habits and most literature says that 90% of their diet is berries, so I thought that maybe early morning feeding would bring them down to earth and hit the berry bushes.

Two days ago I got up before the sun and headed for the ponds - with "Bird" coming along for the ride. Just before sunrise the resident birds were swooping down and feeding on a variety of berries. I figured this was the best option as my bird could be exposed to other waxwings and also have berries to eat. With "bird in hand" I got as near as I felt I could without scaring the feeding birds away and launched "bird in hand" in the direction of the feeding birds. "Bird out of hand" flew in the right direction a bit then did a 180 and flew over my head to a non-berry bush behind me. Being too high up in the bush for me to reach I had no choice but to stand and watch and wait.

"Bird in bush" now began to pick at leaves and hop from limb to limb, all the time viewing the new surroundings. After about 10 minutes of watching, my eye caught another waxwing that had come to visit. It landed in a bush about 10 feet away and then after a few seconds flew right over and landed next to "bird in bush". I don't know what transpired other than beak to beak and as quickly as "new bird" came, "new bird" flew back to the other birds that were feeding nearby. "Bird in bush" now moved low enough to allow me to reach with a long stick which "bird in bush" grabbed onto and I lowered him/her to my finger where he/she is used to exercise from. I put "bird on finger" into my hand and carried him/her over to the bush where the other waxwings were feeding. They proceeded to fly up into the dead snags as I approached but I figured they would return when I left. I put "bird in hand" on a limb where he/she could reach a cluster of berries - just for a starter I picked a couple which "Bird" proceeded to gobble. I said my goodbyes and walked back to the road and watched for a while longer. The resident waxwings returned to the bush to feed, so I will rest, believing that all's well that ends well! We will return to

the NP Ponds in a few days to watch the waxwings and who knows - maybe we will get to see an old friend?!?

Hal, thanks for your help and interest in our 'bird doin's - I appreciated it!

We spotted a pair of chickadees this morning while on our walk—fall must be coming.

*Bob (Berthelote)*

*(Thanks to Hal Lindstrom sending for this great story!)*



*Thoughts (from Gloria Baldi):*

- 1. Just so he knows, it is against the law to have a wild species in captivity--*
- 2. One option is to call Marnie who does have a license and knows how to rehab birds---856-6657. She may take it but her specialty is birds of prey. (If he does take it to her, he can make a donation as she is a 501(c)(3)--and would appreciate it.)*
- 3. We raised a starling once (not illegal) and we just let it free, offering it food whenever it begged. Eventually when the kids forgot to collect worms, they just had "Fred" follow them out to the field as they turned over clods of soil and he would rush in for the bug.. He came less and less so we figured he could find food on his own. (I know.....I know.....another starling, but it was a great learning experience. We have pictures of him flying to land on heads, tricycle handlebars for the ride, and squawking from the roof for food.) This may give Bob some suggestions. I would not just put it out with no food available. GB*

Aesop was quite the fable-teller, but was he a student of bird behavior as well? A study in *Current Biology* suggests he might have been.

Christopher Bird of the University of Cambridge and Nathan J. Emery of Queen Mary University of London report that rooks, a relative of the crow, are able to use stones to raise the level of water in a container so they can reach a floating worm. If that sounds familiar, it's because it's similar to Aesop's fable about the crow and the pitcher, in which a thirsty bird adds stones to raise the water level in a pitcher to drink from it.

Crows, rooks and other corvids are known for their tool use—using sticks as probes, for example, or fashioning hooks out of wire. Mr. Bird knew of the 1980's study in which a rook plugged a hole in its aviary to allow a pool of water to form. That led him to wonder if a corvid could do what is described in the fable.

They experimented with four captive rooks, presenting them with clear tubes partly filled with water with a bug floating on top, and piles of stones. Within a couple of trials the birds had figured out how many stones they needed to bring the bug within reach. "It was a remarkable combination of some understanding of the task with really rapid learning," Mr. Bird said.

Rooks don't use tools in the wild, because they don't need to—they have easy access to food like carrion. But in captivity, they can be presented with a situation like this, where it pays to figure out how to perform a task. "This fits nicely with Aesop's moral," Mr. Bird said, "that necessity is the mother of invention."

He suggested that Aesop may have seen similar behavior in a crow—or perhaps a rook. "In folklore all members of the corvid family are just called crow," he said. "So it might just as easily have been Aesop's rook."

*(from the New Yorker magazine)*

Go to the Cornell Website to view a great video of the rook performing this amazing task!

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/>



## "A Murder of Crows and Other Spooky Bird Tales"

(A murder is the name for a large group of crows)

**Enter now through October 31st**

Birds can be downright spooky sometimes. A European Starling flies at your head, thousands of crows roost in a downtown park, a pigeon takes over your balcony. With Halloween just a few weeks away, we want to see and hear spooky things about birds! We'll try to explain what's really going on with their puzzling behavior.

**Go outside and take a photo, do a painting, write a story or a poem, or even shoot a video showing crows, pigeons, starlings, an owl, or any kind of bird doing something strange. Great prizes: binocs, books, CDs, plush birds!!!!**  
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Visit [www.CelebrateUrbanBirds.org](http://www.CelebrateUrbanBirds.org) to learn more about the contest or email [urbanbirds@cornell.edu](mailto:urbanbirds@cornell.edu) for more information.



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Encyclopedia of Life

Here's a selection of recent listings from our very own regional "**BirdKitt**", an online "listserve" for all birders interested in bird sightings in Kittitas County.

If you are not already signed up, here's how to do it: send an email to [subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:subscribe@yahoogroups.com). Reply to the first email about Birdkitt that you receive from "yahoogroups". To unsubscribe: send email to birdkitt

- [unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com). If you have difficulty, email Beth Rogers [kittittasadudbon@inland.net](mailto:kittittasadudbon@inland.net) or Chris Caviezel [chris.caviezel@gmail.com](mailto:chris.caviezel@gmail.com)

Thanks to Beth Rogers and Cricket Webb for getting this up and running! This is a great resource for finding places to look for birds in the valley.

**9-11-09** Hi Birdkitts-- I was getting my nails done at 7 AM this morning in the building overlooking the west interchange pond off I-90 in Ellensburg. I have watched many species of birds utilize this pond (originally a freeway gravel pit). This morning there were several Double-crested Cormorants fishing in their half-submerged way, and I tried to explain uropygial glands and bone density to my manicurist to no avail (can you blame her?). But we're going on our annual Wyoming "speed goat" hunt soon

and I needed my nails to look good. Anyway, I noticed some Red-winged Blackbirds harassing what looked like a small Great Blue Heron, when it suddenly did a spectacular roll and flared out of their way, flashing beautiful snowy white wings. It headed south after evading its tormentors. I have only seen a few Great Egrets in the county over the last 20 years. Cool. We also had a new yard bird this month--a Townsend's Solitaire! I think this is number 94 or 95. It stayed in the yard for several days.

Downy Woodpeckers have been very busy in the willows, Cedar Waxwings enjoyed our ripe chokecherries, and there are still baby robins in the yard! Up in the hills north of our house last weekend, we saw large mixed flocks of Chipping Sparrows, goldfinches, & juncos, especially in disturbed areas where there were lots of thistles and other weeds. Cedar Waxwings were also prevalent. Deborah north of Kittitas on the Brick Mill Rd.

*Note: I got this photo from Deb in early September, two months after the Peregrine was here, but I thought you'd all want to see this beautiful raptor in our county!* Jan

**7-17-09 Peregrine Falcon!** Jan -- Sorry, I couldn't figure out how to attach to Birdkitt -- technically challenged you know. It was not there this morning when we drove down. It had a vertically streaky breast, so guessing it was an immature. I've only seen a couple in this county, always in late fall or winter. Maybe like the Bald Eagle, they're returning? A pair used to nest on the Columbia across from Vantage many years ago.

Deb



**Peregrine Falcon (immature)**

Photo by Deb Essman

**Name that bird!!!**



**Caption Contest!** Make up a caption for this photo and we will publish your submissions in the next Hooter!

I have a couple friends that use me as their bird book (field guide to birds!). Most recently I got a call to check out a picture sent earlier in the day and "did the bird need assistance?". It was Saturday of Labor Day weekend and it had been raining all day. The friend called and said there was a bird that had been perched on the roof of their shop all day long. It was wet and bedraggled but had

not moved except to shake itself off. She was worried that it was injured or sick. When I looked at the pictures she had sent I discovered she had a Common Nighthawk that had hung around for the day. By the time I called her back with the ID the bird was starting to move around more and preen in preparation for its evening flight. We will never know why it chose to roost on the exposed shop roof instead of one of the



nearby leafy trees where it might have been a little drier.

Submitted by Beth Rogers

Photos and story by Kat Satnik

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Membership!!!***

*The date on your mailing label should indicate your renewal date. If you feel this is not correct, please let us know when you last renewed and we will update the records. If you haven't renewed in a while, please consider doing so since KAS depends on your support to continue our programs and education and conservation projects, as well as publishing and mailing The Hooter. Thanks for your continued support!*

The Hooter is now printed on "Grays Harbor 100" paper ~ 100% post-consumer waste, manufactured in Washington State, using 100% renewable, zero-carbon-footprint energy.



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- \_\_\_\_\_ Renew National Audubon membership \$35
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Mail to: Kittitas Audubon, PO Box 1443, Ellensburg, WA 98926  
Checks payable to Kittitas Audubon

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Membership forms are also available on our Web site: [Kittitasaudubon.org](http://Kittitasaudubon.org).

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**Check out our website ~ see The Hooter in color at [Kittitasaudubon.org](http://Kittitasaudubon.org)**

## *Upcoming KAS Field Trips*

**October 3rd: *First Saturday BirdWalk*** at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park. The birds are moving out and new ones are moving in and through the area. Come join the search. Bring binocs, bird book and a friend. Dress for the weather! Meet at 8:00 AM at the bridge parking lot off Umtanum Road.

**October 17th: *Birding by the Map*** of Kittitas County site locations. On the third Saturday Cricket will lead a group to Site # 5, Hundley Road in the Upper County. This is a heavily wooded (big cottonwood trees) river bottom with interlinked wetlands and ponds. Warblers, kingfisher, woodpeckers, flycatchers, creepers, nuthatches will just get us started. Please make arrangements with Cricket at 509-674-4035 or Marianne at 509-964-2320.

**November 7th: *First Saturday BirdWalk*** - Irene Rinehart Park (see above).



*Come join us for these great field trips. See new places and new birds. Meet new folks. Rediscover old haunts and birds (and bird-ers) who've become old friends. All ages and birding levels welcomed enthusiastically. Good companionship and great birding!*

### **THANKS TO 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. Get your bird seed here!

*Kittitas Audubon Society*  
*P.O. Box 1443*  
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*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.*