

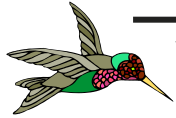
# Calliope Crier

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 protection.

Volume 38, Number 6

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

June 2009



## YVAS CALENDAR

**Aug 11 Board Meeting** at Denny Granstrand's house (2011 S. 47th Ave., 453-2500) at **6:00 pm**.

### Field Trips

**Jun 25 Thursday Morning Bird Walk** — Meet the group at the Valley Mall Blvd. parking lot for the Poppoff Trail at **9:00 am**.

**Jul 31-Aug 2 Camping Trip to the Wallowa Mts in NE Oregon** — See article on page 1.

**Aug 12 Wenas Lake Shorebirds** — Meet leader Denny Granstrand at 40th Ave. Bi-Mart at **5:00 pm**.

**Aug 15 Burroughs Mt. at Mt. Rainier** — Meet leader Denny Granstrand at 40th Ave. Bi-Mart at **7:00 am**.

### Other Activities

**July 11-12 Yakima Folklife Festival** — Your help is needed in the YVAS booth at the Yakima Folklife Festival. See article on page 2.

## Annual "Ptarmigan" Search to the Wallowa Mountains

Yakima Audubon's now-annual quest to find White-tailed Ptarmigan is taking a year off. Instead we will be heading to the Wallowa Mountains of northeast Oregon where we plan to car camp at Wallowa Lake State Park. There is birding in the campground for birds of the dry forests, streamside riparian, and waterbirds. The real natural history experience is not far away with three main areas to explore:

1. The high Wallowas Mountains. Trails (or a tramway!) lead to the high country such as at Aneroid or Bonny Lakes where we'll look for Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, American Pipit, and Horned Lark. Black Rosy Finch has been reported here but is rare. In the spruce and pine forests we'll keep an eye out for Spruce Grouse, woodpeckers, and other forest species.

2. The Zumwalt prairie is undoubtedly the Pacific Northwest's finest grassland. Wildflowers will be past their prime but the area should still be alive with birds, especially raptors. Ferruginous, Swainson's, and Red-tailed Hawks and Golden Eagles thrive on the abundant ground squirrels. This is indeed a world class area for birds of prey. Grassland birds such as Vesper and Brewer's Sparrows are common. The Nature Conservancy of Oregon protects more than 33000 acres of this habitat (<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/oregon/preserves/art6813.html>).

3. Innaha Canyon is one gateway to the Hells Canyon, one of North America's deepest gorges. Riparian and desert birds occur in these dramatic riparian-lined canyons. Yellow-breasted Chats are abundant along many creeks plus many other showy birds.

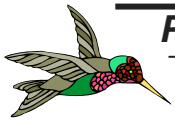
4. Enterprise Fish Hatchery offers good birding in lush riparian habitat right in town.

For this year's trip you need only bring car camping gear plus a rucksack for the day hikes. We plan breakfasts and dinners as a group. Lunches are on your own. Nearby Joseph, a growing arts center, offers a different experience. Thus, this trip should be attractive to non-birding folks who wish to experience interesting cultural and natural venues. Non-campers can stay in a motel or hotel in either Joseph or Enterprise. Contact Andy and Ellen Stepniewski for details or to sign-up. Their home phone is 877-6639. Andy's cell is 949-7404 or e-mail [steppie@nwinfo.net](mailto:steppie@nwinfo.net). Please contact Andy and Ellen before June 30 if you are interested in participating.

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



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

KERRY TURLEY



Dear Friends,

As my term as president comes to an end, I want to thank all those who have contributed in so many ways to the success of our chapter: the extraordinary board, presenters and field trip leaders, helpers at festival displays, participants in Christmas and

backyard bird counts, Bird-a-thoners, bluebird box cleaners and monitors, and all those who have helped on special projects, attended meetings and joined our field trips. All of you have contributed to a memorable couple of years with the Yakima Valley Audubon. Your tireless efforts are greatly appreciated along with your friendship. I really feel blessed that I was surrounded by so many wonderful people. It made my job so much easier.

However, though we have a great deal of momentum going into the 2009-2010 season, the Vice President's position remains unfilled, as does the courtesy position, and the volunteer recognition position. And after many years of dedicated service as the Social chairperson Alice Nevue is moving to the wet side to be near her new grandchild. I want thank Alice for helping everyone feel welcome and for making sure we had great treats for our chapter meetings.

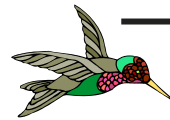
So please consider stepping up to the plate to fill one of these positions. Your personal involvement will bring you rewards that can't be measured in dollars, or awards, but can be readily recognized as an investment in our chapter's future.

At the same time I pledge to continue to do all I can to assist in the continued success of our chapter as I "pass the torch" to our next president, Bill Drenguis; and I challenge all of our members to join fully in the efforts of our chapter.

## Optics Donation

Thanks, Gene Rupel, for the thoughtful donation of a pair of binoculars to our Audubon chapter. They're now in the care of Richard Repp for use on the Thursday morning bird walks. Rich has often had home-schoolers join him on these outings; and now that summer is here, he hopes some public school students will join the group, too. Sometimes these budding birders do not have their own binoculars, and your donation will come in very handy. Thanks again.

If anyone else out there has an extra pair of binoculars or a scope, we can put them to good use on field trips. Call any board member, and we'll arrange to get them.



## MEMBERSHIP

DEBIE BROWN

### Welcome New YVAS Members!

Yakima: Connie Wright  
Tacoma: John Maxwell  
Corvallis, Oregon: Will Wright

### Thank You for renewing your YVAS Membership!

Yakima: Norma Boyer, Earl Derry, Ben Dover, Connie Hughes, Gail Larson, Jennifer Lee, Sheryl Morris, Charlotte Pfeiffer, Alice Presson, Don Sattler,  
Grandview: Myra Dorsey  
Naches: Carol & Jack Roth  
Selah: Joy McKinney  
Zillah: Beth Danhardt  
Union Gap: Larry Martin  
Seattle: Michael Fleming

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

## Help needed in the YVAS Folklife Festival booth

Join us at the YVAS booth at the Yakima Folklife Festival at Franklin Park on July 11 and 12. There is free music all day, as well as plenty of food and interesting arts and crafts booths.

Volunteers are needed for both days. This is a chance to meet the public and talk about birds and Audubon. We will also be selling birding trail maps. If you are interested in helping, call Bob Wahl at 452-9183 or email at [reljwahl@msn.com](mailto:reljwahl@msn.com).

## Join us for the "camping ptarmigan" trip

The 2009 Ptarmigan Trip will be a more user-friendly excursion. We will be camping at Wallowa Lake State Park near Enterprise, OR. Many day excursions are possible, from birding hikes to trips to the local artist's communities of Enterprise and Joseph.

There are things of interest for almost everyone. No Mariner's games but there are things of beauty for nearly everyone to enjoy.

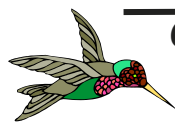
See the article on page 1 if you missed it. This "ptarmigan" trip will be one for all of us to take part in. Don't forget your fishing pole!

## Membership

If you are interested in joining the Yakima Valley Audubon Society, membership forms can be found on the YVAS website at:

<http://www.yakimaaudubon.org/>

Just click on the "Join YVAS" link.



## CONSERVATION REPORT

MICHAEL MARTIN

### Yakima Basin Enhancement Project Roundtable Meeting.

In the wake of the apparent (but not complete) demise of the Black Rock Reservoir project, the Washington State Department of Ecology prepared a draft environmental impact statement looking at alternatives to just adding storage (dams). There was a cart before the horse problem with the Black Rock examination, in that federal funding was obtained and directed exclusively at looking at adding storage capacity to produce more water for Lower Valley farmers. No consideration was given to conservation, changing water pricing, or other innovative approaches. When that approach failed, the Ecology proposal was made, including fish ladders and conservation, and possibly smaller expansions of some existing storage, such as enlarging Bumping Lake (which has been proposed and challenged before). Now the federal Bureau of Reclamation (the federal dams-R-us agency that proposed and evaluated Black Rock) and the state Department of Ecology are convening a Yakima Basin Enhancement Project roundtable. The roundtable discussions will include looking at a storage-plus plan. Even though the Black Rock and Wymer storage proposals alone didn't make economic (or other) sense, Reclamation apparently believes that additional storage plus other components might be feasible, and won't take building new storage off the table.

The roundtable composition is a bit troublesome, because it's by invitation only. The invited environmental groups are the Washington Environmental Council and American Rivers. These are great organizations, but they are located in Seattle. Not included in the round table are the Center for Environmental Law and Policy out of Spokane, who are articulate and vocal advocates for water conservation in Eastern Washington and who challenge water diversions and storage projects for agricultural use that undermine our fragile ecosystems here. And, of course, Yakima Yale Audubon Society isn't on the list. However, the meetings are open to the public, to observe, if not to provide input. The roundtable meeting will be at the Yakima Arboretum on June 30 from 10 am to 1 pm. I invite anyone interested in approaches to addressing the water issues in the Yakima Basin to attend, to become better educated as to what's being considered, and to press that your opinions be included, too.

### Development Rights Transferred to Protect Wenas Ranch

A couple of years ago, Western Pacific Timber (which

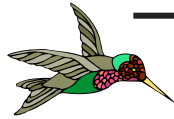
had acquired all of Boise Cascade's holdings in Washington), completed a swap with the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which resulted in a consolidation of public lands in various areas, such as the Upper Wenas area encompassing the Audubon campground area. The swap converted long existing checkerboard holdings into a continuous swath of publicly held and protected land. However, left out of this historic swap was Western Pacific's holdings of timber rights on private lands in the Upper Wenas. The problem was that DNR could only do swaps of land for land, not for land or money for timber rights on private land.

Enter the Cascade Land Conservancy. The Cascade Land Conservancy purchased development rights on about 480 acres of the 1,460-acre Storli ranch, which is on the bluebird trail road just north of the turnoff to the observatory. This is effectively a purchase of the Western Pacific Timber timber rights, and removes the specter of timber removal from the ranch. While the model of just acquiring the land has been around a while, this is a breakthrough in providing an example of using private conservancy funds to get back timber rights on private land in the Upper Wenas. Hopefully, we can repeat this model.

### Critical Areas Ordinance

I had hoped to be writing a detailed description of the agreement reached with Yakima County, in which the County would propose a new revised Critical Areas Ordinance fixing the complaints we had, primarily that there was no protection in their ordinance for habitat associated with endangered, threatened and sensitive species. What the agreement would look like is our promise to dismiss our formal appeals to the Growth Management Hearings Board if the county adopted an ordinance with certain specified fixes. Unfortunately, even though it seems like we had an agreement, the County keeps slipping in language in their proposed revised ordinance that haven't been discussed or agreed to. On the one hand, this is all on track to be adopted by County Commissioners in the beginning of August. On the other, nothing is currently agreed to. It's infuriating. But I'm hopeful we will work this out in a way to provide the protections we are looking for and hit the timeline. And maybe, in September, I can provide a detailed explanation of what the last year of negotiations has produced.

— Michael Martin —  
Conservation Chair



## FIELD TRIPS

### LARRY ROBINSON

*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.*



**Jun 25 Thursday Morning Bird Walk** — Meet the group at the parking lot at the east end of Valley Mall Blvd. at **9:00 am** for the last TMBW of the summer.

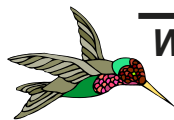
**Jul 31-Aug 2 Camping in the Willowa Mts in NE Oregon** — Join Yakima Auduboners for a wonderful weekend of camping and birding in "Little Alps" of Oregon. See article on page \_\_. Deadline for registering for this trip is **June 28**.

**Aug 12 Wenas Lake Shorebirds** — Mid-August is a good time to check out the "fall" migration of shorebirds in eastern Washington. This evening trip will focus on identification of this approachable but challenging group of birds. Meet leader Denny Granstrand at the 40th Ave. Bi-Mart parking lot at **5:00 pm** or at the Wenas Lake parking lot at **5:30 pm**.

**Aug 15 Burroughs Mt. at Mt. Rainier** — This trip is a leg stretcher, with a substantial elevation gain spread over 3-4 miles (one way). The views will be incredible, bird possibilities include Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, American Pipit, and the possibility of White-tailed Ptarmigan (okay, its not in Yakima County but we'll take a ptarmigan anywhere we can find it). Meet leader Denny Granstrand at the 40th Ave. Bi-Mart parking lot at **7:00 am**. Be sure to call Denny (453-2500) if you want to go on this trip.

## Please contribute for gas when you ride on field trips

With high gas prices it is important for all participants to contribute for gas. Based on four people in a car, here are the totals per person: 100 miles driven on the trip — \$5.00 each; 150 miles — \$8.00 each, 200 miles — \$10.00 each; 250 miles — \$13.00 each; 300 miles — \$16.00each. Please pay your share; if drivers have to pay most of the gas bill, they may quit driving.



## WORDS & BIRDS; PHOTOS & KUDOS

RICHARD REPP

In comes June riding waves of heat. Fear not . . . the birds are still out there!

**Scott Downes, Debie & Ron Brown – Birdathon.** Mid-May is a great time to get outdoors and sample what migration and spring have combined to endow the bountiful Yakima Valley. This year, YVAS held its annual fund raising Birdathon on May 16. And while all of our participants deserve a tip of the hat, Scott seized the opportunity to go above and beyond by starting his solo White Pass area route at 2 am and continued to bird until 8 pm. Among his 112 specie captives were **Flammulated Owl, Black-throated Gray Warbler** and a pair of **Sandhill Cranes**.

The Cranes were discovered in the Rimrock area and strongly suggest that they might be on a previously unknown breeding territory. The only cranes known to breed heretofore in Yakima County have been on the closed portion of the Yakama Nation reservation towards Mount Adams. In the Wenas Area, Ron and Debie thread through **Empidonax flycatchers** to stitch together a quilt of 99 species.

**Jeff Kozma – American Avocet.** On May 12, Jeff charted the shallow waters of a flooded farm field along Pumphouse Road a half-nautical mile due west of Old Goldendale Road. Navigating over the field were all six Swallow species recorded on Yakima County's log. Three crescent-faced male **Blue-winged Teal** were a small booty but Captain Jeff's treasure was shanghaiing his first Washington State American Avocets. Rivaling the Avocet's appearance is its natural history. From the Birds of North America Online: "Avocet parents are noted for their complicated suite of deceptive and aggressive anti-predator behaviors, and sometimes appear comical as they respond to



**American Avocet**  
Photo by Denny Granstrand

## Words & Birds continued from page 4

the presence of a potential predator near their nests. The long recurved bill, used for both visual and tactile feeding on invertebrates, is so sensitive that a bird in the hand will recoil at the gentlest touch.” After copulation “pair stands side to side with necks entwined and run forward 3.5–12 steps, approximately 1–7 m. The pair then separates.” And though it maintains an extensive breeding range in the west, “The species was extirpated from much of its eastern range at the beginning of the twentieth century. Its persistence in western North America will depend on inland wetland conservation and restoration efforts.”

**Joe Schons – Doves.** Near 40<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Avenues, Joe has been able to compare a **Ringed Turtle-Dove** with individual **Eurasian Collared-Doves**. The behavior of the Eurasian is often quite brazen while the Ringed becomes skitterish at the slightest movement.

**Kathleen Ross – Band-tailed Pigeon.** Boldly branishing a bi-colored bill as it pilfered seed from a feeder a mere six inches from a window on E Street (no tale if “Boss” Springsteen or other musicians joined the banded one) in Toppenish.

**Kerry Turley – Wilson’s Phalarope.** At the same Pumphouse Road temporary wetland commandeered by Jeff (see above), Kerry ran up the Jolly Roger with six Wilson’s Phalaropes and a pair of American White Pelicans, one of which, appeared to have suffered a broadside hit to one contorted wing.

**John Hebert – Western Scrub Jay.** Another yarn to support possible breeding as a jay with nesting material in its mouth swooped to a tall mast during a YVAS field trip to Snow Mountain Ranch in May.

**Denny Granstrand – Western Screech Owl.** Editor/Swashbuckler Denny was summoned to hijack a wayward juvenile Screech Owl from the furnace room of a 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Tieton Drive home. Another example of nature attempting to adjust to habitat piracy by humans?

**Bruce and Sherrel Hailstone – Black-headed Grosbeak.** A new yard edition at 72<sup>nd</sup> and Washington Avenues, this willing singer also sports buccaneer black atop its skull.



**Black-headed Grosbeak**  
Photo by George Vlahakis

**Jeff Kozma – Least Flycatcher.** On the other end of the songsters spectrum is this tiny flycatcher with its monotonous non-stop emphatic dry “Che-bek” call. Jeff’s was in a unlikely Wenas port of deciduous shrub nestled in a dry creek bed.

**Elizabeth Bohn – Yellow-breasted Chat.** Want vocal variety? Check out Cowiche Canyon. The Chats there will boldly bully and mimic any sound of the best parrot on a ship’s first mate’s shoulder.

**Sue and Bill Ericksen – Common Nighthawk.** One of the last migrants to arrive in the valley each spring and one of the first to depart in early fall as it is dependant on warm temperatures to ensure a steady supply of flying insects. From the Birds of North America Online: “This nighthawk is often observed on the wing, hawking insects at dusk and dawn over urban and rural areas. Its loud, nasal *peent* calls, spectacular booming courtship dives, and erratic, almost batlike flight make this a familiar bird to anyone who spends time outdoors on warm summer evenings. In many ways, the name “nighthawk” is inappropriate for this bird because it is most active at dawn and dusk, not night, and like other members of its family, is not related to the hawks.

This is a species that actively pursues flying insects on the wing, often feeding on those attracted to streetlamps and other bright lights. Although it nests most often on open, cultivated fields, gravel beaches, rocky outcrops, and burned-over woodlands, it is well known for its propensity to nest on flat gravel roofs, especially in cities. Whether nesting on roofs or natural sites, it makes no nest per se but usually lays its eggs directly on the ground; the species cryptic plumage makes nesting birds difficult to see. Both the female and male, which are similar in size and



**Common Nighthawk**  
Photo by George Vlahakis

appearance, feed regurgitated insects to their chicks.”

Ah, summer! The time of vacations, picnics, and all manner of outdoor activities. However you enjoy your summer break, be sure to pack your binocular...it is a great time for birding also. And if you have not made a contribution to YVAS’s flag ship fund raiser, the USS Birdathon, there is still time. Place your check in a corked bottle and toss it adrift with the US Postal Service!

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

## Monitoring the Bluebird Boxes for Audubon

We leave in the morning  
because it's cooler,  
armed with clipboards, sunhats  
and a childhood buzz  
that accompanies a search  
for treasure.

I never thought  
I would find love  
this late in life,  
much less easy love;  
but here we are,  
laughing, graying  
(and ultimately fading),  
together.

And here we are in the Wenas Valley,  
where the formerly brown hills  
are flooded with balsam root flowers,  
each one a sun.  
We hear wik-a-wik-a-wik-a,  
and when we look up,  
a Northern Flicker twirls,  
showing us his white rump  
and jazzy leopard wings

We return  
our gaze to the side of the road,  
look for the sky blue roofs of the boxes.  
I knock softly  
on the side of the first one,  
to give warning, a chance to escape.  
Then you lift the roof.  
She's here, wide-eyed,  
frightened, but doing her job.  
The shawl of her azure wings  
shelters three aqua eggs  
the size of dimes.  
We record the data,  
but the silly smiles on our faces  
won't go away for hours.

— Dotty Armstrong —

## Birdathon Update

A big “thank you” to everyone who contributed, both to the 2009 Audubon Birdathon, both birders and to the Birdathon contributors. This year's Birdathon had 25 birders in 11 teams and found an impressive **181** species in Yakima County and so far we have raised a little more than \$2,000 for Chapter activities, but we are still about 20% below last year.

Maybe it's the economy, but we're hoping it's just those late responders haven't arrived at the mailbox yet. NO, it's NOT TOO LATE! You can still send in a Birdathon donation - at 10 cents per species that would be \$18.10, or any amount you choose. (just send your pledge to YVAS Birdathon, P.O. Box 2823, Yakima WA 98907). As a thank you I'll send you a complete report of Andy's Birding results, he says the “Spectacular weather brought many spring migrants. We tallied greater numbers and diversity of neotropical migrants: flycatchers, vireos, swallows, warblers, tanagers, and orioles than on any previous Birdathon. However, shorebird diversity and numbers were down as the date for this event was perhaps 10 days late for peak movement of this group.”

— Dan Kinney —

## Butterfly Enthusiasts Invade Yakima

The Washington Butterfly Association holds its Tenth Annual Conference in Yakima, July 17 - 19, with lectures in the Oxford Suites, 1701 E. Yakima Ave., and field trips roaming the rugged wilderness west of town.

Renowned lepidopterist and writer Dr. Robert Michael Pyle will deliver the keynote address, “Conserving the Rainbow Resource” at 7:45 p.m. on Saturday evening July 17. His talk will cover the rich history, energetic present, and challenging future of butterfly conservation, with dramatic historic and color images. Dr. Pyle, the author of *The Butterflies of Cascadia, A Field Guide to All the Species of Washington, Oregon, and Surrounding Territories* has also published eleven other books, hundreds of papers, essays, stories, and poems. Dr. David James, Associate Professor, Dept. of Entomology at WSU, will lecture Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. on “Butterflies of the Yakima Region” He will describe species that may possibly be seen on Saturday and Sunday field trips.

Both speakers participate in field trips Saturday and Sunday, which may visit dry shrub-steppe, moist meadows, or cool sub-alpine habitats. Target locations might include Bear Canyon, the Rimrock area, and/or Bear Creek Mountain. Final field trip locations will be determined only a day or two in advance of the conference, depending on weather and blooming conditions.

Highlights of butterfly species that may possibly be seen include the Half-moon Hairstreak (*Satyrium semiluna*), Artic Blue (*Agriades glandon*) Arrowhead Blue (*Glaucoopsyche piasus*), Blue Copper (*Lycaena heteronea*), Mariposa Copper (*Lycaena mariposa*), Sonoran Skipper (*Polites sonora*), Clodius Parnassian (*Parnassius clodius*), and Two-banded Checkered Skipper (*Pyrgus ruralis*).

The area also has the “true” Dotted Blue (*Euphilotes enoptes*) found nowhere else in the state, and small colonies of the endangered Mardon Skipper (*Polites mardon*); with good timing and some luck, these could be spotted.

Children and novices are welcome to join this fun and informal weekend conference. All WBA field trips encourage observation through binoculars or net-and-release; no butterflies are kept for collections. You may register for a single event or for the entire conference. For more information, visit the WBA website - <http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabaws/conference.htm> or contact Jennifer Kauffman, 206-729-7866 or [jenkauffman@earthlink.net](mailto:jenkauffman@earthlink.net).

## Vredenburg Trail Blooms

The trail is a string of nest boxes beginning at the end of the pavement on North Wenas Road and stretching 13 miles to the intersection of Durr Road just above Ellensburg. Established by YVAS members in 1982, the trail now consists of 132 boxes.

In 1994, the trail was named in honor of Virginia and Harold Vredenburg to recognize their years of tireless devotion to help bluebirds flourish in Yakima County.

Another cool spring may have delayed many insectivores, including bluebirds, in laying clutches of eggs. However, trail monitors in early June have found the nest boxes jammed with eggs and nestlings.

On June 6, Jean Chott's monitoring team (Nancy Born, Hannah Born, Pat Stebing, Mary Belzer, Dorothy Brink) enumerated box contents. Their findings (193 eggs, 236 nestlings) enunciate the possibility of yet another outstanding year of bluebird production on the trail. And those numbers are undoubtedly low as 37 females remained in boxes shielding nest contents from avian auditors.

Jean's team also verified that 19 Mountain Bluebirds had fledged from five boxes, all located at or near the Ellensburg end of the trail. This mirrors the exact number fledged by June 8 last year; intriguing or perhaps an indication of habitat quality, three boxes (113, 124, 125) were among the first to fledge both years.

Other species utilizing the nest boxes seem to be having an off year. Only one House Wren nest has been detected (seven last year) and it has already failed. Two of three White-



**Newly-hatched Western Bluebirds with the one in upper left showing its "egg tooth".**

breasted Nuthatch have also failed; the other had two chicks visible during monitoring. Four House Sparrow nest starts are a troubling trend; all are in locations in close proximity of human/livestock dwellings. And a bit odd is the total lack of Tree Swallows, almost an annual trail nester.

While it is still a bit early, 2009 has the potential to become one of our most productive years. May the weather and bugs allow a multitude of second broods!

— Richard Repp —

## Birding Class at the Selah Library for Home-schoolers

On May 22, 39 home-schooled kids attended a Birding Basics class at the Selah Library. The kids ranged in age from four to sixteen. On display was Yakima Audubon's birding quiz and other large photos of local birds and posters of shrub steppe. The class started with the kids listing birds that they could already recognize (which included a penguin and an ostrich). Then we talked about how they knew, say, a quail was a quail and used that discussion to talk more generally about field markings and what to concentrate on when trying to identify a new bird. The highlight was actually using a field guide. Recently, Yakima Audubon acquired multiple boxes of "Birds of the Inland Northwest and Northern Rockies" by Harry Nehls, Mike Denny and Dave Trochlell which had a printing error (the description of the photo of a Yellow-headed blackbird is on the wrong page). However, with a label directing the user to the right page, it's a fine field guide. It includes a couple of novel categories for each listed bird, "Did You Know?" with interesting and sometimes unusual information, and a line to fill in Date and Location Seen. Each child received a field guide to keep. We first looked up birds they already knew, and read the descriptions, to get used to using a field guide. Then we traipsed to the park to look for birds (Brewer's blackbirds and House sparrows). Back at the library, the kids used their field guides to identify the birds on

the birding quiz. Later in the day, one of home-schooling moms called me to get a bird identification over the phone, describing the characteristic hovering that American kestrels do so well.

— Michael Martin —

Conservation Chair and Selah Librarian



**A pair of Western Bluebirds with food for their chicks.  
Photo by Mike Roper**



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.

**2009 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD**

President	Kerry Turley ( <a href="mailto:kdturley@embarq.com">kdturley@embarq.com</a> )	837-6930	Membership	Debie Brown Sturnella@aol.com	248-3878
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Vice President	Open		Programs	Andy Stepniewski ( <a href="mailto:steppie@nwinfo.net">steppie@nwinfo.net</a> )	877-6639
Secretary	Vera Backstrom		<b>Special Committees:</b>		
Treasurer	Ellen Stepniewski ( <a href="mailto:steppie@nwinfo.net">steppie@nwinfo.net</a> )	877-6639	Bird Rehabilitator	Connie Hughes ( <a href="mailto:CHbirdlady@msn.com">CHbirdlady@msn.com</a> )	457-5661
Directors:	Angie Begosh ( <a href="mailto:mollybot5@hotmail.com">mollybot5@hotmail.com</a> )	834-1528	Bird Reports	Richard Repp ( <a href="mailto:Rich712@aol.com">Rich712@aol.com</a> )	965-1134
	Jan Gano ( <a href="mailto:gano12@earthlink.net">gano12@earthlink.net</a> )	966-4539	Bluebird Trail	Bettie Soden (sponsorship records)	453-8185
	Bob Wahl ( <a href="mailto:reljwahl@msn.com">reljwahl@msn.com</a> )	452-9183	Courtesy	vacant	
			Important Bird Areas	John Hebert ( <a href="mailto:hejohn1126@msn.com">hejohn1126@msn.com</a> )	965-8235
<b>Standing (Voting) Committee Chairs:</b>			Newsletter Mailing	Joyce Lucas ( <a href="mailto:ajbirds@aol.com">ajbirds@aol.com</a> )	966-8115
Audubon Hoegar Preserve	Leslie Wahl ( <a href="mailto:reljwahl@msn.com">reljwahl@msn.com</a> )	452-9183	Publicity	Angie Begosh ( <a href="mailto:mollybot5@hotmail.com">mollybot5@hotmail.com</a> )	834-1528
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Bluebird Trail	Richard Repp ( <a href="mailto:Rich712@aol.com">Rich712@aol.com</a> )	965-1134	Volunteer Recognition	vacant	
Conservation	Michael Martin ( <a href="mailto:selahlibraryguy@gmail.com">selahlibraryguy@gmail.com</a> )	698-4430	Webmaster	John Hebert ( <a href="mailto:hejohn1126@msn.com">hejohn1126@msn.com</a> )	965-8235
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Fund Raising	Dan Kinney ( <a href="mailto:insur3@charter.net">insur3@charter.net</a> )	452-3260	Yakima Valley CBC	Denny Granstrand ( <a href="mailto:dgranstrand@charter.net">dgranstrand@charter.net</a> )	453-2500
			Yakima Valley Audubon Voice Mail		248-1963