

Calliope Crier

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society is people dedicated to the enjoyment and preservation of the natural world. Through birding, education and conservation activities in our community,

Volume 34, Number 3

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

March 2005

AUDUBON CALENDAR

Mar 24 Chapter Meeting at 7:00 pm at the Yakima Area Arboretum.

Apr 12 Board Meeting at Larry and Doris Robinson's, 430 Clover Springs Road in the Nile (658-2918).

Field Trips

Mar 19 Wahluke Slope and White Bluffs — meet leader Scott Downes (469-7807) at the K-Mart parking lot at **7:00 a.m.** for an all-day trip to a very under-birded area.

Mar 26 Bluebird Box Cleanout — meet leader Richard Repp at **9:00 am** at the end of the pavement on North Wenas Road. Bring work gloves and a scrapper. **Potluck lunch afterwards — all chapter members invited!!!**

Apr 9 Satus WRA — meet the group at **7:30 am** at the Valley Mall IHOP parking lot, then meet leader Gunter Hadersberger in Granger at **8:00 am**.

Apr 13 Wednesday Morning Birdwalk — meet the group at the Poppoff Nature Trail parking lot at the east end of Valley Mall Blvd. at **8:00 am** for a two-hour stroll along the Yakima Greenway.

Apr 23 Columbia Gorge/Lyle — meet leader Denny Granstrand (453-2500) at the Valley Mall IHOP at **7:00 am** for this all-day trip.

Apr 27 Wednesday Morning Birdwalk—SPORTSMAN STATE PARK— meet the group at the duck pond just inside the main entrance on Keys Road at **8:00 am**. parking in the park will be free for that trip.

Other Activities

Spring ACOW — Ellensburg, Apr 8-10. See article on page 8.

Mountain Quail released near Asotin

The small and declining population of Mountain Quail in the Blue Mountains has been augmented by the release of 73 Mountain Quail from Oregon. The Washington State DFWD supervised the release, which happened on March 12 near Asotin.

More information on this release can be found on the Internet at:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/do/mar05/mar1505a.htm>

MARCH PROGRAM

Using Spectrograms to identify bird songs and calls

with Arch McCallum

Most birders are visual learners, but during the breeding season land birds are much more likely to be heard than seen. For those of us who have to relearn songs and call every year, a visual aid to remembering the hundreds of song-types and call-types, the spectrogram is the tool to use.

This program will show you how spectrograms represent different qualities of sound (e.g., nasal, harsh, sweet, pure), and how to use them to remember sounds by the way they look.

Arch McCallum is an ornithologist who has worked as an interpretative naturalist and college professor, and is now a conservation-oriented bioacoustics consultant working out of Eugene. His current work includes projects on the Breeding Bird Survey in Maryland, management of the Tricolored Blackbird in California, and individual recognition of Bonin Petrels in Hawaii, all based on bird sounds.

What's inside the Crier this month...

| | |
|---|------|
| President's Report | 2 |
| New and Renewing Members | 2 |
| Conservation Committee Report | 3 |
| Hoeger Preserve 2005 Task List | 3 |
| Field Trips | 4 |
| Bird Sightings | 4, 5 |
| Vredenburg Bluebird Trail Cleanout Invitation | 6 |
| "Backyard Birding" Class a Success | 6 |
| Lola Bartol, First YVAS President | 7 |
| Spruce Grouse Status Update | 7 |
| Spring ACOW | 8 |
| Merri Asks, Andy Answers | 9 |
| Beginning Birding Class, May 14 | 10 |
| Membership Application | 11 |

Visit the Yakima Valley Audubon Society Website at: <http://www.yakimaaudubon.org>

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



As all of you know, the Yakima Valley Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society (NAS). Historically, there has been a strong relationship between NAS and chapters. In 2001, NAS tried to implement changes in this relationship with a myriad of proposals. One that caused serious concern to many chapters was the change in how membership dues collected by NAS would be distributed to the chapters. This policy was implemented and resulted in much reduced payments to chapters.

At numerous board meetings over the past four years, discussion of this issue cropped up. Each time, I listened in astonishment of NAS continued efforts to undermine their long relationship with chapters. The strong and negative reaction from chapters resulted in NAS forming the Ad Hoc Chapter Committee to reexamine the policy changes. In 2004, the Committee released their recommendations and input was solicited from chapters. The core of the Ad Hoc recommendations was a relationship shifting from a Chapter-National interface to one of Chapter-State office interface, with most activity, help and revenue, determined at the state level rather than national. Chapters had many concerns about this shift, 143 of them submitted formal comments to the Committee. The details of these recommendations can be found at: www.audubon.org/local/cso/adhoccom/.

The NAS Board of Directors heard and thoroughly discussed the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Chapter Committee. In February, the Board reaffirmed the tremendous value of Chapters as partners in our shared conservation mission and the Board's support for strengthening, empowering and investing in the Audubon Grassroots Network. "Chapters are an essential part of the conservation work of Audubon, and enhancing the Chapter relationship is critical," said Board Chair Carol Browner.

Based on the discussion, specific direction was given to the NAS Planning and Finance and Conservation Committees for the Fiscal year 2006 budget process. The Finance Committee was directed to maintain baseline funding at the FY2005 level (approximately \$875000.00) as a predictable source of revenue for Chapters, and to provide increased collaborative funding for conservation programs of 20% over FY05 funding (approximately \$175000.00). Priorities and allocation of new collaborative funds to Chapters are to be determined through consultation between the Chapters and State Programs or Chapter Services in each state. Chapters and State Programs are also encouraged to work together to seek additional new funding from local and state sources through joint fundraising.

(continued in next column)

NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Welcome new YVAS Members:

Prosser: Timothy King
Yakima: Rosemary James

Thank You for renewing your YVAS Membership:

Selah: Gus & Mary Pooler
Yakima: Agnes Badgley, Charlotte Pfeiffer, Richard Repp, Bill & Edith Ryan

Please note that the above membership renewals are for Yakima Valley Audubon membership. Renewals to National Audubon are separate and are not listed here.

— Bob Wahl —

Bring on those cookies!

The two kind ladies who have signed up to be cookie bakers for the March 24 meeting are Donna Homer and La Vonne Benner. Remember to bring at least three dozen each, especially since we only had 2 sign up. Please, more of you SIGN UP! You eat the cookies; you can take turns bringing them! It puts a heavier load on the two who signed up, which isn't fair (also that means fewer cookies for you if by chance there are less than anticipated). Are we going to have to go to cookie-rationing if sign-ups don't improve? Everyone will get one cookie. Are you scared yet? Just remember that threat when the list comes your way next meeting!

And now a praise report. Thank you all who do bring cookies (they are always good!), & thanks for setting out the mugs etc. while waiting for tardy ole me to show up! I liken myself to the Alice in Wonderland bunny who looks at his watch & shouts in panic "I'm late! I'm late! I'm late!". Mostly I am; I write it off to "old" age!

Good spring birding to you!

— Connie Hughes —

What does this mean to the Yakima Valley Audubon Society. Our annual "safety net" payment from NAS over the past two years has been about \$1000. This is an important component of our revenue stream.

I am very pleased to see NAS, at its board meeting in Florida in early February, unanimously endorsed resumed support for chapters, including increased funding and development of a supplemental fund, earmarked specifically for conservation projects.

Your Yakima Valley Audubon Board is committed to continue working with NAS and the Washington State Office, in a relationship that helps achieve our conservation and educational missions. It is heart warming to see that NAS is finally listening to the chapters!

— Andy Stepniewski —

CONSERVATION

Important Issues being discussed by the Conservation Committee

Submitted by Leslie Wahl

Hoeger Preserve – An outline is presented with a list of tasks for the year. Scotch thistle eradication begins as early as April depending on the weather. We will do a preliminary survey Sunday, March 13th to check for garbage dumping and weeds. The Noxious Weed Board provides herbicide grants for those who prefer to spray for Scotch Thistle. We are attempting to control the Scotch thistle with bi-weekly weed digging in lieu of spraying. It will take an effort over several years in order to control and eventually eradicate our small areas on the northwestern boundary and the northern terminus of the large draw along the military fence line.

Recycling – The Citizen's group is meeting again on April 5, 2005, 9:30 am, hosted by the Restore and chaired by Loretta Zammarchi from Yakima County Solid Waste Division. The proposed agenda for the meeting will be announced closer to the meeting. Sage Park, Dept of Ecology has provided some contacts for other cities currently operating with mandatory recycling programs. The group is open for attendance from any interested parties throughout the Yakima Valley. If anyone is interested, please contact Leslie Wahl at 509-453-9182 for details.

Critical Areas Ordinance and Shoreline Master Plan Update – All's quiet on the CAO front for now. The County sent out copies of the Preston Shepard CAO proposal, I assume at taxpayer's expense. I will try to get an update on the process from Ryan Hopkins, Public Outreach Planner with Yakima County.

Sub-Basin Planning Board – The March 9th meeting was cancelled. They will be sending out a briefing sheet next week with a synopsis of the March 2 workshop, and an update on where they are in the stakeholders' meetings.

Important Bird Areas Update – There likely will be an update at the Spring ACOW on the progress being made on the IBA toolkits for chapters. Tim Cullinan usually has an update for the group on new listings.

Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee – The next meeting is Friday, April 8, 1:30-4:30 at the Kittitas County Fairgrounds in Ellensburg. The draft agenda for the meeting is not out yet. We should have any agenda items to Heath Packard by March 21st.

Audubon Washington Doings – Check out the website a www.wa.audubon.org for updates on all current state office activities including the Bird's eye View that is posted in its entirety at no charge. Since the legislature is now in session, this is a busy time for state staff who is tracking proposed legislation in both the House and Senate. The Hot Lists are out for the week of March 7th.

If anyone is interested in Audubon's position on a particular bill, please contact Leslie Wahl at 452-9183.

Wenas Hazel Wolf Sanctuary – We received an email request from Helen Engle for a presentation at either the WSACC Conservation Committee meeting or the full council at the ACOW April 8th-10th. She is looking for assistance with a large map of the area and information regarding the goals of Audubon for the protection/preservation of the area.

HOEGER PRESERVE 2005 TASK LIST

MARCH – Visit property – survey for garbage dumping, scotch thistle. Arrange for a garbage pickup crew if there is a need.

APRIL – Begin bi-weekly scotch thistle cutting depending on the weather conditions and the progress of the germination.

MAY – Continue weed cutting on a bi-weekly basis. Research and make a board request for signage on the western access road.

JUNE – Continue weed cutting. Install sign (with YVAS board approval).

AUGUST – Property visit for garbage patrol.

OCTOBER – Final visit for the year for garbage patrol.

Please contact Bob and Leslie Wahl if you would like to help on any of these activities (rewahl@televar.com).

LOCAL FIELD TRIPS

Please call the leader before the trip to let him/her know you are interested in going. That way, if plans need to be changed, he/she can call you. Also, if no one calls, the leader will know to cancel the field trip and won't be sitting around at the meeting place all alone! Be sure to wear clothing appropriate for the weather and take lunch, snacks and beverages. Also please make a contribution to the driver for gas when you carpool. Contribution should be 15 cents per mile divided by number of people in car, including the



- Mar 19 Wahluke Slope and White Bluffs** — meet leader Scott Downes (469-7807 or downess@charter.net) at the K-Mart parking lot at **7:00 a.m.** for an all-day trip to a very under-birded area. Scott has been visiting these areas regularly and has generated a great bird list. This is the first YVAS trip to this area for many years. If you haven't seen the White Bluffs, you need to go on this trip. It is a spectacle and destination point in itself!
- Mar 26 Sage Grouse lek tour on the Yakima Training Center.** Prior sign-up mandatory! Phone Andy Stepniewski (877-6639 or 949-7404, or steppie@nwinform.net) by **March 1**. This trip is booked up. If you have signed up to go and can't make it, please call Andy to cancel. Other people are very interested in taking your place. If you are signed up and will be going, you will have a great time.
- Mar 26 Bluebird Box Cleanout** — meet leader Richard Repp (965-1134 or Rich712@aol.com) at **9:00 a.m.** at the end of the pavement on North Wenas Road to get your boxes assigned. Bring work gloves, a scrapper and something to share for the potluck lunch. All chapter members are invited for the potluck. If you can't make it for the clean-out activities, you are still encouraged to drive up for lunch. For additional information, see the announcement elsewhere in this Crier. By bringing a folding camp stool, chair, and/or table, you will double your pleasure at the potluck.
- Apr 9 Satus Wildlife Area** — meet the group at the Valley Mall IHOP parking lot at **7:30 am** and carpool to Granger to meet leader Gunter Hadersberger at **8:00 am**. This trip starts off spring birding, so expect to see lots of newly arrived migrants. The Yakama Nation has been doing an incredible job of restoring the habitat in the Satus WRA and it is showing the fruits of their labors in the numbers of birds that are seen there.
- Apr 13 Wednesday Morning Birdwalk** — meet the group at the Poppoff Nature Trail parking lot at the east end of Valley Mall Blvd. at **8:00 am** for a two-hour stroll along the Yakima Greenway.
- Apr 27 Wednesday Morning Bird Walk — Sportsman State Park** — meet leader Richard Repp (965-1134) at **8:00 am** at the duck pond — first parking area to the right beyond the entry gate. The \$5.00 entrance fee has been WAVED for this trip. This is a chance to explore new trails in a familiar park.

BIRD SIGHTINGS



While a military march is mandatory ambulation, the past 30 days has found many members electing to migrate to points far and near. And the call of spring has been heard everywhere.

Bob and Leslie Wahl accompanied Bob and Maia Mittelstaedt to Todos Santos on the Baja California.

At the Hotel California there, they drank in several Xanthus Hummingbirds sipping refreshments from multiple feeders. Urban legend has it that the 1970s hit song "Hotel California" by the Eagles (song was Golden, the singers are now Bald) was inspired by this very inn. As a denizen of the valley floor, I'm not exactly sure where that location exists on maps. As the Xanthus measures 3 1/2 inches, I'll wager that they traveled the longest distance to see the shortest bird featured in this month's column.

George and Susan Vlahakis flew the county to visit southwestern states and discovered them to be decked out with visual blazers such as Northern Cardinals, Vermillion Flycatcher, and Elegant Trogon.

Flocks of valley birders descended on the Spokane Valley

home of Al and Anne Sherrodd for views of a Cape May Warbler that lingered for weeks. As a residual bonus, Denny Granstrand toughed out Kittitas County's first Tufted Duck when he returned to verify Vantage's Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches. This touched off another mass migration of local birders intent on viewing a duck that could be described as a consanguineous Greater Scaup with a ponytail sculpted by Donald Trump's personal hair stylist.

Betsy and Michael Martin only had to travel as far as Mabton to make me swoon with over 50 Tundra Swans and

(Bird Sightings continued on page 5)



*Elegant Trogon
Photo by George Vlahakis*

Bird Sightings (continued from page 4)

30 American White Pelicans be along the Yakima River. A follow up visit by John Hebert added 25 Greater White-fronted Geese and 300 Cackling Geese in a flock of 750 geese.



Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
Photo by Denny Granstrand

Fortunately as gas prices soar, local venues prove to anything but a bore. Denny tickled Tieton's French's Canyon for Pygmy Nut-

hatches, White-breasted Nuthatches, and three

Bushtits traveling in a mixed flock of foragers. Phelps Freeborn dauntlessly dominated the endemic domain of the Basalt Daisy at the eastbound I-82 Selah Creek rest stop. While not everyone's bed of roses, Phelps cultivated the dark cliffs for a Prairie Falcon aerie and several Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches.

At the Nile Valley home of Doris and Larry Robinson, March burst with blossoms of Killdeer, Say's Phoebe, and Western Bluebirds. In their grove of locust trees, Larry's home-brew suet continues to be an intoxicating attraction for White-headed Woodpeckers. Jeff Kozma's early March march to the Nile Burn above the Robinsons tapped into a plethora of peckers of wood.



Long-eared Owl
Photo by Mac Knight

Playing taps in earnest were two White-headed and two Hairy Woodpeckers being challenged by the resonant raps of six Williamson's Sapsuckers.

A pair of Red-tailed Hawks has rebuilt the nest that fell victim to a windstorm last year at the Konnowac Pass home of Debie Brown. With spring in the air, eggs are sure to follow in the nest. A bit to the north at the east end of Mieras Road, Scott Ray has been hearing the hoots of Long-eared Owls. Scott suspects they roost in the sumac grove that is just north

of the Yakima Training Center fence along the Hoeger Property.

Andy Stepniewski's morning constitutional hike up Rattlesnake Ridge has featured amendments by singing Western Meadowlarks in mid-February, the territorial antics of paired Chukars, and an aerial analysis of the avoirdupois and length differences of a soaring Golden Eagle and a hazing Common Raven. Mike Roper's March 5th raptor field trip bore witness to a flip flop of sorts when a Bald Eagle purloined prey in mid-air from a riled Raven. Teenaged Tyler Munson served notice on that trip that he has eyes of/for diurnal raptors with his quick spots of Prairie Falcon and distant eagles.

March has become synonymous with Sandhill Cranes in Othello. Closer to home, Bob Fay was treated to a baker's dozen of these majestic omnivores feeding in corn stubble near Basin City.

By providing water for drinking and bathing, we enhance our chances of attracting species that frequently eschew our offerings of seed and suet. A dozen Cedar Waxwings lined up for a feather cleansing dip in a bird bath just eight feet outside the Sun Country Estates home of Judy and Richard Dezarn March 5.



Cedar Waxwing
Photo by George Vlahakis

The Mountain Chickadee that was first noted on Nov 19 by my wife, Eloisa, visiting our home feeders has made sporadic appearances...last seen on March 10. While not above pilfering black oil sunflower seeds, it seems to have developed a fondness for chunky Skippy peanut butter...served up straight in one of Larry's custom designed suet feeders. To my surprise, I recently caught a Song Sparrow making several quick sorties to sample said butter. I'm having difficulty explaining the surge of Skippy sales to Eloisa. I point to the birds but she eyes my burgeoning waistline.

If you have internet access, I suggest you visit the web pages of our trio of talented photographers. Many of the birds mentioned in this column now reside among the multitude of images displayed. You will find a link on the YVAS website. But remember to set aside a little time to get out in the fresh air to view the avian action live!

Please e-mail me with your sightings at Rich712@aol.com or phone me at 965-1134.

— Richard Repp —

VREDENBURGH BLUEBIRD TRAIL CLEAN-OUT INVITATION

It's spring and once again, volunteers are needed to clean out nest boxes and pick up trash along the Vredenburg Bluebird Trail. We will meet at the end of the pavement on North Wenas Road (where it intersects Audubon Road) at 9:00 a.m. on March 26. Be sure to wear sturdy shoes, bring gloves and, if you have them, a putty knife or old ice scraper, and a screwdriver. Garbage bags and some cleaning tools will be supplied.

After the clean out we will meet at the Umtanum Falls Trailhead parking lot (between Box 71 & Box 72) for a potluck lunch. **This year, we would like to extend a warm invitation to the potluck to members with an interest in bluebirds but who are unable to assist in the actual cleanout.** Please come and visit with friends old and new. The potluck itself should start close to noon.

In past years, the potluck has been fantastic. However, if you want to notify me of the dish you intend to bring, perhaps duplication could be avoided. Contact Richard Repp with questions at 965-1134 or Rich712@aol.com.



This sweet Mrs. Mountain Bluebird needs some help getting her favorite nest box ready for this years young-uns.

Photo by Mac Knight

"Backyard Birding" Class a Success

Yakima Valley Audubon put on a "Birds in Your Backyard" event for beginning birders March 12, sponsored by the Yakima Area Arboretum. This class featured birding basics and birds Yakima residents can expect in their yards. I started the class off with a slideshow on "Backyard Birds in Yakima," with technology ably overseen by Mac Knight. Denny Granstrand did a tutorial on binoculars and scopes, then went on to explain field guides. Larry Robinson had a very nice display of bird feeders, including all the various types. Larry also featured an impressive collection of bird nest boxes. Wow! I never knew there were so many types!

Jeff Kozma finished the inside class with an excellent discussion on "Plantings in your yard for birds," in other words, creating habitat. He prepared an excellent spreadsheet including the common trees, shrubs, ground covers, and perennials important for bird food and cover. We went outside afterwards where Merri Knight shared her spotting scope, allowing the "students" to study a Great Blue Heron, which was fishing in the pond, and a pair each of Wood Ducks, American Wigeons, and Canada Geese. It was great viewing, right outside the arboretum back door.

Thanks all who helped make this class a success. And, thank you to the Yakima Area Arboretum, which gave us this fine opportunity.

— Andy Stepniewski —

Lola Bartol, YVAS Charter Member, passed away at age 80

Lola Kirbyson Bartol of Yakima, WA, born August 23, 1924, in Portland OR, passed away on February 26, 2005, at the Landmark Care Center.

Mrs. Bartol was a charter member of the Yakima Valley Audubon Society and was its first president.

She was also an avid tennis player and was a charter

member of the Yakima Tennis Club. She was nationally-ranked in women's 70 (that's years-old) Singles in 1994 and 1995, in addition to Women's 75 Singles in 1999.

Lola Bartol is survived by her husband of 55 years, Donald C. Bartol, DMD, of Yakima and one daughter, Cynthia K. and her husband John J. Chuta of Bellevue, WA.

Sage Grouse Status Update From Andy Stepniewski



Greater Sage Grouse displaying
Photo by Andy Dantzker

I am a member of the Sage Grouse Working Group. This panel is a group composed of biologists from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Yakama Nation, The Nature Conservancy, US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Washington State Parks, and concerned members from the public such as the Audubon Society, and Washington Cattlemen's Association. This group is interested in conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse. We met in Toppenish on March 1. This meeting updated us all on actions underway aimed at conserving populations and habitat for the grouse, a cornerstone species of the shrub-steppe habitat in the Columbia Basin.

One major project discussed was the translocation of 25 female grouse from Nevada areas to the Yakima Training Center (YTC) in order to infuse more genetic diversity into the declining and "inbred" population on the Yakima-area installation. The first release took place last year in spring. Radio tags were fitted on all the translocated grouse. Because the birds could be tracked, biologists knew their location at all times. They found 12 birds wandered to shrub-steppe off the YTC at least once and five of the mortalities occurred "off-post." Of the 25 birds released, 12 have died, 9 initiated nesting, four of these were successful, but there are no surviving chicks. Another translocation effort is planned for this year.

Another major project underway is reintroduction of grouse

onto the Yakama Indian Reservation, planned for this fall. A detailed mapping project of a portion of the reservation, done over the past two years, shows a large (160,000 acres) area of suitable grouse habitat exists in the Mule Dry Creek drainage. This large, unfragmented parcel of shrub-steppe lies on the north flank of the Horse Heaven Hills. Pine Springs, within this large area, was the area where grouse were last noted before they disappeared many decades ago. Along with release of grouse onto the reservation this fall, removal of 75-100 wild horses, which degrade the quality of the habitat, is planned. Future releases are also planned, along with rehabilitation of shrub-steppe. Long-term goals of this project include swapping birds with the YTC to improve genetics of both populations, rehabilitation of the degraded shrub-steppe west of US-97, and further control of the wild horse population.

Other projects underway by the working group include assigning formal conservation priority status to the Douglas County Conservation Reserve Program (USDA) lands that now host about 600 birds, or 60% of the Washington population of Greater Sage-Grouse.

USFWS biologists at the Hanford National Monument are watching their shrub-steppe revegetate after the 2000 fire that burned much of the suitable sagelands there. They are especially focused on habitat quality of the new growth and tackling control of weedy invasives which are pervasive on low elevation areas there.

We also talked about the recent decision by the USFWS not to list the grouse as an endangered species. Colin Leingang, biologist at the YTC stated the US Army would most likely not be as proactive in conservation of grouse and their habitat if they're not mandated to do so, "that's the reality."

Large fires have occurred on high quality grouse habitat on the YTC during the past two summers. I voiced this concern and asked for advice from the group on how to eliminate use of live fire by the US Army during the summer drought. I was told to contact the base commander at both the YTC and Fort Lewis. Fortunately, the present YTC base commander seems to be concerned about grouse and their habitat, so Audubon has an opportunity to try and effect meaningful dialogue in this regard. The working group acknowledged conservation groups like Audubon were in a better position to seek changes in the way the US Army deals with the issue of live fire in summer than agency personnel. Yakima Audubon will be involved in this process!

— Andy Stepniewski —

SPRING ACOW 2005
Kittitas Valley: Cascades to the Columbia
April 8th through 10th
Hosted by Kittitas Audubon Society

Ellensburg, located in the heart of the Kittitas Valley with the Cascades Mountains to the west and the Columbia River to the east, is the site for the Spring ACOW 2005 (Audubon Council of Washington).

Friday begins with registration and meetings of both the Conservation Leaders (1:30) and the Chapter Education Chairs (2:30). Dinner will be "on your own". Our evening program features Gaylord Mink sharing his videos of local "Fish-eating Birds". Following the program, we will end the evening with a social hour of talk, libations and a bit of food.

Saturday dawns early with a Continental Breakfast. We'll pick up our lunches and head for our birding destinations. Jeb Baldi has several birding spots planned. Saturday afternoon will feature: I-90 SNOQUALMIE PASS PROJECT AND WILDLIFE CROSSINGS, a shared presentation by Patty Garvey-Darda, Cle Elm Forest District Biologist and Randy Giles, WSDOT project Engineer. The I-90 project will determine the level of wildlife connectivity for over 260 species for the next half century and provide safer passage for motorists. Also featured: PROJECT CAT Gary Koehler, Wildlife Research Scientist and students from the Cle Elum-Roslyn Schools will present Project CAT. Project CAT (Cougars & Teaching) is an ongoing partnership program between the WDFW and the Cle Elum-Roslyn School District involving students, K-12, and teachers. Saturday evening will begin with dinner, followed by Ken Bevis, a Yakima Valley Audubon member and Wildlife Biologist for the WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife. His program will be: "Spotted Owls and other small challenges for the 21st Century".

Sunday begins with a Continental Breakfast. Morning session is planned by the Audubon Washington Staff followed by Chapter reports and special reports.

See you all in Ellensburg!

Contacts for the conference are:

Kittitasaudubon.org

Gloria Lindstrom, co-chair (509) 925-1807

woodlind@charter.net

Gloria Baldi, co-chair (509) 933-1558

baldi@kvalley.com.

PROFILES

(Editor's note: This is the tenth in the series of Profiles about currently active Audubon members. Previous ones: Repp, Kinney, Robinsons, Granstrand, Hebert, Brown, Turley, Wahls, Knights.)

(Profiler's note: This is the tenth profile of current YVAS members. For the others, each person chose the next one. With Andy Stepniewski a clear choice for this one, "The Crier" instead asked Merri Knight, profiled last month, to pose the questions for him.)

Merri Asks, Andy Answers

Merri: *Are you going to try to beat John's record this year?*

Andy (firmly): No, that competition takes a lot of time from normal living. I would have had to start in January, and I didn't.

Andy (thinking aloud): Locally, we need more youth involvement. National should quit messing with the chapters and recognize that they are the broad base of the organization. But National does lobby very effectively.

Merri: *Who or what got you interested in birding? How old were you?*

Andy (reminiscing): I started on my own—at 11 or 12—as a Boy Scout in Southern California, learning to identify trees. I still have my 1965 "Native Trees of Southern California"—..here it is. That put me on the road to science and it wasn't difficult to go on to other things. In 1966 I began to learn about habitat, from dry chaparral to mountains, in country similar to our Cascades. I also began to learn about ecological concepts which are so important.

Merri: *What local conservation project would make the biggest impact on birding in Yakima County? (positive, negative?)*

Andy (firmly again): Take the Nature Conservancy recommendations on the Training Center and implement them.

Merri: *How many species are on your life list? How important are such lists?*

Andy (seriously): I've never counted them. It's not my goal to have a big list, but I do keep journals for every trip I make. Here's my very first journal, from July 1968 in Sequoia National Park and the drawing that I made that I thought was a rough-legged hawk.... but turned out to be an immature red tail! I'm more interested in habitat—for birds, plants and animals, and the quality of that habitat.

Merri: *What keeps you interested in birding after so many years?*

Andy (thoughtfully): Habitat. In any place that has natural habitat I find enjoyment of birds, trees, flowers, geology and the landscape. Especially places that I can get to by hiking.

Merri: *What are some of the changes you've seen in birding?*

Andy (quickly): Three major ones. One: it's easier to learn bird identifications. Field guides now put texts, pictures, maps on one page. For instance, here's my original Peterson. It doesn't even have maps! Two: birding is more popular, not just retired people. Three: birding is more competitive, especially with the focus on finding rare birds, which aren't part of the natural scene. But I must admit that I burn up a lot of gas looking for them, most of which are way, way lost!

Merri: *How many states, countries and continents have you birded?*

Andy: I've sampled all the major regions of the United States, west, mid-west, northeast, southeast, and Alaska and Hawaii. I have a special love for the mountains in the north countries, the Yukon, British Columbia, Alaska. Continents? Every one but Antarctica. . . when it's summer there, it's winter here and my busiest time. Maybe when I retire. . .

And a final question from me: How did you decide to write "The Birds of Yakima County, Washington"?

Andy explains he started to do annotated lists of birds—pre-computer days—and found material dating back to 1885 in journals at CWU, UW, and state Fish and Wildlife Archives in Olympia. "I stacked up enough papers to fill an apple box," he admits, "and one thing led to another." The first printing of 1000 sold out and the second one of 1000 is available in local and regional bookstores.

Merri: *Where would you like to bird that you haven't been and what bird would you seek?*

Andy (hopefully): Southern Mexico in the mountains, El Triunfo, a wilderness trip, hiking in. The quetzal, which I've seen in Guatemala but would like to see in Mexico.

And for you who haven't seen Andy's own habitat: a small library/office with six-foot high book shelves, one section for flowers, trees, geology, natural sciences, and the other two for a couple of hundred birding books from everywhere Andy's been and hopes to go.

Merri: *What species should be added to the endangered list that hasn't been protected yet?*

Andy (emphatically): Our own backyard Sage Grouse. There is a diminishing population on the Yakima Training Center and it's in grave risk of disappearing.

And notice his screen saver, reflecting diverse images: hiking scenes, landscapes, apple boxes from Windy Point Orchards and mostly birds, prominent among them that "elusive ptarmigan".

Merri: *What should change in local or national Audubon?*

— Jeanne Crawford —

Beginning Bird Class May 14

You can learn more about the basics of bird identification in a class scheduled for May 14 at Toppenish National Wildlife Headquarters. This class will feature Jeff Kozma, biologist with the Yakama Nation, with assistance from Mac and Merri Knight, Richard Repp, Larry Robinison, and Kerry Turley. Refuge Manager Howard Browers will provide the venue and cover in case of inclement weather. Ellen Stepniewski will be coordinating refreshments.

The class will begin Indoors at the brand new refuge headquarters, There, you will be introduced to the use of binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, and an overview of bird communities by habitat. Then you'll go outside and visit each of the major habitats found in the refuge: 1—marsh and ponds, 2—creekside riparian vegetation, and 3—dry country shrub-steppe. This class is scheduled for the time in spring when the refuge is alive with colorful water, shore, and land birds. Ken Bevis, WDFW biologist, calls it the "Serengeti of Washington." At the end of the class, you'll prepare a list of the birds you've observed and discussion will follow.

The class will begin at 7:30AM at refuge headquarters and end at about 2 PM.

The fee for the class is \$10 for YVAS local members and \$25 for non-member, which includes membership in the Yakima Valley Audubon Society. The class size will be limited. Participants should bring binoculars, a bird identification guide, lunch, and drinks. Mid-morning snacks and beverages will be offered.

To register, e-mail Andy Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net) and state you wish to sign-up or leave a message at the YVAS phone number (509-248-1963).

Bequests To Our Chapter

bequest (bi-kwest'), n.

1. A disposition of assets by will.; 2. A legacy;
3. A gift in your will to protect birds, wildlife, and habitat.

As a member of the Yakima Valley Audubon Society, you have helped protect birds and the natural environment with your support. Now, help shape the future by including a gift to Audubon in your will. Bequests may be made directly to our local Audubon chapter or to Audubon Washington (the state office).

Sample language for your attorney:

I bequest to the National Audubon Society., a not-for-profit corporation with its principal offices located at 700 Broadway, New York, NY 10003, the sum of \$_____ (or _____% of my estate). This gift is applied 100% to the permanent endowment of _____ (name your local Audubon chapter or Audubon Washington,) or specify _____% for both.

For further information contact: Leslie Wahl at 452-9183 or e-mail her at: rewahl@televar.com.

Use the following form for membership in the Yakima Valley Audubon Society. A separate membership is required for the National Audubon Society. Please use the form sent to you for renewal of your National Audubon Society membership. Current membership will be honored until their expiration date. At the time of the renewal of your National Audubon Society membership you will need to send in a membership to the Yakima Valley Audubon Society in order to continue to receive the *Calliope Crier* and other local membership benefits.

YVAS MEMBERSHIP

Join or renew your annual membership to the Yakima Valley Audubon Society to receive ten issues of the *Calliope Crier* and all chapter membership benefits. National Audubon membership and *Audubon Magazine* are not included with your YVAS membership.

Yakima Valley Audubon Membership \$25

Yakima Valley Audubon Senior (62+)/Student Membership\$15

I do not wish to receive any solicitation or communications from NAS (please check if applicable)

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please make your check payable to: **Yakima Valley Audubon Society**

First time members can use the following form for an introductory membership that includes membership in **both** the Yakima Valley Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society. You will be assigned to your local chapter when you join National Audubon. Please use this form so that Yakima Valley Audubon will receive the full first year dues. After the first year, a separate membership renewal will be required for the Yakima Valley Audubon Society or for you to continue to receive the *Calliope Crier*. After the first year, you will need to use the renewal form sent to you by the National Audubon Society to renew your membership with the National Audubon Society.

INTRODUCTORY NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

New members receive membership in the National Audubon Society and the Yakima Valley Audubon Society for the first year with a combined introductory membership. You will receive ten issues of the *Calliope Crier* and four issues of *Audubon magazine*.

Introductory Membership\$20

Introductory Senior (62+)/Student Rate\$15

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please make your check payable to: **National Audubon Society**

Y09-7XCH

Send the form and your check to :

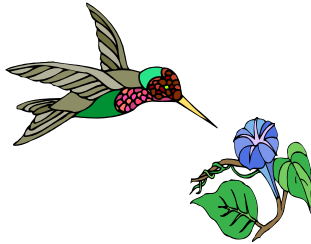
YVAS Membership
P.O. Box 2823
Yakima, WA 98907-2823

If you have any questions, please call Bob Wahl at 452-9281.

Yakima Valley Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2823
Yakima, WA 98907

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Yakima, WA
Permit No. 38

Return Service Requested



*Check your label—
has your membership expired?*

 printed on 50% post-consumer recycled paper

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society meets on the fourth Thursday of January, February, March, April, May, August, September, and October at 7 pm at the Yakima Area Arboretum, located at 1401 Arboretum Drive, Yakima, WA. Guests are welcome at these meetings. The Annual Meeting of the Society is held the first Thursday of December at 6 pm. The Board of Directors meets each month **except** December at 7 pm at locations announced in the *Calliope Crier*. Members may attend Board meetings; however, please notify the host because of possible space restrictions.

2005 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|----------|----------------------------------|---|----------|
| President | Andy Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net) | 877-6639 | Revenue | Dan Kinney (insur3@charter.net) | 452-3260 |
| Vice President | John Hebert (jhebert8235@charter.net) | 965-8235 | Special Committees: | | |
| Secretary | Vera Backstrom (mw_327@msn.com) | 653-1174 | Audubon Refuge Keeper | Kerry Turley (kdturley@bentonrea.com) | 837-6930 |
| Treasurer | Ellen Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net) | 877-6639 | Bird Reports | Richard Repp (Rich712@aolcom) | 965-1134 |
| Directors: | Bill Drenguis (DRENGUIS@aol.com) | 965-5808 | Bluebird Trail | Bettie Soden (sponsorship records) | 453-8185 |
| | David Hartwig (hartwigwest@msn.com) | 453-4099 | | Richard Repp (trail maintenance) | 965-1134 |
| | Richard Repp (Rich712@aolcom) | 965-1134 | Courtesy Important Bird Areas | vacant John Hebert jhebert@nwinfo.net | 965-8235 |
| Committee Chairpersons: | | | Social/ Bird Rehabilitator | Connie Hughes (CHbirdlady@msn.com) | 457-5661 |
| Conservation | open | | Volunteer Recognition | vacant | |
| Crier Editor | Denny Granstrand (dgranstrand@charter.net) | 453-2500 | Webmaster | Mac Knight (mac_knight@charter.net) | 457-6410 |
| Education | open | | Website | www.yakimaaudubon.org | |
| Field Trips | Larry Robinson (laris430@yahoo.com) | 658-2918 | Toppenish CBC | Andy Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net) | 877-6639 |
| Membership | Bob Wahl (rewahl@televar.com) | 452-9183 | Yakima Valley CBC | Denny Granstrand (dgranstrand@charter.net) | 453-2500 |
| Program | Mac Knight (mac_knight@charter.net) | 457-6410 | Yakima Valley Audubon Voice Mail | | 248-1963 |