Monthly Programs will resume in September!
The Hooter will take a break in July. In the meantime, take a walk in the woods or the park or wherever you are. Join us for the First Saturday BirdWalks! And don’t forget your binoculars!

**Do You Know the Other Way Birds Migrate?**


Some species change locales by merely moving between higher and lower elevations. Here are four examples of altitudinal migrants in the U.S.

Birds are movers. Many embark on incredible, high-risk journeys to complete their lifecycles, from the 60-hour non-stop flights of the Blackpoll Warbler to the Pacific-Ocean-crossing Bar-tailed Godwit. But while some species are winging it to another continent, other birds raise their young, find food, and escape bad weather by moving down or up in elevation. This behavior—when species predictably change their elevation between their breeding and non-breeding territory—is known as altitudinal migration. These pilgrimages don’t span continents, but birds travelling to lower altitudes can still experience drastic changes to their environment, with important consequences for conservation.

In 2017, Alice Boyle, a Kansas State University ornithologist, made a list of every altitudinal migrant in North America. She found that 116 species in the United States and Canada qualify as altitudinal migrants in some portion of their range, most of them out west. She suspects that weather is the main factor behind altitudinal migration in North America, where mountaintops become frigid and inhospitable in winter.

Understanding these journeys is increasingly important because climate change threatens mountaintops. The common logic goes that when warmer temperatures creep up mountain slopes, montane habitats and the birds that rely on them will follow to stay cool. But because mountains only go so high, wildlife can only go so far before reaching the peak—at which point there’s nowhere else to go. There’s still little known about how altitudinal migrants might react to these changes, but Boyle is hopeful that her list will encourage future study about this little-known phenomenon to improve our ability to conserve altitudinal migrants.

To read the full article and see the few species we do know about, click the link above.

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**TOUCAN DO THIS!!**

KAS is looking for an enthusiastic individual to fill this board position:

**Publicity Chair**

Please email Judy Hallisey: hydrojude@gmail.com if you are interested.
Board Members

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Judy Hallisey ..........270.792.9188

VICE PRESIDENT
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*BLUEBIRD BOXES
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*SOCIAL GREETER
Kay Forsythe ..........509.925.2356

*CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT
Phil Mattocks

KAS Board Meetings are held at 4:30pm on the 1st Thursday of each month at the Methodist Church across from The Ellensburg Library. These meetings are open to the public and all Audubon members—please come and join in the discussions. Meetings adjourn by 6:00 or 6:30pm, then we all go out for a sociable dinner—NO business discussion allowed!

*Non-voting members

Board Notes

By Gloria Baldi

A summary of the May 2nd KAS Board meeting follows:

The month of May was the last month for printed copies of the Hooter to be sent to members who are only National Audubon members unless they notified the Hooter editor via email and paid the local dues of $20.00. Increased postage prompted an evaluation of Hooter mailings. If you are not receiving one (either printed or email) and believe you should be, please notify Kris Kaylor (kaylormade@me.com) or call 509-933-1558.

A $200 donation was sent with Board approval to the Dungeness Audubon Center for a remodeling and upgrade project. (If you are in the Sequim/Port Angeles area of Washington, the Center and its surrounding area is well worth a visit.)

KAS programs for 2019-20 are being scheduled. Although Lesley McGalliard has some speakers, any ideas you can give will be extremely appreciated.

Education activities have kept Steve Hall busy teaching birding to elementary school students during their weeks at Lazy F Ranch in the Manashtash Canyon. (He can still use more binoculars if you have a pair you no longer need. The goal is to have each student use a pair because of the added reward in viewing the detail of birds.)

Steve Moore and Jim Briggs are helping Judy Hallisey teach about birds to the Cle Elum Middle School students at their Bioblitz on May 30th.

Controlling suction dredging in WA State did not pass the Legislature this year, so next year will require a second effort. The Board voted to sign KAS on a letter of support to regulate such a destructive practice. Comments on the Wenas Shooting Area closed on May 16th.

Jan Demorest, Steve Moore, Gia and Gary Cummisk placed nine bird boxes for bluebirds, Kestrels and chickadees in Liberty at the request and donation of a private landowner.

Meghan Anderson has resigned as Publicity Chair. Are you one that may volunteer for the position? Meghan was also praised for her letter-to-the-editor regarding ‘Climate Science’.

Terms ‘climate crisis and environmental collapse’ are replacing ‘climate change’.

The protocol for KAS Facebook postings was discussed.

Diane Gauron is inventorying all KAS educational materials for use by individuals doing a presentation.

Next Board meeting is June 6th. Come join us.

Would you be willing to make a $25.00 donation for the Great Blue Heron pictured?

The art piece is 25 inches wide by 30.5 inches tall, is beautifully matted, framed, and ready to hang. It would be perfect for an entry or an office wall. Call 509-933-1558 for delivery anywhere in Kittitas County.
May 4th

1st Saturday BirdWalk

Report and Photos by Steve Moore

8 birders from Ellensburg, Roslyn and Easton had a perfect calm spring day for tallying 39 species of birds. It doesn’t get much better than this: 10 species before leaving the parking lot, and an accumulation of up to 6 species of warblers: Yellow, Yellow-rumped, good looks at Wilson’s and Nashville, and glimpses of what were probably Orange-crowned (parking lot trees) and Townsend’s (in a fir tree)! Also seen: Golden-crowned Kinglet (solo! – we’re used to seeing flocks); 3 species of wrens, cowbirds, waxwings, two each finches and swallows, and the likely song of a Warbling Vireo (“receiver-receipt”). And, Spotted Sandpipers and our usual kingfishers along the riverbank.

8:00am Saturday, June 1 and July 6—First Saturday BirdWalk, Irene Rinehart Park.

May 17th

Robinson Canyon

Report and Photos by Steve Moore

Six of us from Roslyn and Ellensburg spent 3 hours walking the woodland trail which follows the canyon high along the southern bank. The start of this trail has been camouflaged by last year’s selective logging, but greenery is coming up nicely through the skid trails. The weather was cool and overcast but the scheduled rain preceded our visit (only the boots got wet). A lot of the birding was by ear as the birds are settling in to nesting activities. The best visuals were of Western Tanagers, common in the trees; Lazuli Buntings, very vocal in the open areas; a Nashville Warbler; Chipping Sparrows mating in the trail; a flock of siskins; and a pair of Black-headed Grosbeaks scolding us with flutey call notes. Mainly heard were Yellow Warblers, below in the brush; a booming Sooty Grouse; nuthatches, a jay and a flicker, and the question-and-answer singsong of a Cassin’s Vireo. Distant views of Redtails, a kestrel, and an accipiter rounded out a list of about 22 species.
The American Kestrel

Submitted by Gloria Baldi

“America’s Smallest Falcon is Getting Smaller” by Lauren Chambliss is the title of an article in the latest Cornell Lab of Ornithology Living Bird magazine. Data indicates that not only has this colorful and fierce little falcon decreased in population by fifty percent, it has also shrunk in body size. Scientists do not know why, nor do they know if the affecting factors are on breeding or wintering grounds, or during migration. They cite the usual possibilities of habitat loss, exposure to pesticides, climate change, less food (decline of insects), fewer nesting spots, and increased predation by hawks. The areas of the highest population decline are also the areas where the Kestrels have the most body shrinkage.

Because of the plight of the Kestrel, a citizen-science effort is a great way to add to the data. It is probably too late this year to erect a box and attract a pair of Kestrels, but for those of you who already have a box, or know of a Kestrel pair nesting, reporting the success is encouraged to provide scientists with important data to help fuel Kestrel conservation. Find out more through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s Nestwatch program (nestwatch.org). This is one more opportunity to help birds!

April 2019

Contagious Moods Among Ravens?

Ravens are known to be problem solvers. A new study suggests that moods—at least, bad moods—may be “contagious”. See the article by Carolyn Gramling in the 20 May 2019 issue (updated online) of Science News at https://tinyurl.com/y588nym6. The article includes a link to the original peer-reviewed research in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, by Jessie Adriaense of the University of Vienna and colleagues.

Mark Your Calendars!

3rd Sundays • April-July • 9-11 am Feel the Burn Guided Hike Series at Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park: Participants will search for wildflowers, regenerating plants, birds and signs of other wildlife after three fires burned through the park last year. Attend one or all the hikes to see changes over the seasons. Be a citizen scientist—help us collect information and learn! Meet at the Backcountry Trailhead located off Vantage Highway, ½ mile down Recreation Drive. Bring wind-proof layers and sturdy hiking shoes.

June

1st • Sat. • First Saturday BirdWalk. Irene Rinehart Park. Meet at 8am at Irene Rinehart riverside parking lot off Umptanum Road for a 3 hour walk. Breeding birds have arrived and are noisily nesting and raising families.

16th • Sun. • 9-11am • Feel the Burn #3: Impacts of Fire on Shrubs, Birds and Other Life. What happens to sage and other shrubs after a burn? Does loss of canopy impact other life?

July

July 21 • Sun. • 9-11am • Feel the Burn #4: Survival on Fire-Scarred Lands. Explore how plants and animals survive fire and semi-desert conditions in the shrub-steppe.

The mission of Kittitas Audubon is to develop an appreciation of nature through education and conservation, with a focus on birds.
Recently, I went to West Richland to visit family, and my cousin asked if we had seen the Pelicans on our trip down. We hadn’t, so she offered to take me for a short drive. WOW! I wasn’t prepared for what was in front of us! Too many to count, breeding, non-breeding, riding the waves of the water. What an amazing site! Along with Pelicans, we saw Seagulls, Cormorants and Cliff Swallows. —K. Kaylor

The following information is borrowed from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

**Basic Description**

One of the largest North American birds, the American White Pelican is majestic in the air. The birds soar with incredible steadiness on broad, white-and-black wings. Their large heads and huge, heavy bills give them a prehistoric look. On the water they dip their pouched bills to scoop up fish, or tip-up like an oversized dabbling duck. Sometimes, groups of pelicans work together to herd fish into the shallows for easy feeding. Look for them on inland lakes in summer and near coastlines in winter.

**Cool Facts:**

- **In *A Sand County Almanac***, pioneering conservationist Aldo Leopold described a migrating group of American White Pelicans this way: “Let a squadron of southbound pelicans but feel a lift of prairie breeze…and they sense at once that here is a landing in the geological past, a refuge from that most relentless of aggressors, the future. With queer antediluvian grunts they set wing, descending in majestic spirals to the welcoming wastes of a bygone age.”

- **American White Pelicans** cooperate when feeding. Sometimes, large groups gather in wetlands. They coordinate their swimming to drive schooling fish toward the shallows. The pelicans can then easily scoop up these corralled fish from the water.

- **American White Pelicans** must provide roughly 150 pounds of food to nourish a chick from its birth to the time it’s ready to forage on its own.

- Contrary to cartoon portrayals and common misconceptions, pelicans never carry food in their bill pouches. They use them to scoop up food but swallow their catch before flying off.

- Pelicans are skillful food thieves. They steal from other pelicans trying to swallow large fish and are successful about one-third of the time. They also try to steal prey from Double-crested Cormorants that are bringing fish to the surface. In their dense nesting colonies, some birds even steal the food that a parent on an adjacent nest has disgorged for its young. They forage almost exclusively by day on their wintering grounds, but during breeding season, they commonly forage at night. Even though it’s hard to see, nighttime foraging tends to result in larger fish being caught than during the daytime.

- Pelican chicks can crawl by 1 to 2 weeks of age. By 3 weeks they can walk with their body off the ground and can swim as soon as they can get to water. Older chicks move up to running, then running with flapping their wings, and by the age of 9 to 10 weeks, they can fly.

- **American White Pelicans and Double-crested Cormorants** are often found together. They sometimes forage together (though they mainly hunt different fish and at different depths). Cormorants even nest individually or in groups within pelican colonies.

- Pelicans are big birds that can overheat when they’re out in the hot sun. They shed heat by facing away from the sun and flapping their bill pouches—which contain many blood vessels to let body heat escape. Incubating parents may also stretch their wings wide to aid cooling.

- **American White Pelican** embryos squawk before hatching to express discomfort if conditions get too hot or cold.

- The oldest known American White Pelican was at least 23 years, 6 months old, and was banded in North Dakota in 1983.
Styrofoam: a Promising Development?

Think of to-go coffee cups, take-out/leftover boxes at restaurants, “packing peanuts”, cheap ice chests, insulation, and a host of other uses. Now remember that styrofoam is made from petroleum, we can’t compost it, and burning it releases toxic gases. But it’s cheap, lightweight, and convenient. Some proposed alternatives have been more expensive or not as good at insulating.

A bright spot on the research front: scientists at Washington State University have developed a plant-based, environmentally-friendly foam that may have real promise. See the 9 May 2019 WSU Insider article by Tina at https://tinyurl.com/y5fektux. The original, peer-reviewed research will appear in the 15 Aug 2019 issue of the journal Carbohydrate Polymers, to which a link appears in the Hilding article.

Fudging the Numbers


Breeding birds

Several studies have indicated that our warming planet is causing a shift in avian breeding habits: earlier Spring weather, earlier egg-laying. Most of those studies focussed on birds with animal-based diets. Now Washington State University avian physiologist Heather Watts and colleagues have data that suggest earlier timing may be true for birds with plant-based diets, in particular House Finches. It’s not yet clear if this is a threat, but it’s one more thing to keep in mind. See the Jessica Tir article in the 19 Dec 2018 issue of WSU Insider at https://tinyurl.com/y3jblf8s.

GOT BINOULARS?

Consider donating a pair (or more) to KAS for their education programs with school classes and local organizations. Contact our Education Chair, Steve Hall for more info. (See page 2)
## Membership Form

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- **NEW** Membership  
- **RENEWING** Membership

### Membership Options:
- KAS Individual $20
- Family $30

### Premium Memberships:
- Bluebird $50
- Kestrel $75
- Hawk $100
- Lifetime Individual $300
- Lifetime Family $500

- **Make a Charitable Donation:** (Please enter dollar amount)
  - Scholarship Fund $______
  - Nest Boxes $______
  - Education $______
  - General $______

Your generous donation to a specific project is symbolic. Kittitas Audubon is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, serving the communities of Kittitas County, Washington. Go to [kittitasaudubon.org](http://kittitasaudubon.org) for more information. KAS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

Please indicate membership preferences below:

- **YES** I want to “Go Green” by receiving the Hooter newsletter **online only**
- **YES** I wish to receive occasional emails related to Audubon activities

May we print your name in the Hooter to acknowledge your membership/donation?  
- Yes  
- No

- **GIVE THE GIFT OF KITTITAS AUDUBON!**
  Please send gift recipient’s name, address, email, and phone to address below.

Please make checks payable to:
Kittitas Audubon Society  
PO Box 1443  
Ellensburg WA 98926

**THANK YOU!**

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### GET “THE HOOTER” ONLINE

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

Each month, we’ll send you an email with a link to the new Hooter.

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### INTERESTED IN BIRD BOXES?

Hand-crafted Bluebird, Kestrel, and Barn Owl Boxes by Tom Gauron
Please contact Tom at 509.968.3175 for more information.
Mark Your Calendars!

First Saturday BirdWalks
Irene Rinehart Park on Umptanum Road at 8 AM for a 3-hour walk

June 1st and July 6th
Breeding birds have arrived and are noisily nesting and raising families. Jan and Steve lead; 509-933-1179.

Field Trip
June 14th, Friday ~ Bullfrog Pond and Tumble Creek, Roslyn area.
Join the Suncadia walking group on their home turf for Cle Elum riverbank and eastside forest birding. We meet at Super One parking lot, west end, at 8 AM and drive to Bullfrog Pond first, then walk trails upriver from the Tumble Creek community. 509-933-1179 for info.

Board Meetings
Meet at 4:30pm at the Methodist Church on the corner of 3rd and Ruby
June 6th
July: email/phone
General Meetings will resume in September.
Enjoy your summer!