



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, we raise awareness and promote the cause of global environmental

Volume 33, Number 10 A Chapter of the National Audubon Society November/December 2004

AUDUBON CALENDAR

- Dec 2 Christmas Banquet and Silent Auction at 6:00 pm** at the Yakima Area Arboretum.
Jan 14 Board Meeting at Dan Kinney's, 207 Santa Rosa Drive in Terrace Heights, 452-3260 at 7:00 pm.

Field Trips

- Dec 4 Arboretum Sparrow Patch "Bit Sit"** — join Richard Repp at the sparrow patch from **9-11 am**. Brush up your sparrow ID skills for:
Dec 18 Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count — meet the group at Yakima Sportsman's State Park at **7:00 am**. Contact Denny Granstrand (453-2500 or dgranstrand@charter.net) for more info.
Dec 19 Toppenish NWR Christmas Bird Count — meet the group at the Branding Iron Restaurant in Toppenish for breakfast at **7:00 am**. Contact Andy Stepniewski (877-6639 or steppie@nwinfo.net) for more info.
Jan 2 Arboretum Sparrow Patch "Big Sit" — join Richard Repp at the sparrow patch from **9-11 am**.

Other Chapter Activities

- Jan 8 Field Trip Planning Meeting and Potluck Lunch** at Larry and Doris Robinson's at 430 Clover Springs Rod in the Nile. Help plan the new year's field trip schedule.

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DECEMBER PROGRAM

Birds of Botswana with Bill Drenguis

Our own Bill Drenguis recently traveled to Botswana on a "camera safari" to travel the country and take photos of wildlife. Bill recently replaced his 35 mm camera with a Canon 300D digital, along with a new 100-400 mm lens and a 1.4x adaptor. This gave him some good range for wildlife pictures and the wonderful ability of the lens to apply its image stabilization features to minimize camera movement.

Botswana is in the middle of the Kalahari Desert. Even so, it has huge wetlands, with an amazing variety of wildlife. Bill will be showing photos from his trip, concentrating on the birds found in the Botswana wetlands.

Join us on December 2 at the annual meeting to see Bill's slideshow. This program will provide an opportunity to see birds that you may have never seen and to discuss them with someone who has first-hand experience. See you there!

9TH ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION

It's getting to be that time again – Holiday potluck and silent auction! Last year the auction brought in \$953.50. Let's beat that this year and try to pass the record set in 2001 of \$1,062.50!

When you have items you wish to contribute to this year's auction, please contact me (evenings, home 697-8144; cell phone 307-4939). Proceeds from the auction go to support our chapter.

As you're out and about, and especially if you're visiting a bird-y store, think about what you could donate to the auction. Services are another wonderful idea – food or even meals, weeding and pruning, guided bird walks are all well received. Use your imagination and have fun with this auction (but please no white elephants)!

Let me know as soon as possible what it is you're donating for the auction and whether or not you'd like a minimum bid and how much that would be. You can bring the items with you to the Arboretum on Thursday, December 2 between 5 and 5:30 (bidding begins at 6 pm and we need to have everything set up beforehand) or arrange to get them to me ahead of time.

— Maia Middlestat —

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Happy Holidays to you all! December is the month the Yakima Valley Audubon Society celebrates the holiday season and the close of another exciting year. The first event is on December 2 when the chapter's annual dinner and silent auction will be held. Plan to arrive at 6:00 pm at the Yakima Area Arboretum. For the pre-dinner silent auction, contact Maia Mittelstaedt (965-9220) to arrange and list your items. This is a

potluck dinner. Bring your own place setting and please bring a dish sufficient for eight fellow members. Fresh ham will be provided by the chapter. Following this sumptuous dinner, our own Bill Drenguis will present a show on his recent trip to Botswana in southern Africa. This is sure to be an exciting presentation, during which, you'll visit some of Africa's game parks, famous for their large mammals, but also an exciting part of the world to study birds. A superb variety of large and colorful birds reside in southern Africa, many of which are easy to see.

The Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count is the perfect way to spend December 18. Join one of 12 teams that will cover a selected part of the long-established 15-mile count circle. Everyone who enjoys birds is welcome, regardless of skill level. If you are a beginner, other members of your team will be willing to share their knowledge and enthusiasm. After the count, the teams meet at Debie Brown's home on Konnowac Pass to warm up, tally the birds seen, recount the days events, and enjoy a potluck dinner. Denny Granstrand is the leader for this event. To sign up, call or e-mail him: 453-2500, dgranstrand@charter.net.

December 19, the Toppenish NWR Christmas Count will be held. Seven to eight teams cover another 15-mile diameter circle in the Lower Valley. Again, you don't have to be an expert, just interested in the beautiful world of birds. The same warm up refuge, blow-by-blow tally, and potluck dinner will be at our home in Parker Heights. I will be organizer for this count. Please contact me if you are interested in participating: 877-6639 or steppie@nwinfo.net.

I hope to see each and every one of you at one or all these December events!

— Andy Stepniewski —

Christmas Idea For Young Birders

Owl Moon by Jane Yolen and John Schoenherr is a delightfully written and wonderfully illustrated book for children for Christmas.

Among the greatest charms of children is their ability to view a simple activity as a magical adventure. Such as a walk in the woods late at night. Jane Yolen captures this wonderment in a book whose charm rises from its simplicity. "It was late one winter night, long past my bedtime, when Pa and I went owling." The two walked through the woods with nothing but hope and each other in a journey that will fascinate many a child. John Schoenherr's illustrations help bring richness to the countryside adventure. The book won the 1988 Caldecott Medal.

NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Thank You for renewing your YVAS Membership

Grandview: Janet White
 Naches: Vera Backstrom
 Tieton: Sandra Wasson
 Toppenish: James Hansen
 Yakima: Grace Anderson, Joyce Dennison, Charles DeJournette, John Hebert, Kay Marsh, Elaine Pigion, Ron Sell and Linda Knutson, Getha Tidrick, Elizabeth Thomas, Bob & Leslie Wahl

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 —

Christmas Banquet and Silent Auction December 2 at the Yakima Area Arboretum

Our annual Christmas Banquet and Silent Auction will be Thursday, December 2, at the Yakima Area Arboretum, with dinner being served at 6:30. Those who have signed up to decorate a table can come at 5:30 to decorate (or later if you work). There are still have three vacant tables, so if you didn't sign up but would like to decorate a table, please call me to reserve one. Most tables are round, with some oblong, so get there early to get your pick.

Try to bring your food by 6:00 so you have time to visit and browse the silent auction. We will have entertainment by Matthew Knight playing keyboard.

Remember to bring your own table service (plates, cups, silverware, & a serving tool for your potluck item, with your name on it. Bring the food by 6 or 6:15 so we have time to set up the buffet table, and keep hot foods hot, etc. while you attend the auction.

If you're a member who hasn't been coming, this is a great time to come get re-acquainted with some wonderful people, enjoy a great meal, and maybe pick up a real treasure at the auction.

Potluck food assignments are as follows for the first letter of your last name: **A-G vegetable, fruit, or side dish; H-P salad &/or bread & butter; Q-Z dessert;** . Auduboners love to eat so you should bring a dish that will serve at least 12-14 people. If your dish can't be readily identified, please provide a title for it and a list of ingredients if possible (for those with allergies). We will be providing ham. Wine will be available for purchase by the glass or bottle. There will be coffee, water for tea, punch and lemonade.

Our members are our Christmas treasure, always provide beautiful table décor and cook wonderful food. Thank you all for all the years you've come through, for all of us. Let's do it again!

If you have questions, please call me at 457-5661 or e-mail chbirdlady@msn.com.

— Connie Hughes —

CONSERVATION

Some Enviros Optimistic, Others Fear Bush's Second Term

Not surprisingly, President Bush has thus far failed to mention the environment in discussions about his second-term agenda. But even though the White House will be focusing primarily on foreign policy and domestic economic issues, some environmentalists are optimistic that the administration will work to leave an environmental legacy to be proud of during its second term.

"We hope the President's conciliatory and unifying words in his acceptance speech signal a new willingness to meet us halfway on key conservation issues," says Rodger Schlickeisen of Defenders of Wildlife. "We remain vigilant as ever but are hopeful that we can make some meaningful progress in Bush's second term." Defenders of Wildlife is particularly concerned about the rollback of the Clinton-era national forest "roadless" rule, efforts to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling, and waning protections for endangered species.

Fred Krupp of Environmental Defense says that Bush's re-election "offers an opportunity to make progress on a series of vital issues that need rapid positive action." Krupp points to global warming, clean air, and the protection of oceans as key issues in which the Bush administration has opportunities to make lasting change. Environmental Defense hopes to put its long history of bipartisan problem-solving to work in helping the White House to come around on these issues and others.

Meanwhile, other environmentalists are taking a more defensive stance. "As sweeping as this administration's attack on the environment has been, things are about to get worse," says NRDC president John Adams, who vows to fight Bush administration plans to further loosen regulations on factory emissions and water quality standards.

Kieran Suckling of the Center for Biological Diversity worries that the Bush administration will join forces with the Republican majority in Congress to launch an unprecedented assault on endangered species protections. "Bush has already placed fewer species on the Endangered Species List than any president since the act was passed," says Suckling, who frets that the combination of a Republican majority in Congress and "a president as anti-environmental as Bush" could lead to the passage of scores of anti-environmental laws over the next few years.

But, in an interesting turn of events, perhaps the environmental silver lining of the 2004 election lies in the fact that President Bush considers himself a "Reagan Republican." During the 1980s, Ronald Reagan's disastrous environmental policies inspired millions of Americans to take matters into their own hands when it came to protecting their land, air, water and wildlife. Membership levels at environmental groups swelled to unprecedented levels, and when Bill Clinton took office he enjoyed widespread public support for his pro-environmental initiatives.

Indeed, what might make W a green hero in the end is his very opposition to many of the federal environmental policies initiated by his predecessor, and the outrage it stirs among a public looking to preserve the quality of the environment it has inherited.

CONTACTS: Defenders of Wildlife, (202) 682-9400, <http://www.defenders.org>; Environmental Defense, (212) 505-2100, <http://www.environmentaldefense.org>; Natural Resources Defense Council, (212) 727-2700, <http://www.nrdc.org>; Center for Biological Diversity, (520) 623-5252, <http://www.sw-center.org/swcbd>.

Directives from the U. S. Department of Justice Office of Pure Taxonomy

The following announcement regarding U. S. bird listing rules is adapted from a memo issued this week by U. S. Justice Department spokesman Nero Fleurmquist.

As of November 3, 2004, all bird list issued by the Federal Government must be approved by the U. S. Department of Justice Office of Pure Taxonomy. Attorney General John Ashcroft will examine each list.

The following changes were announced:

- The English name of any species which includes the word "breasted" will be revised to use the word "upper-fronted";
- All species whose names contain the word "rump" will be revised to use the word "tailbase";
- All species using the name "California" are revised to use the word "Liberal";
- Streaked Shearwater is renamed Pinstriped Shearwater;
- Crossbills are renamed "Seedslayers";
- Phainopepla renamed "Blaxwing" because the Department of Justice couldn't figure out what Phainopepla means and there are a lot of them in California;
- Records of Eurasian tits will be referred to by their

Latin name – Parids;

- Palm Warbler is renamed Ground Warbler because the word Palm suggests . . . well, never mind what it suggests;
- Hooded Warbler is renamed Ashcroft's Warbler;
- Flame-colored Tanager is removed from the U. S. list because it comes from Mexico and could get people too excited;
- Great-tailed Grackle is renamed "Demure Grackle", to the amusement of anyone who has been within 200 yards of one;
- Flesh-footed Shearwater is lumped with Pink-footed to avoid use of the word "Flesh";
- All godwits are renamed "Mudstanders";
- Pectoral Sandpiper is renamed "Streaked Upper-fronted Sandpiper".

The only positive aspect of this new policy in Washington is that all mention of hybridization is also forbidden because it is, well, not normal. Thus we need not pay any attention to all of those pink-footed gulls in the Pacific Northwest that are the product of a joint endeavor by different species.

Additional changes are expected.

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 driver.



- Dec 4 Arboretum Sparrow Patch "Big Sit"**— Subject to cancellation in inclement weather. Drop by the Sparrow Patch on the east side of the Yakima Arboretum between 9:00 and 11:00 am to join Richard Repp in a "Big Sit" focusing on winter sparrows. A scope will be available for scrutinizing individual birds. Visual ID aids will also be on hand to help strengthen your skills. A post "sit" walk along Buchanan Lake or through the Arboretum is possible.
- Dec 18 Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count** — Meet the group at the fireplace at Sportsman's State Park at **7:00 am**. Contact compiler Denny Granstrand for more information at 453-2500 or dgranstrand@charter.net .
- Dec 19 Toppenish NWR Christmas Bird Count** — Meet the group for breakfast (how come Andy always gets to do the really fun stuff?) at **7:00 am** at the Branding Iron Restaurant in Toppenish. Contact Andy Stepniewski at 877-6639 or steppie@nwinfo.net for more information.
- Jan 2 Arboretum Sparrow Patch** - Subject to cancellation in inclement weather. A repeat of Dec 4 "Big Sit." See description above.

BIRD SIGHTINGS



Four more years? Another election year has come and gone. Talons came out, shrieks were heard, the undecided or weak were scrutinized with voracious eyes and sound bites lashed for the throat. Ah yes, raptor season is upon us.

YVAS President Andrew Stepniewski welcomed the King of the accipiters, the Northern Goshawk, to the oval Cowiche Canyon on October 10. Two immature Goshawks (Princes that followed Andy home?) petitioned for our President's attention at his Parker Heights Green House two days later. Staying the politically correct course, Mike Roper was lobbied by another Northern Goshawk reigning above the basalt thrones north of 16th Avenue at the Naches River.

Though somewhat diminutive in size, the Merlin seems to be soliciting support as the county's whip of the Falcon Party. One beseeched Denny Granstrand, our Editor, at home before another attempted to grab more press by confronting Denny near Zillah by feigning to be atop a power poll...er, pole. Staging a whirlwind of appearances, another Merlin campaigned from a cottonwood snag across the Yakima River from Buchanan Lake. Spurred to save ten thousand words, still another Merlin arranged for a Lower Valley photo-op with George Vlahakis. Not to



Merlin

photo by George Vlahakis

be out-done, a Sharp-shinned Hawk door-bellied George at home for a yard list first. Fowl was also on the banquet menu for another Sharp-shinned Hawk polling feeders at the home of Sherrel and Bruce Hailstone in West Valley. Mirroring politics, birding proves it is both a dog eats dog and bird eats bird world.

In the season of talking heads, hoo-hoo better to turn to for a bit of wisdom than our resident owls? Ever the consummate newsman, Denny scooped up an injured Western Screech Owl from a Pleasant Avenue driveway. He placed the injured owl in the capable hands of raptor rehabber Steve Seibert and was able to interview a Burrowing Owl that had crashed into a display window at the local Ford dealership the same day...definitely a misguided Explorer. A raucous caucus of American Crows rallied Sherry and Pam Morris into their 9th Avenue backyard to discover a Great Horned Owl perched in a Cedar tree. The owl calmly surveyed the crows but elected not to enter into a debate with them. John Hebert collaborated with Denny to verify a Barn Owl in their mutual neighborhood precinct. Rumors of a Northern Saw-whet Owl in the same area have surfaced but as the only evidence to date is the call, it is too early to call this one.

Grassroots efforts at home have registered rewards for several members. Elizabeth Bohn's dry Naches Avenue domain ticketed an at large Belted Kingfisher, normally



Great Horned Owl

(**Bird Sightings** continued on page 5)

Education Committee Chair Opening

After more than six years of service to the Yakima Valley Audubon Society, Betsy Martin has resigned. Her most recent position was Chairperson of the Education Committee, beginning in March 2003. Prior to that, from January 1998 through February 2003, she served as Secretary for the chapter. In her resignation letter to the board last week, Betsy notes "as you may have guessed from my absence from meetings of late, I have lots of stuff happening in my life right now. It is time for me to resign from the Education Committee. I am still available to be called for volunteer stuff, I just can't do any leading or organizing at this point. Please pass this along to the rest of

the Board. I have thoroughly enjoyed all my time on the Board."

We thank Betsy for her years of service to the chapter and wish her well for the future. This leaves the Education Committee Chairperson position open. This committee performs an important outreach function in the community and I truly hope we can find a willing and able chapter member to carry on in this capacity.

— Andy Stepniewski

Bird Sightings (continued from page 4)

limited to areas containing a wealth of water, as well as a more expected American Kestrel. Canvassing the Moxee Valley pasture of Debie Brown on October 11 was a Common Poorwill...very uncommon for October. Even more unusual, was a Chestnut-backed Chickadee at Vera Backstrom's Naches home. It is one of the few arid lowland records for this denizen of moist habitat. Even though an occasional female or juvenile

Anna's Hummingbird has blessed the valley in recent winters, Phyllis Knight's Sun-tides area nectar feeder recently attracted a rare adult male Anna's. In more liberal Western Washington, a male Anna doesn't turn heads. But here...wow! Mary Strate also had an Anna's Hummingbird, an immature, to go along with a very late Rufous that has been hanging out at her feeder first couple of weeks in November, on November 13.

The Sparrow Patch at the Arboretum's compost compound opened in late October. John Hebert was the first to view a White-throated Sparrow this season at that location. One has been seen several times since...as recently as Nov 12. An October 27 visit by Mike Roper notched a female Cassin's Finch filching seed with the regulars as well as both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets in the trees behind the slash.

Various vagarious ventures vetted results further a field for several YVAS members. Desperate to end years of fruitless frustration chasing after his personal "jinx" bird, Denny finally enlisted Chris Reid to guide him to a Spruce Grouse on the North Fork of Ahtanum Creek. A grateful Denny allowed her to pick up and pay for an Oriental takeout dinner afterwards.

(For those who don't know, Chris happens to be Denny's lovely wife). Chained up but still bogged down in the season's first heavy snowfall on the South Fork of the Ahtanum, Jeff Kozma cast an exasperated gaze into the heavens and reeled in two brilliant Pine Grosbeaks atop a nearby tree. Traveling the high elevations near Mt. Adams, Scott Downes also encountered Pine Grosbeaks in addition to a Three-toed Wood-

pecker and a weird wet/dry

combo of Red-breasted Sapsucker and White-headed Woodpecker within a few trees of one and other. Had a Blue Grouse ambled by, Scott could have composed one for the good old red, white and blue.

On Oct. 10, Kerry Turley made his usual whistle stop tour of the Lower Valley from Granger to the Toppenish National Wildlife Refuge capturing 57 species thereby earning the coveted Heinz 57 endorsement. Constituents for the tour included Ruddy Duck, Sora, Virginia Rail, Black-crowned Night Heron and Pectoral Sandpiper. A card-carrying member of the dawn to dawn Kamikaze Klub of birders, Kerry is featured in this month's Profile. The ticket of John, Kerry (why does that name sound familiar?), and Larry Robinson braved cold driving rain at Rimrock Lake to review 15 Bald Eagles, a raft of 15 Common Loons, dozens of Western Grebes, and countless Common Mergansers on Oct 17.

On Jan 1, John launched Initiative 256 — his quest to break the single year county record of 255 species. In the past month, he has added Surf Scoter (Rimrock Lake), American Tree Sparrow (YTC), and Red-breasted Merganser (Priest Rapids Lake). Ellen Stepniewski provided him a prodigious Pacific Loon at Rimrock Lake and John quickly hummed out to see Phyllis' Anna's. He was caught napping when two Bohemian Waxwings wandered through the Arboretum on Nov 3 and was a day late for Andy's Common Redpoll near I-82 exit 44. Darkness precluded an immediate response to Andy and Ellen's Mosebar discovery of a Harris's Sparrow and a possible Swamp Sparrow. With 246 species, he is positioned for a David Letterman top ten countdown. Zero for two on Blue Jay chases, he needs those Saw-whets to turn into a saw when. Two rare county birds are currently being seen in Eastern Washington-Blue Jays (250 sightings in Idaho) and Cattle Egrets (a dozen near Walla Walla). Support Initiative 256 by reporting unusual birds promptly!

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

— Richard Repp —



Anna's Hummingbird



Pine Grosbeak



American Tree Sparrow

Plan May Keep Sage Grouse Off Endangered Species List

WASHINGTON, Nov. 9 - An initiative by the Bureau of Land Management to conserve the habitat of the Greater Sage Grouse is complicating efforts to earn the bird designation as an endangered species. The bird is a signature species of the West whose range overlaps with oil and gas deposits and grazing lands throughout the Rocky Mountain states. The initiative, likely to be unveiled next week by the bureau, is outlined in a series of internal documents.

The effort to get the bird listed is being considered by a sister agency in the Interior Department, the Fish and Wildlife Service, which must make its decision by Dec. 29. Such a designation could lead to new restrictions on energy exploration and grazing on lands where the birds live.

The likelihood that the Sage Grouse could be given endangered status grew in June with the release of a pessimistic scientific assessment by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

That group's analysis concluded, "we are not optimistic about the future of Sage Grouse because of long-term population declines coupled with the continued loss and degradation of habitat and other factors," like the impact of the West Nile virus.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Land Management, which supervises more than half the land where Sage Grouse roam, is starting to highlight existing state and local conservation efforts and to conserve the bird's habitat through its own land-use planning process.

An internal memorandum discussing the guidance that the bureau is preparing for its field offices said that if the Sage Grouse was listed as endangered, "Sage Grouse management would then be conducted under a defined regulatory process that could shift the emphasis away from cooperative conservation efforts. This could affect a wide scope of activities conducted or authorized by the B.L.M."

If the Sage Grouse were listed, the ultimate decisions on protecting the bird would largely shift from states to the Interior Department, which administers a regulatory regimen prescribed by the Endangered Species Act. Populations of the Sage Grouse have declined in fits and starts over the past 30 years, and have been the focus of state conservation efforts in states including Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Nevada and South Dakota. The range of the sagebrush within which they live covers more than 185,000 square miles across the West.

The June report by the Western wildlife agencies' association indicated there was a total population of 50,000 male birds in 2003, and said that, after rapid declines from the 1960's to the 1980's, the population had "tended to stabilize." But it also noted, "although there are areas that presently could be considered population strongholds, some populations are still declining rather precipitously in various portions of the species range."

In an interview Tuesday, Interior Secretary Gale A. Norton was neutral when asked how she regarded listing the bird as endangered. "There are lots of efforts being made to put in place good strong conservation measures," Ms. Norton said. "Ultimately, it will require deciding whether those measures are sufficient."

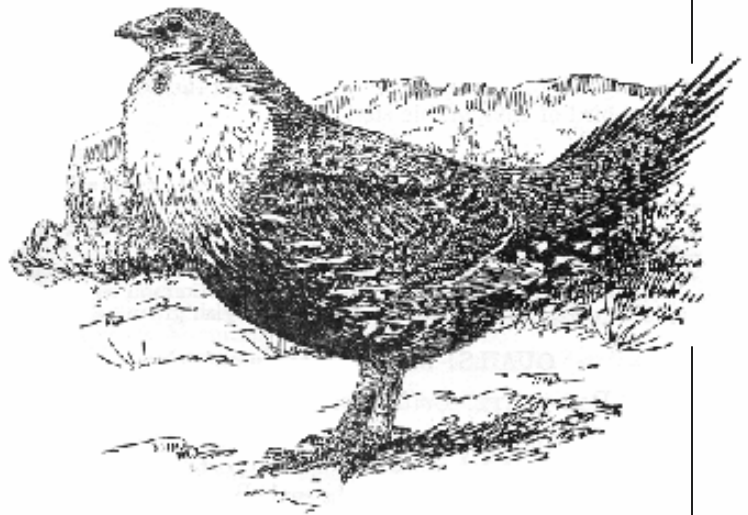
"You have to make a threshold determination whether the species is on a track that would usually cause it to be listed on the endangered species list," she added. "If that's true, then you look at the conservation efforts to see if they are enough to move the decision in the opposite direction."

Kathleen Clarke, the Bureau of Land Management director, said in an interview that her office would provide the Fish and Wildlife Service with not just prospective conservation plans but a compilation of the state and local conservation efforts undertaken previously.

Asked if her strategy would render moot the listing of the bird as an endangered species, she said, "I'm not going to speculate. Fish and Wildlife has to apply their process - it is their decision to make. We are working hard to make very sure they are clear about what we have done and are committed to doing."

But Mark Salvo, a specialist on the issue for the American Lands Alliance, which had petitioned to list the Sage Grouse as endangered, said, "Given B.L.M.'s track record and the current administration's goals for public land, it would be a big mistake to rely on this B.L.M. plan to restore the species."

He added, "I don't think there's any question that the B.L.M. has produced this plan to try to head off a listing," and noted that the June report "painted a fairly grim picture of Sage Grouse habitat."



Greater Sage Grouse

By FELICITY BARRINGER
Copyright New York Times

It's Christmas Bird Count Time!

The 2004 Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count

Please mark your calendar now for our 32nd Annual Yakima Valley Christmas Count. This nation-wide census of birds in specific 15-mile diameter circles is now undertaken annually by more than 50,000 birders. And you don't have to be an expert to participate—just be willing to help by looking, listening or tallying. It's great fun, and challenging too, to canvas your designated area.

We will meet at 7:00 a.m. Saturday December 18 at the central fireplace in Sportsman's Park. We will then depart for a full day of birding. Meet again with the traditional re-cap and no-host dinner at Debie and Ron Brown's house at 240 Meadowlark Lane south of Moxee at 5:00 p.m. Directions: go east on Hwy 24

We need observers, so if you are interested, please call me at 453-2500, or e-mail me at dgranstrand@charter.net for more information.

The 2004 Toppenish NWR Christmas Bird Count

Coming a day after the Yakima Count is the 20th Annual Toppenish Christmas Bird Count. We will meet December 19 at 7:00 a.m. at the Branding Iron Restaurant in Toppenish (junction of US-97 & SR-22). The rules are the same as for the Yakima Count: observers are assigned to a team to cover a specific portion of a 15-mile diameter circle in the Lower Valley. If you're interested, please call me at 877-6639 or e-mail me at steppie@nwinfo.net

Interest and enthusiasm are key requirements. We will train you! Following the count we meet at Andy and Ellen's house at around 5:00 p.m. in Parker Heights to go through the tally, warm up with a bowl of soup and hot (and cold!) drinks and recount the day's experiences.

Friendly competition between the two counts has become a tradition. In 2004, which count will win?

Attention Backyard Birders

Want to ensure that the birds visiting your feeders are included in the upcoming Christmas Bird Count? Wish you could participate in the CBC but are unable to devote a whole day to the task? Well, if you live within a 7.5 mile radius of Sportsman Park, we have a deal for you. We are looking for individuals willing to spend a little time watching their feeders or walking their immediate neighborhood on the date of the CBC.

Your efforts will both expand and improve the accuracy of the data gathered and reported during the CBC. Please contact Denny Granstrand by Dec 15 to enable him to coordinate your efforts with others censusing nearby to avoid overlaps. The Yakima Valley CBC will be held on Saturday, Dec 18. If you live in the Lower Valley within a 7.5 mile radius of the

intersection of Larue and South Wapato Roads, contact Andy Stepniewski to participate in the Toppenish CBC on Sunday, Dec 19. E-mail addresses and phone numbers for Denny and Andy are listed on the back page of the Crier. If you aren't sure if you live within the boundary of either circle, contact Andy or Denny to find out for sure.

The rules are fairly simple: count all of the birds that show up at your feeder. You shouldn't submit the total of all of every species seen at your feeder throughout the day because birds will be visiting it more than once. You will have to make an estimate to arrive at a somewhat accurate total for each species.

Denny or Andy will answer any questions you have about the participating in the Christmas counts in this way.

— Richard Repp —

Yakima Valley CBC Makes Big Change For The Post-count Dinner

Many of us can remember the good old days of the Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count, when we would gather afterwards for the traditional post-count dinner at one of the local buffet restaurants. We were given the banquet room where we enthusiastically rehashed all of the events of the day in a private room not worrying about disturbing (and not bothered by) the other diners.

That changed several years ago when the Old Country Buffet Restaurant decided the banquet room was no longer available. The tone of our dinners changed as we tried, in vain most of the time, to be heard over the roar of the other customers. Every year we walked out wondering if there wasn't a better alternative. In last month's Crier, I asked if there was anyone had an idea for another restaurant or someone who would be willing to invite the entire crew to their home for the evening's festivities.

Debie and Ron Brown have answered that call and graciously made their home open for us. After the finish of the day's birding on December 18, we will gather at their house at 240 Meadowlark Lane, south of Moxee, at around 5:00 p.m.

Directions: Go east on Highway 24 to just past Moxee. Turn right (south) on Faucher Road; in 0.8 miles Faucher turns slightly to the right and becomes Konnowac Pass Road. In another 2.2 miles (give or take a little) turn right onto Meadowlark Lane. (That makes approximately three miles from Highway 24 to Meadowlark Lane.) As you drive down the hill on Meadowlark Lane, Debie and Ron's house on the hillside to the left. Debie's "Common Thread Quilting" sign is next to the driveway.

We will be having pizza delivered, so please be prepared to make a financial contribution. Also please bring an hors d'oeuvre, salad or desert and any beverages you would like to contribute.

We look forward to a wonderful evening of camaraderie, good food and great stories while gathered around the fire! Please remember to take your muddy boots off at the door. You might even want to bring slippers!

PROFILES

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

For Kerry Turley, Three Is The Right Number

For most Auduboners, one Christmas Bird Count is enough: its cold, a long day, but fun. For some, two is better: Yakima and Toppenish Counts. For Kerry Turley, it's three: the two local ones and one more, either the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society Count in the Tri-Cities area or the Two Rivers Count around Walla Walla.

Why? "Well", Turley says, "anyone crazy enough to be out in that weather is fun to be with. And I enjoy being with people in different situations from the usual ones." He confesses that his wife Diane says he "is certifiable". (See "crazy" earlier in this paragraph.)

So he's readying his warm fuzzies that he'll layer and stocking up on enough peanut butter, jelly and bread to make the sandwiches he lives by on lengthy birding jaunts.

Turley has been birding since 1989, when, at a retreat where he was casually birding, a priest asked him about his life list and if he hoped to become a member of the "700 Club". "You need a life list if you're going to be a serious birder," he was told.

He didn't know about a list or club, but he immediately took up birding seriously and now, 15 years later, has his lists right at hand. "I don't bird without a list," he says. Life: 387, County: 245, State: 304 right now.

A couple of weeks ago he may have missed getting to the Arboretum to see the Bohemian Waxwing that Richard Repp found there that could have been added to his county list. "I have Bohemian Waxwings on my life list and I've been to the Arboretum but not when the waxwing is there.

By profession, Turley is the parish administrator for St. Joseph Parish in Sunnyside and recently was ordained a deacon in the church. He has been with the parish for 13 years.

The minute you step into his office, you know it's a birder's habitat. The screen-saver on his computer shows a Northern Saw-whet Owl. And above his desk, among other family photos, is one, displayed with special pride, taken a couple of years ago of Kerry and his then five-year old grandson T. J. Berger. With binoculars they are looking at swallows at a family picnic.

T. J.'s sister, Cassie, five, also has her own binoculars but the youngest, Britney, "isn't big enough yet for optics," her grandfather says. "Its fun taking the kids out and teaching them about birds. I'm breaking them in right," he explains.

Turley is involved with several other Yakima Valley Society Auduboners in a major bird census project with the Yakama Indian Nation. He, Andy, Denny, John, Debie, Richard and Gunter all have access to certain areas to count the birds four times a year. The group works with Tracy Hames, YIN wildlife biologist.

The Nation is trying to rehabilitate the area to its original habitat and is re-channeling Toppenish Creek, Kerry explains. They are studying how the bird life changes as habitat is restored. "It's a good learning experience", Turley notes.

He birds along his designated area weekly and likes to return repeatedly to "see how the birds change and use it differently. You get a real sense of the changes of seasons."

Turley also enjoys his once-a-year field trip leadership for Connie Estep of Richland, a Tri-Cities birding teacher and long-time Audubon member.

In response to the usual "why birding" questions, Turley says that "while I'm birding I can forget everything else. It's one of the few things that clears your mind totally."

— Jeanne Crawford —

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.

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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.

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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.

2004 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD

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