



"Little Owl" ~ engraving by Albrecht Durer, 1508

The Hooter

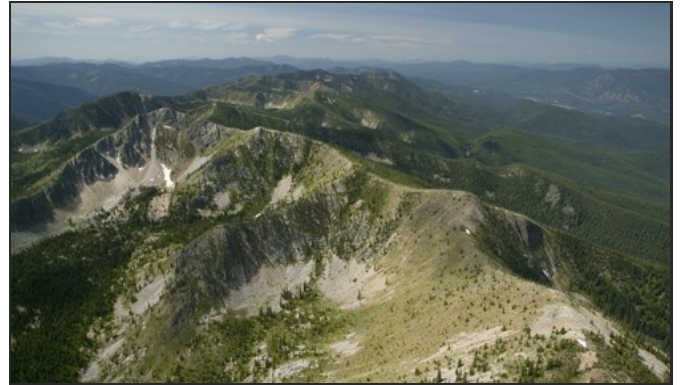
Kittitas Audubon

April 2011

Membership Meeting - Thursday, April 21st
@ 7:00 PM ~ Hal Holmes Center

"Columbia Highlands Conservation Initiative" **presented by Kit McGurn of Conservation Northwest**

Join the Kittitas Audubon and Conservation Northwest for a multimedia presentation that takes an informative look at one of the wildest and least visited parts of Washington State, the Columbia Highlands. This unique landscape in the northeastern corner of WA state hosts an array of native wildlife that still exist together like nowhere else in the U.S. outside of Alaska, from grizzly bear to caribou to the ghost-like Canada lynx and wolverine. Scientific research has identified the Columbia Highlands as an important habitat bridge for wildlife between the Cascade and Rocky Mountains, one that complements connected habitat running north and south through the Cascades.



Also learn about the innovative conservation efforts to protect key parts of this area that are based on years of collaboration and dialogue in north-eastern Washington and seek to balance wilderness, national recreation area, and national conservation area protections with working lands and restoration forest practices.

Kit McGurn is the outreach coordinator for Conservation Northwest. He works to educate and engage WA citizens on landscape and wildlife conservation issues in the Pacific Northwest in order to build demand for protection of the Northwest's unique ecosystems. Previously he worked for the Sierra Club in Seattle and for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition in Idaho on Western Wolf protection and Roadless area preservation.

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

May 19th: Reecer Creek Restoration Project (west of ball fields of West Ellensburg Park)

KAS BOARD MEMBERS

Co-Presidents – Gloria Baldi	933-1558
Gloria Lindstrom	925-1807
Vice President – Bud Rechterman	962-4508
Secretary – Jim Briggs	933-2231
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*Bluebird boxes – Jan Demorest	933-1179
Past President – Tom Gauron	933-2550
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*Christmas Bird Count – Phil Mattocks	962-2191
*Librarian - Ginger Jensen	925-5816
Social/Greeter – Kay Forsythe	925-2356

**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!

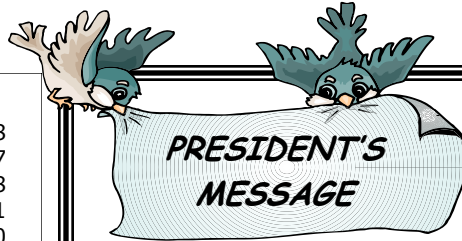
Send in your stories & photos!

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

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*~ Submissions from readers / members are most welcome and encouraged! ~*

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

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE****Recycling News!!!**

Recycling just got easier for some of us. People who live outside the city or city people who don't have curb-side pickup can now take all their recyclables to the Waste Management deposit area where North Wenas St. dead-ends at West 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave just before the caboose and old train depot.

It is now possible to recycle just about everything in one spot and you don't have to separate anything. Just toss everything together; glass, tin and aluminum cans, newspaper, mail, magazines, all cardboard, and plastics (bottles, tubs) with any number as long as it has the recycle emblem on them. No styrofoam items please\*.

The hours for recycling are limited. They are only open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00 to 2:00.

**Happy Recycling!** *Co-President, Gloria Lindstrom*

*\*Check Waste Management website for more detailed list of what is and IS NOT accepted. Here's a select list of "not accepted": plastic bags, plastic trays, plates, utensils, prescription vials (Vitamin bottles OK), aluminum foil or trays, light bulbs, window glass. NO LIDS of any kind.*

**Welcome New Members!****National:**

- ◆ Justin Gibbens & Renee Adams ~ Thorp
- ◆ Jim & Carol Pidduck ~ Ellensburg
- ◆ Janice Welch ~ Ellensburg
- ◆ Greg McLaughlin ~ Ellensburg

**Local:**

- ◆ Susan Merrill ~ Ellensburg

**Want to learn more about birds ?**

A CWU field ornithology class is scheduled for July 4th through August 12th. Jerry Scoville, a native of Eastern Oregon where a number of field trips are to occur, will be the instructor on campus. Check the next **Hooter** for more details.

**March's First Saturday BirdWalk** ~ Whoa --- it began gray, dark and cold in the mid 40's. I would have enjoyed remaining in my warm bed, but duty calls each month. We never know who will meet for the BirdWalk, and this day three new birdwatchers joined us for a total of twelve. Soon the sun appeared to brighten our day, although it was a slow day for birds as we spotted only 20 species. As usual, we did have some memorable events. First was the sighting of a new Red-tailed Hawk nest within the park. Second was the scope view of a female Hooded Merganser with perfect light to see all her subtle, but fantastic, color. The third event was the spotting of a Dipper where Reecer Creek flows into the Yakima, a busy little critter who let us watch as it found its lunch. A pleasant morning.

~ Gloria & Jeb Baldi

**SNOWY BIRDING ~ March 19, 2011** ~ First lesson for a field trip leader: check out your site before you go. And check the weather. With 4-6" of new snow in the upper county the birds were in hiding. ~ We thought we were going to be able to take the WDFW lane to the river from the end of Hundley Road. Not a chance. The lane was blocked with a big berm of snow. ~ Regroup. Figure where to go next.

Looking for another location, I was wandering around on the Google map and came across Lavender Lake. So that's where it is! Not at Bullfrog, not at Easton, but across the freeway from the end of the West Siding Road. The side nearest the freeway appears to be WDFW fishing access site but the far side is a private road to a number of homes. Even then there are possibilities for birds here, but not at this time of year or this weather.

Last resort: BN ponds in Cle Elum. There's always something there. Uh-uh. With a skiff of ice on the ponds even the ducks were in hiding. Driving along however, I shouted "Eagle!" "Where?" Our driver was looking across the pond where we nor-

mally see them. This beautiful mature Bald Eagle was right overhead on a big snag. Best bird of a very short day. We were home by 10:30.

~ Marianne Gordon

**Raptor Photo Field Trip or "Planning versus Serendipity"** ~ **March 26, 2011** ~

Sometimes the leader should listen to the attendees, particularly when no one shows up. Go back to bed! It was a cold miserable day with very flat light, snowing, blowing and what raptors that were around, were hiding in the trees. Raptor field trip was a complete bust. The best photo of the day was taken when I got home. ~ The moral of this short story is "always be prepared"; the best photos do not always come from careful planning. ~ Cricket

**Thanks to all Kittitas Audubon members who have led the First Saturday BirdWalk every month since October 2002, and to Steve Moore for his excellent record keeping. A total of 128 different species of birds have been seen at the Park. Did you know the total species count in Kittitas County is 260, while the count for Washington State is approximately 325? Therefore, over 1/3 of the State's birds have been seen in our park. Come and join us for a first Saturday in search of new bird species, as we spot the regulars that arrive annually with the seasons.**

Jeb



photo by Cricket Webb

## 5000 trees to pot for Reecer Creek!

Interested in preparing trees for habitat rejuvenation? In packs of 1000 at a time, bare-root stock will be transferred individually into pots for root development in time for fall planting at the site of the newly re-routed Reecer Creek just west of the ball fields at West Ellensburg Park. By the time the *Hooter* is in your hands the first 1000 will be potted, but there are 4000 left. Call Gloria Baldi at 933-1558 if you wish to be added to the list of volunteers. *Plant a tree!*



A few weeks ago, I wrote an article that ran in the Record, advocating for an awareness of unintended deaths of one of my favorite friends, the Ospreys. That alert was directed at those among us who open bales of hay and straw to feed and bed the cattle and horses of our busy valley. A problem arises since this makes available one of the Ospreys' favorite nest materials, the orange and blue plastic twine that binds the bales. On the Web you can Google "Osprey deaths and baling twine". You'll find more than a few reports of incidents where young birds have become ensnared in twine and died from strangulation and/or starvation--something like 675 references to this sad situation. You will also discover that this is more than a local problem; it exists nation-wide. This is unnecessary and totally preventable.

This little note is to solicit your help in asking your friends and neighbors to take positive steps to insure that old waste twine is disposed of so that this hazard is eliminated. These great birds are already on their way back north, likely to arrive within the next couple of weeks. Let's make sure they have a successful reproductive

season. **Help clean up the baling twine that might go astray!** ~ Bud Rechterman



photo by Cricket Webb

\*Editor's note: here's just one website that addresses the recycling of plastic baling twine: [http://www.progressivedairy.com/hg/features/2009/0309/0309\\_olsen\\_twine.html](http://www.progressivedairy.com/hg/features/2009/0309/0309_olsen_twine.html)

### *Grade School Birdwatchers of 1959*

I attended what was called Cascade Elementary School in Ellensburg for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. When the High School was built on East Third Avenue, the "old" High School was converted to an elementary school for all the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in Ellensburg. My 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher was Miss Ellen Munson and she was known among the students as the "bird lady". She was a long time birdwatcher and she made sure her class had an exposure to birding as well. Everyone in the class became a member of the Junior Audubon Society and had their red member pins. For some of us that initial introduction to birding stuck, and we still watch birds today because of Miss Munson.



Miss Ellen Munson 1959

The class would regularly take nature walks for recess and try to differentiate between Audubon Warblers and Myrtle Warblers. This was before they were considered variants of the same species. When we saw a low flying hawk with a white rump, it was a Marsh Hawk. I still have a hard time calling them Northern Harriers.

Every Monday morning we would report to Miss Munson what birds we saw over the weekend. She knew what birds to expect around Ellensburg so she sometimes had to correct our identifications. One spring Saturday, I took a trip to Yakima with Bryan Evenson and his mother and on our return trip to Ellensburg we saw a flock of Black-Necked Stilts just south of town. They were in a seasonal pond just north of the veterinarian's office that was located where the south Ellensburg freeway interchange is today. We were ecstatic since this was a new species for our life list. We were absolutely sure they were Black-Necked Stilts, but were afraid that Miss Munson would not trust our identification when we told her of our find on Monday morning. Bryan and I decided that we needed to tell her that Saturday, so we had Bryan's mother drive us to her apartment. We knocked on the door and told her what we saw. She said that they could not be Black-Necked Stilts, as she had never seen them in the valley. We convinced her to come with us to take a look for herself. As we approached the pond there were no stilts to be seen, but we waited by the side of the road for about five minutes and, sure enough, the Black-Necked Stilts came back to that pond. Our sighting was now "teacher-verified" by Miss Munson. On Monday morning she told the rest of the class what we had spotted that weekend!

~ Wayne Erickson

Many thanks to Wayne for responding to our call for volunteers for KAS with this great story!



Eagle Nest in Norfolk Botanical Garden, VA:  
<http://www.wvec.com/marketplace/microsite-content/Eagle-Cam.html>

Hummingbird nest in CA:  
<http://www.ustream.tv/hummingbirdnestcam>

Barn Owl nest box in  
 Oceanside, CA: <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/owlceanside>



*You may need to copy and paste these URLs , if you are viewing this online. These cams are fabulous! I spend too much time just watching these babies and their parents. Right now (Thursday 5 PM ~ 8 pm and getting dark in Norfolk) both eagle parents in the nest; male is eating from a catfish caught earlier. The female takes a tidbit from his beak and feeds one of the three hungry eaglets. Amazing to witness this!*

*Jan =^..^=*

## Birds and Wildlife Need You! Sign up for Audubon Action Network.



photo by Jan Denforest

The only way we'll be successful in our conservation efforts is with your help. All members in Washington are encouraged to sign up for Audubon's Action Network. Through the network, you will receive action alerts for both federal and state legislative issues. Get access to your lawmakers, local media, and inside information on issues impacting birds, other wildlife, and their habitats! All you need to do is fill out the form at the link below, which will automatically match you to your specific federal and state lawmakers, and give you full and free access to all of the options our AUDUBON ACTION CENTER has to offer. This information is confidential and will not be used for other purposes.

[http://www.audubonaction.org/site/Survey?ACTION\\_REQUIRED=URI\\_ACTION\\_USER\\_REQUESTS&SURVEY\\_ID=1341](http://www.audubonaction.org/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=1341)

**Helping is easy, won't take much time,  
 and most importantly, will go a very long way towards  
 protecting our wildlife!**

(You may need to copy and paste the URL above to access the website.)

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 [kittittasaudubon@inland.net](mailto:kittittasaudubon@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.

**3-10-11** ~ Spring is here? Just this morning three Killdeer checked out their old haunts in our front yard. They nested here last summer just before our moving in, so we are hoping they return. ~ jeb

**3-12-11** ~ We started the morning with a visit of 2 Red Crossbills at the feeder along with the usual complement of RB Nuthatches, Mountain and BC Chickadee, House Finch and juncos. There is a Spotted Towhee and Song Sparrow in the gully but they only show up on the deck when the snow is deep. And of course the Steller's Jays and a flicker.

It was a brisk walk out to get the mail this morning but very productive with spring arrivals.

First was the call of the robins. Saw several flocks at various locations along the way from the house down Danko and White to Airport Road and back. And of course the flocks of blackbirds also hanging out by the runoff puddles.

There were 3 killdeer calling and hanging out on the snowbank next to the mostly frozen runoff puddle in the field at the bottom of the hill. We see them here every year. Unfortunately, the farm has been approved for development, so probably not too much longer.

On the way back on Danko we found the Say's Phoebes. They have nested around a couple of the

houses here on the road for the last 2 or 3 years so it was nice to see the two of them back.

And to top it off there was a Western Bluebird sitting on the wind turbine this afternoon. ~ Beth and Craig just west of the Cle Elum Municipal Airport

**3-13-11** ~ Hi Birdkitts--They must have seen Beth's posting and knew it was okay to come, because in the sagebrush today going up Parke Creek we saw dozens of Western Bluebirds. Saturday at the top of the Beacon Ridge Road looking into the Quilomene was one lone Mountain Bluebird according to friends, and no sign of the Gyrfalcon. The Gyr must be headed back up north I guess. Killdeer have been here about 2 weeks--pretty pitiful last week standing on the side of the road in 2 inches of snow--they looked so forlorn. But today it just rained and lots of big fat worms were coming out in the lawn and pasture, so they looked happy to be here. Still lots of Bald Eagles in the valley, and a Prairie Falcon was on a pole on the Number 81 Rd Friday morning. ~ Deborah on the Brick Mill Road north of Kittitas

**3-21-11** ~ Hiking up the Ridge Trail along the edge of the pines, there were Western Bluebirds everywhere, some even checking out the new nestboxes that we helped Eagle Scout Ryan Johnson, place last spring. I'll keep an eye on them through nesting season! ~ Steve

Moore, Ellensburg proper

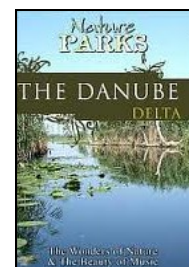
**3-23-11** ~ We've been graced with a female Varied Thrush almost every day for the past week. She pokes around in the old leaves we left in the flowerbeds, picking up leaves and tossing them away, then poking with her fine sharp beak in the exposed rotting material for tasty morsels. She also digs in the soft dirt with her beak, scattering the dirt aside to make sizeable holes where she finds more juicy bites. One day I saw a male lurking about, so maybe they are considering setting up housekeeping this spring, up in the woods in the foothills. What a treat to see her every day in her beautifully designed attire! ~ Jan Demorest a few blocks east of downtown E'burg

**3-24-11** ~ "Nest Watching made easy"...We have two Red-tailed Hawk nests and one Great Horned Owl nest out in our area. Directions: starting from the Denmark fire station at the corner of Sorenson and Denmark Road, go west 1/4 mile, the first nest is just 20 feet off the road on the right. One half mile further in the Poplar tree windbreak on the left, the Great Horned Owl has been on her nest for about a month; the Red-tails have a nest nearer the road slightly higher up. Stop just before the power pole for the best place to look. ~ Gerry & Marilyn Sorenson, on Sorenson Rd SE of town

## Canoeing the Danube River Delta in Rumania!!!!?

Would you like to explore the wetlands of the Danube Delta teeming with Eurasian-African migrating birds? In mid- to late September, the mosquitoes have given up and the weather is mild and balmy. If this piques your interest, contact Jud Weaver at [jweaver2@charter.net](mailto:jweaver2@charter.net)

*Jud says: "I envision our group camped on an island, grilling fresh caught pike over a campfire, while our guide softly serenades us with Romanian folk songs."*





**GET "THE 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**

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

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.



Check out the Grays Harbor Paper website at:  
<http://www.ghplp.com/index.html>

**Your KAS membership dues working for a better environment!**

*Let us know what you think!*

**BECOME A KITTITAS AUDUBON MEMBER!! (Or renew your membership)**

Receive The Hooter ~ help support education and conservation activities and projects!



Darling Bird Studios, ©2007 UNA

Two options are available:

**OPTION 1:** Membership in National Audubon includes a subscription to the magazine, *Audubon*, membership in the local chapter (KAS), and KAS monthly newsletter, *THE HOOTER*

- \_\_\_\_ Join as a new National Audubon member      \$20      (includes KAS membership)
- \_\_\_\_ Renew a National Audubon membership      \$35

Make check payable to: National Audubon Society    Include this form and mail to: Membership Data Center, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chapter Code COZY220Z

**OPTION 2:** Membership in only the local chapter, KAS, includes the monthly newsletter, *THE HOOTER*

- \_\_\_\_ Join the local Kittitas Audubon Society (KAS) chapter      \$20
- \_\_\_\_ Renew your KAS membership      \$20
- \_\_\_\_ Make a donation to KAS    \$\_\_\_\_\_ (amount)

Make check payable to KAS and mail to: KAS, P.O. Box 1443, Ellensburg, WA 98926

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**Would you like to receive The Hooter electronically?**

**Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No, prefer paper edition \_\_\_\_\_**

*Kittitas Audubon is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational society.  
 All memberships and donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.*

**Membership forms are also available on our Web site: Kittitasaudubon.org.**

For membership information contact Membership Chair, Tuck Forsythe ~ forsythe (at) fairpoint.net

**Check out our website ~ see The Hooter in COLOR at www.kittitasaudubon.org**

## *Upcoming KAS Field Trips*

### **April**

#### **Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> ~ First Saturday BirdWalk.**

Come join us at 8:00 am at the bridge parking lot at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park. Dress warmly for spring winds and bring binoculars. Uneven ground, about 2 to 3 hours. The BirdWalk is always open to the public. Gloria & Jeb

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> ~ Snow Mountain Ranch.** The ranch, purchased in 2005 by the Cowiche Canyon Conservancy, consists of 1800 acres of diverse habitat with open sage, riparian creek-side, and miles of trails. Spring comes earlier than in Ellensburg so we should see spring migrants (possibly Lewis' Woodpecker). call Jeb 933-1558.

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> ~ Third Saturday Birding by the Map.** Site # 2 John Wayne Trail @ Hyak; could see lots of hummers. Call Cricket (509-674-4035) or Marianne (509-964-2320) for details.

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> ~ Crab Creek & Columbia Basin.** A road trip for shore birds, ducks, and Burrowing Owls. One year over 70 species were tallied. Jo Ellen and Marianne. Please call Marianne (509-964-2320) for details.

### **May**

**1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> ~ Sunday to Wednesday ~ Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.** Four day trip; your chance to enjoy the spring migration in person with terns, gulls, ibis, shore birds, warblers, and maybe Sandhill Cranes. Space is limited so call Steve Moore (933-1179) for details and to sign up for this special event.

**7<sup>th</sup> Saturday ~ First Saturday BirdWalk –** Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park, 8:00 am, bridge parking lot. See above.

### **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*

*P.O. Box 1443*

*Ellensburg WA 98926*



*The Hooter - April 2011*

*The Newsletter of Kittitas Audubon - <http://www.kittitasaudubon.org>*