

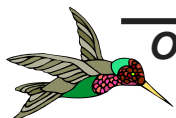
Calliope Crier

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 39, Number 9

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

October 2010



OCTOBER PROGRAM

ANDY STEPNIIEWSKI

Feathered Architects: The Fascinating World of Bird Nests with Idie Ulsh

From eagles to hummingbirds, Idie Ulsh will explore with us how and where birds make nests, nest configurations and relate interesting facts about their construction. She has photographed the nests of more than 30 species, with an emphasis on song birds.

Idie is well known for her bird and butterfly programs. She has recently completed an in-depth, three-year study of bird nests and is eager to share her findings. She is a past president of Seattle Audubon, founder of the Washington Butterfly Association, Seattle Audubon Master Birder, WOS member, freelance nature photographer and an independent college counselor.

In addition to her own photos, she will include photos from University of Puget Sound Slater Museum, Cornell Lab of Ornithology and many local photographers who have contributed to this unique and fun program.

Plan to Attend
Thursday
October 28 at 7:00 pm.

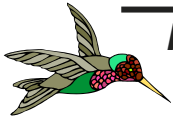


Robin's Nest
Photo by
Denny Granstrand

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



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BILL DRENGUIS



Live from Pingyao, China. Just a quick note. The pollution in the cities is as bad as you have heard about, and there are LOTS of cities. So far I have seen roughly 10,000 people for every bird. Still it's a great experience. I hope to be getting out into the countryside soon.



MEMBERSHIP

DEBIE BROWN

Thank you for renewing your YVAS Membership!

Yakima: Stan Belsher, Elizabeth Bohn, Jeanne Crawford

Selah: Marcia Shotwell,

Naches: Larry & Doris Robinson,

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



YVAS MEETINGS

Oct 28 Chapter Meeting at the Yakima Area Arboretum at **7:00 pm**.

Nov 9 Board Meeting at Bill Drenguis's house (7708 Poplarview Dr., 965-5808) at **7:00 pm**

Dec 2 Christmas Banquet and Silent Auction at the Yakima Arboretum at **6:00 pm**.



**I want you . . .
to donate items for the
YVAS Silent Auction
at the Christmas Banquet**

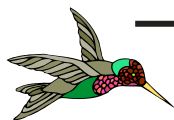
**Contact Bill Drenguis
(965-5808 or
DRENGUIS@aol.com)
to make your donations**

Though the sun still shines warm and bright on many of our days, it is time to think about one of YVAS's major fundraisers – the Silent Auction held in conjunction with the annual Christmas Banquet. In years past, generous donors and bidders have combined to enhance YVAS's budget. Craft and new or gently used items with a conservation connection have proven popular at this event. By donating your items early, you ease the event's last minute workload. Do it today!

BEAUTIFUL BIRD CALENDARS FOR SALE !!!

Birds of Washington State are featured on this Bird Note 2011 wall calendar with stunning photos by Paul Bannick: Acorn Woodpecker, the elusive White-tailed Ptarmigan, Peregrine Falcon with prey in talons, (ha, not so elusive for us!), Boreal Chickadee, Sharp-tailed Grouse in mating display, Barn Owl, Western Tanager, Common Nighthawk, Burrowing Owl, Brown-capped Rosy Finch, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Sandhill Crane, Spruce Grouse, and Northern Saw-Whet Owl. Yeah, that's 14 species, including one for the front cover and one for the back cover. The calendars are going like hotcakes, but hopefully we'll have a few left for sale at the next chapter meeting!

They're only \$10 each.



CONSERVATION
ANGIE BEGOSH

US Fish & Wildlife Service Initiates 30-Day Public Scoping Period for Preparation of WDFW Wildlife Areas HCP EIS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) set a 30-day public scoping period for a proposed Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) covering the 32 wildlife areas managed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The scoping is part of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) required under the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments taken during this period will assist in development of the EIS.

A little background for those not completely familiar with some of the policy terminology. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was signed into law on January 1, 1971, and essentially established this country's environmental policies. NEPA requires that agencies evaluate the effect their proposed actions will have on the environment before moving forward. It also requires that citizens be involved in the process through public comment periods. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a report that includes a proposed project's purpose and need, a description of the affected environment, a range of alternatives to the proposed action, and documents the potential effects to the environment, both negative and positive. An EIS is not final until a draft form has been released for public comment. A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is an agreement that specifies the federally listed species and geographic area to be covered, and outlines the conservation strategies that will be followed to avoid, minimize or mitigate incidental take. "Take" is defined by the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect any threatened or endangered species, or attempt to engage in such contact. An action is defined as "take" even if it is not intentional.

WDFW's proposed HCP includes a federal incidental "take" permit (ITP) to allow standard land management and operations activities, agriculture, and recreation on its wildlife areas. Those approximately 900,000 acres of WDFW-owned or managed lands host fish, wildlife, invertebrate and plant species that are ESA-protected. If granted, the permit would authorize the incidental take of 32 listed species, plus 20 unlisted species should they become listed under the ESA during the term of the HCP. These species are: marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, western snowy plover, Oregon silverspot butterfly, golden paintbrush, howellia, Spalding's silene, Ute ladies' tresses, Columbian white-tailed deer, gray wolf, grizzly bear, lynx, pygmy rabbit, and the bull trout. The applications also request incidental take authorization for the following species under NMFS jurisdiction: chinook salmon Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESUs) in Puget Sound, the Lower Columbia River, Upper Columbia River springrun, Upper Willamette River, Snake River fall-run and the Snake

River spring/summer-run; chum salmon ESUs in the Columbia River and Hood Canal (summer run); coho salmon ESUs in the Lower Columbia River; steelhead Distinct Population Segments (DPSs) in Puget Sound, Snake River Basin, the Lower Columbia River, Middle Columbia River, Upper Columbia River, and the Upper Willamette River; sockeye salmon ESUs in Ozette Lake and the Snake River; the Southern DPS of the pacific eulachon; and the Southern DPS of the green sturgeon. The WDFW also requests incidental take for the following unlisted species under FWS jurisdiction should they become listed during the term of the HCP: burrowing owl, greater sagegrouse, sharp-tailed grouse, slenderbilled white breasted nuthatch, streaked horned lark, northern leopard frog, Oregon spotted frog, Rocky Mountain tailed frog, sagebrush lizard, striped whipsnake, Van Dyke's salamander, western pond turtle, mardon skipper, Taylor's checkerspot, valley silverspot, westslope cutthroat trout, fisher, Townsends western big-eared bat, Washington ground squirrel and the western pocket gopher.

The HCP would cover activities such as horseback riding and dog field trial events; construction, maintenance, removal and operation of upland infrastructures, water control structures, and water crossing structures; non-chemical weed control; forest management; livestock grazing and associated activities; agriculture and associated activities; irrigation; upland bird stocking; wildlife feeding; routine habitat management; and habitat restoration. In other words, these activities on a state wildlife area could continue even if a protected species was unintentionally harmed, provided that conservation measures in the plan are implemented to minimize and mitigate any harm.

The Service is seeking, in particular, specific comments on:

- (1) The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that implementation of any reasonable alternative could have on endangered and threatened species, and other unlisted species and their habitats;
- (2) Other reasonable alternatives (in addition to the HCP), and their associated effects;
- (3) Measures that would minimize and mitigate potentially adverse effects of the proposed project;
- (4) Baseline environmental conditions and/or important species observations within the WDFW wildlife areas;
- (5) The term of the ITPs;
- (6) Covered activities that should or should not be part of the HCP;
- (7) Wildlife areas that should or should not be part of the HCP;
- (8) Species that should or should not be on the ITPs;



FIELD TRIPS

DENNY GRANSTRAND

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.

- Oct 27 Wednesday Morning Bird Walk** - Meet the group at the Popoff Trail parking lot at the east end of Valley Mall Blvd. at **9:00 am**.
- Nov 10 Wednesday Morning Bird Walk** - Meet the group at the Popoff Trail parking lot at the east end of Valley Mall Blvd. at **9:00 am**.
- Nov 13 McNary NWR and Tri-Cities birding** - This trip offers a superb opportunity to study a variety of waterfowl, including geese, dabbling, and diving ducks at McNary Pool at the refuge at the height of waterfowl migration. We will also look for birds of prey, gulls, and songbirds at a variety of locations in Benton County. Meet at 7:30 am at the Sears parking lot west of IHOP, Valley Mall Blvd. Contact Bill Drenguis at 965-5808.
- Dec. 18 Toppenish Christmas Bird Count** – Contact Compiler Andy Stepniewski (877-6639 or steppie@nwinfo.net) if you would like to attend or if you would like more information.
- Jan 2 Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count** – Contact Compiler Denny Granstrand (453-2500 or dgranstrand@gmail.com) if you would like to attend or if you would like more information.



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.



BIRDS & WORDS, PHOTOS & KUDOS

RICHARD REPP



Ross's Goose
Photo by Jim Christensen

Ah, autumn and the Halloween season...goblins, ghosts, black cats, bats and...birds??

Birding is a colorful pursuit and, therefore, rarely black and white. However on October 6, **Jim Christensen** unmasked a thusly-plumaged **Ross's Goose** at Randle Park. A Yakima County first record discovered at a city park is akin to someone dropping a five-pound Hershey bar into your plastic pumpkin on Halloween. It seems too good to be true! Yet this bird hung around for days, posing for enough photographs to eliminate any doubt to its purity.

According to the Birds of North America Online, the Ross's Goose was first described in 1860 but: "Its arctic nesting grounds remained unknown for another 80 years until Angus Gavin, a manager with the Hudson's Bay Company, located them in the Perry River region of the central Canadian Arctic in 1940." Once abundant in California, heavy losses to hunting related early 1900's game markets occurred. However, "...total number of birds have increased from a recorded low of 2,000–3,000 in the early 1950s to

more than 188,000 recorded nesting in (Canada's) Queen Maud Gulf Migratory Bird Sanctuary in 1988" Concerns remain as, "Winter range in Central Valley, CA, which constitutes former exclusive winter range of Ross's Goose, has about 6% of original wetlands; most were lost to rice, cotton, and other crops in the nineteenth century. Availability of water at roost areas has been reduced by increasing conflicts with municipal and agricultural demands."

In the week following the Ross's appearance, many birders trekked to Randall. Among the more pedestrian costumed birds loafing at the location were two **Greater White-fronted Geese** and one minima subspecies **Cackling Goose** – the Cackler being the equivalent of the "fun size" candy bars dominating trick or treat offerings. At a distance of eight feet, it was both fun

Vredenburg Box Rentals to Increase?

At their September meeting, the Board of Directors voted to restructure the fee paid by sponsors of bluebird nest boxes on the Vredenburg Trail. The “rental” rate for the boxes has been five dollars per year for some time.

The Board also recognizes that, in the current economic climate, the budgets of some sponsors may already be stressed. To ensure that none of the trail’s current sponsors are forced to cancel, the Board settled on a proposal that will allow each individual to select a rate compatible with their financial obligations.

The new rate structure consists of three tiers or levels; each sponsor will choose the level that reflects their interest and/or ability to pay. In effect, the rate increase will be entirely voluntary. The three levels are:

- Level 1: Chickadee - \$5.00 per year
- Level 2: Western Bluebird - \$7.00 per year
- Level 3: Mountain Bluebird - \$10.00 per year

When the Mountain Bluebird rate of \$10.00 per year is chosen, the box sponsor’s name in the October Crier’s Trail Report will be printed in bold text. As an example, we have used bold text for two of our memorial boxes, #26 and #119, in this year’s recap

Revenue generated in excess of trail expenses will be used to help YVAS’s conservation and education outreach efforts. In the past year, the YVAS has given financial support to: Raptor House (a local nonprofit bird rehab facility), Cowiche Canyon Conservancy (for land acquisition at Snow Mountain Ranch), Washington State Audubon (birding trail maps and administration), National Audubon Society (fund to assist in the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico), Yakima Greenway, Yakima Area Arboretum, and other conservation organizations.

Many of the trail’s boxes are sponsored by people who live outside of the Yakima Valley and, therefore, may not be involved in YVAS’s two primary fundraisers – the May Birdathon and the December Silent Auction. The new rate structure will allow those who believe in YVAS’s mission and the spirit of the Vredenburg Bluebird Trail to make a financial contribution.

The perils facing birds, wildlife and habitat will remain in the future. Please keep this in mind when selecting your sponsorship level. And, yes, if you are able to contribute more than ten dollars per year, we will gratefully accept your donation.

Sponsors – please check the Paid Thru column in the trail recap elsewhere in this Crier. If your rental expires in 2010,



A Pair of Western Bluebirds
Photo by Mac Knight

please consider this your first reminder to remit your renewal. A reminder card will be sent to sponsors of boxes that have not been renewed by Nov 30. Mail your check to:

Yakima Valley Audubon Society
ATTN: BLUEBIRDS
P O Box 2823
Yakima, WA 98907

To avoid confusion, please enclose a note indicating the box(es) and the payment level you are choosing. An email address or a phone number on your note will allow us to quickly resolve any payment questions.

The Vredenburg Bluebird Trail was established in 1982 and is YVAS’s longest running conservation and outreach effort. The nest boxes on the trail are well maintained due (in no small part) to the efforts of Larry Robinson to build replacements and to repair damaged/worn boxes. In early April, a team of volunteers prepares for the coming season by inspecting and cleaning every box on the trail. This year, each of the 132

nest boxes was checked at least twelve times during the nesting season. That equates to lifting roofs 1,700 times; recording each of these observations on a field worksheet; tabulating species, eggs, nestlings and determining the number fledged; entering the data collected onto the annual report printed in the October Crier.

Effort is expended in recruiting, briefing and coordinating volunteer monitors. Worksheets, instructions, and informational aids must be prepared and exchanged with each week’s monitors. The average distance each monitor must travel to reach the trail is close to 25 miles. It takes approximately six hours each week to monitor the trail. Monitors are dedicated; the trail is checked on cool, rainy spring days as well as on the hottest days of summer. While some boxes have easy access on the shoulder of the road, many require a trek up sloping hillsides. Sponsorship lists are maintained. Payment reminders must be sent, change of addresses recorded, payments logged.

Countless hours and a lot of effort is spent on the Vredenburg Bluebird trail every year. Why do we do this? One answer was given by Virginia Vredenburg, one of the trail’s founders, in a newspaper interview in 1995. “The first time I looked into a bluebird box and saw those darling little birds, it was love at first sight,” she recalled. Indeed, to peer into a box and view blue eggs, is awesome. Seeing freshly hatched chicks is breathtaking. Glimpsing fully feathered nestlings on the threshold of fledging is exhilarating. We do this because we are bluebirders! Sponsor, monitor, builder, and record-keeper – all true to the blue.

— Richard Repp —

2010 VREDENBURGH BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT

Box	Sponsor	Species	Eggs	Flg	Paid thru	Box	Sponsor	Species	Eggs	Flg	Paid thru
1	Harold Vredenburg	W	6	6	2020	34	Sarah Burke	W	5	5	2011
2	Ella Friedenson	W	5	5	2010	35	Joe & Alberta McGuire	W	3	0	2010
3	Alice Nevue	W	9	8	2010						
4	Steven & Marcia Shotwell	W	9	4	2010	36	Larry Robinson	W	6	0	2010
5	Sparrow Nevue	W	5	5	2010	37	Cathy LeCompte	WBNU	0	0	2010
6	Betty Peterson	W	5	0	2010	38	Charlotte Pfiesser	W	4	4	2010
7	Nita Coleman	W	5	0	2010						
8	L. R. Putman	W	8	0	2010	39	Maia Mittlestaedt	W	9	4	2011
9	Bob Wahl	W	5	0	2010	39A	Joan Gilman	W	4	2	2011
10	Joe & Alberta McGuire	W	5	0	2010	40	Gertrude Repp Memorial	W	5	4	2010
11	Steven & Marcia Shotwell	W	6	6	2010	41	Joan Gilman	W	7	4	2011
12	Russel Shelden Memorial	W	4	4	2010	42	Lavina Doty	wren			2010
13	L. R. Putman	W	7	7	2010	43	Maia Mittlestaedt	W	6	0	2011
13a	David & Becki Hartwig	W	6	6	2010	44	Dorothy Munroe	W	6	5	2010
14	Megan & Ted Friedenson	W	6	0	2010	45	Jerry & M. A. Ruthruff	W	5	4	2010
15	L. R. Putman	W	5	4	2010	46	Nature Artists Garden Club	W	6	6	2010
16	Rachel Bold	W	2	1	2010	47	Joan Gilman	W	4	4	2010
17	Michael West	W	5	5	2011	48	Janice Ferguson	W	6	4	2011
18	Nita Coleman	W	6	6	2010	49	Cathy LeCompte	W	3	0	2010
19	L. R. Putman	W	5	5	2010	50	Cathy LeCompte	W	6	0	2010
20	Abigail Chipps	W	5	4	2010	51	Ron Sell	W	6	0	2011
21	Pete & Pam Neumann	W	5	4	2010	52	Linda Knutson	W	0	0	2011
22	Leslie Wahl	W	5	5	2010	53	Megan & Steven Pooler	W	5	5	2010
22A	Robert English	W	4	0	2010	54	Kay Marsh	W	6	3	2010
23	John & Muriel Ainsworth	W	6	6	PMBD	55	Kay Marsh	W	5	4	2010
24	Virginia Gill	W	2	0	2010	56	Denny Granstrand	W	7	0	2012
25	Betty Peterson	W	5	5	2010	57	William & Kelley Strange	W	6	6	2010
26	Arlene Wood Memorial*	W	6	0	PMBD	58	Janice Ferguson	W	6	6	2010
27	Kay Marsh	W	6	6	2010	59	Denny Granstrand	W	5	0	2012
28	Cathy LeCompte	W	4	2	2010	60	Megan & Steven Pooler	W	8	4	2010
29	Donna Zimmerschied	W	5	0	2010	61	John Meyer Memorial	W	5	4	2010
30	Betty & Greg Neumann	W	5	3	2010	62	Martha Anderson	W	5	0	2012
31	Donna Zimmerschied	W	11	5	2010	63	Tom Wilson	W	6	5	2010
32	Larry Robinson	W	6	6	2010	64	Mike & Carolyn Wood	W	7	0	2010
33	L. R. Putman	W	5	4	2010	65	Lucky Hall	W	5	0	2011

2010 VREDENBURGH BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT (CONT'D)

Box	Sponsor	Species	Eggs	Flg	Paid thru	Box	Sponsor	Species	Eggs	Flg	Paid thru
66	Carol Phillips	W	5	5	2010	101	Amy Sinden	W	5	4	2010
67	William & Kelley Strange	W	10	8	2010	102	Jean Chott	W	6	0	2010
68	Noel Knoke	W	5	5	2010	103	Mary Ellen Silvers	W	6	0	2010
69	Janet White	W	10	4	2010	104	Richard Repp	W	5	0	2010
70	Joan Gilman	W	5	4	2010	105	Jim Ehret	W	6	2	2010
71	Bob & Helen Stuckey	W	9	4	2011	106	Joan Miler	W	5	0	2010
72	Grover & Louise Eakman	W	7	7	2010	107	Joan Miler	W	8	0	2010
73	Chris Sorenson	W	5	5	2010	108	Raleigh Watts	W	10	5	2010
74	Hannah Born	W	5	5	2010	109	Andy & Ellen Stepniewski	W	11	0	2010
75	Grover & Louise Eakman	W	13	5	2010	110	Martha Fleming	W	3	0	2010
76	Margaret Morris	W	2	2	2010	111	Martha Fleming	W	8	0	2010
77	Shannon O'Malley	W	11	0	2010	112	Dotty Armstrong	W	6	4	2010
78	Conner O'Malley	W	6	3	2012	113	Lavina Doty	W	5	3	2010
79	Toppenish Garden Club	W	5	5	2010	114	Joan Gilman	M	5	5	2010
80	Adam Newhouse	W	9	4	2010	114 A	Justine Repp-Faith	M	5	4	2010
81	Hunter Headley	M	10	7	2010	115	Vera Backstrom	M	5	5	2010
82	Bettie Soden	M	4	0	2010	116	Dorothy Munroe	W	0	0	2010
83	Toppenish Garden Club	W	7	0	2010	117	John & Ann Brangwin	M	6	0	2010
84	Caitlin O'Malley	W	11	0	2012	118	Noel Knoke	W	6	5	2010
85	Julianne Jensen	W	5	5	2010	119	Jack Whitnall*	W	3	0	PMBD
86	Paige Jensen	W	6	5	2010	120	Apple Blossom Garden Club	M	6	6	2010
87	Jenna Jensen	W	4	1	2010	121	Andy & Ellen Stepniewski	W	3	0	2010
88	Marie Brangwin	W	6	6	2010	122	Lavina Doty	HOSP	0	0	2010
88A	Sandra Bowman	W	0	0	2014	123	Lavina Doty	M	4	0	2010
89	Peter Sorenson	W	5	5	2010	123A	Ariana Faith	M	4	2	2010
90	Bill & Edith Ryan	W	6	6	2011	124	Mt. Clemen Garden Club	W	10	0	2010
91	Patrick Burke	W	9	6	2011	125	Virginia Vredenburgh	M	5	5	PMBD
92	Leslie Burke	W	6	0	2011		TOTAL FLEDGED			378	
93	Joan Gilman	W	4	3	2010		WESTERN BLUEBIRD			344	
94	John & Sally English	W	6	0	2010		MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD			34	
95	Joyce Meyer	W	5	0	2011		OTHER SPECIES			0	
96	Kay Marsh	W	6	4	2010						
96A	Ewell & Rosemary Jones	W	6	6	2010						
97	Alwin Berger Memorial	W	0	0	2012						
98	P. A. Fitzpatrick	W	3	2	2010						
99	Herb & Lois Roberts Memorial	W	6	0	2010						
100	Susie Lattomus	W	4	1	2010						

Key:

Flg = Fledged
 W = Western Bluebird
 TRES = Tree Swallow
 WBNU = White-breasted Nuthatch
 HOSP = House Sparrow
 PMBD = Proclaimed Memorial by Board of Directors
 M = Mountain Bluebird
 MOCH = Mountain Chickadee
 HOFI = House Finch
 chip = Chipmunk

* Sponsor's name in **bold text** indicates payment at Mountain Bluebird Rate (\$10 per year)

Vredenburg Trail – 2010 Cools Down

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 to honor both Virginia and Harold Vredenburg in recognition of their years of tireless devotion to help bluebirds flourish in Yakima County.

For the third consecutive year, a cool, wet spring impacted the bluebirds nesting strategy. In 2008 and 2009, the bluebirds were able to overcome a delayed start with both years posting fledge totals over 550 young. This year, persisting spring rains wreaked havoc with spring nesting efforts.

At numerous boxes, egg laying seemed to stutter-start. Rain followed early warm weather causing nesting birds that had laid a few eggs to fail to complete clutches. Many early chicks perished, presumably from the lack of insect prey during the cool, rainy interruptions.

Conversations among fishermen frequently center on the one that got away. After two years of record setting fledge totals, bluebirds returned to the Vredenburg in droves this spring. Bluebirds built nests in 129 of the trail's 132 boxes: 127 of those nests held bluebird eggs at some point during the season. 2010 must go down as the year that got away. With decent weather, this should have been the first year to total over 600 fledged young.

Despite poor weather, this year's nesting bluebird pairs distinguished themselves as a scrappy lot. They held off later arriving House Wrens admirably; they usurped four boxes from White-breasted Nuthatches and, as reported in last month's Crier, managed to out last dreaded House Sparrows at one box. This year's fledge total of 378 was hard earned!

In one of the year's more interesting developments, a European Starling managed to enlarge Box 28's entrance hole to gain entry and complete a nest. Peering into the box and viewing a large black bird was quite a shock! The non-native was ousted and a new predator guard installed. Western Bluebirds then occupied the box and fledged two young.

To borrow a signature line from baseball's Chicago Cubs fans, "Wait until next year!"

— Richard Repp —

	WEBL	MOBL	BB sp	BB tot
1982	72	54		126
1983	125	66		191
1984	144	133		277
1985	115	82	17	214
1986	259	150		409
1987	299	209		508
1988	311	151		462
1989	319	148		467
1990	304	118		422
1991	204	87		291
1992	211	147		358
1993	267	125		392
1994	310	167		477
1995	258	128		386
1996	319	152		471
1997	413	120		533
1998	347	141	62	550
1999	276	118	7	401
2000	383	115	44	542
2001	347	105	6	458
2002	315	81	59	455
2003	283	93	19	395
2004	332	90	17	439
2005	320	16		336
2006	235	66		301
2007	334	91		425
2008	518	51		569
2009	504	74		578
2010	344	34		378
TOTAL	8468	3112	231	11811
WEBL = Western Bluebird MOBL = Mountain Bluebird				

Vredenburg Trail - Thank You Monitors

A well deserved thank you is hereby extended to all the volunteer monitors who gathered data during the nesting season: Eileen & Dan Kinney, Kailie & Shannon Kinney, Mary & Gus Pooler, Marsha Fleming, JoAnn Platt, Pat Stebing, Nancy Born, Hannah Born, Linda Sumner, Dorothy Brink, Mary Belzer, Jean Chott, Judy & Jan Gano, Joy McKinney & friends, Vera Backstrom, Dotty Armstrong, Leslie & Bob Wahl, Angie Begosh, Jason Riggins, Jeanne Crawford, Jackie & Jim Hertel, Susan Gallegos, and Elizabeth Bohn.

Additionally, birding enthusiasts attending the Washington

Audubon Memorial Day Wenas Campout again assisted with the monitoring. Campers participating this year: Debra Herman (Richland), Chloe & Luke Yugawa (Seattle), Dan Fender & Nancy Nelson (Olympia), the Ellen Stevenson family (Vancouver), the Dorothy Grazul family (Camas), Ana Feldman (Seattle), Stef & Yarrow VanDyke (Seattle), and Tracey Scalici (Tumwater).

I am sure that the trail's founders and sponsors are grateful for the efforts expended by all the monitors in this 29th year of the trail's existence. Job well done!

— Richard Repp —

Birds & Words, Photos and Kudos continued from page 4



Acorn Woodpecker
Photo by Mike Roper

and a treat to compare this midget with like-sized **Mallards**.

A bit more fitting for the garish costume season is the **Acorn Woodpecker**. In the Essential Field Guide Companion, Pete Dunne duns the Acorn as, "A medium-sized, somewhat stocky woodpecker whose histrionic plumage, animation,

and noisome volcalizations demand attention. The conservatively patterned black back, dark-bibbed and darkly streaked breast, and white-bellied body lay a staid foundation for the bird's outlandishly patterned 'clown face.' From the golf tee-shaped bill to the white face, crazed yellow eye, and red beanie, the bird is the caricature of a clown."

Though fairly common south of our state, the Washington population of Acorn Woodpeckers is limited to small handful of birds in the Lyle area. Three of Yakima County's four records have originated at Fort Simcoe. **Kerry Turley** tweaked Simcoe's oaks for this latest vagrant on Oct 3. **Debie Brown**, in a follow-up visit to the Fort a week later dredged up yet another county rarity. Despite its ghoulish first name (think of midnight mist rising from a isolated quagmire), the **Swamp Sparrow** is reputed to readily respond to a birder "squeaking" at a wetland's edge.

Speaking of swamps, low water at the Satus Wildlife Area provided **John Hebert** a birder's bonanza. Mud there had carp as thick as kids squigilling through the affluent Tancarra development on Halloween night. Gathered to collect fishy treats were 27 **Great Blue Herons**, 23 **Double-crested Cormorants**, 13 **Great Egrets**, three **American Bitterns** and three **Black-crowned Night-Herons**. Boasting broad bills wasn't enough for Satus that day. John wasn't about to turn his nose up at the upturned bills of a flock of 16 **Greater Yellowlegs**.

And if a bird ever looked like Count Dracula, it would have to be the **Turkey Vulture**. Most of these summer visitors have departed south, but **Joe Schons'** sharp eyes put a stake through one cruising over the Yakima River Canyon. The same evening, (Oct 8) Joe hawked a **Common Nighthawk** drifting over the ponds east of Selah. According to records maintained at the Washington Ornithological Society, the latest this species has ever been reported in Washington State is October 11.

After visually googling two **Snow Geese** flying with four **Greater White-fronted Geese** near the intersection of Old Goldendale and Marion Drain Roads, **Denny Granstrand** goosed it for Randall Park. There he added Canada and Ross's to his gaggle to complete a county four-geese species day.

On Sep 21, **Scott Ray** parked at the top of Chinook Pass to walk towards Sheep Lake. He hadn't advanced beyond the vehicular parking lot noise when he detected the song of **Pine Grosbeaks**. Shortly, two male Grosbeaks rammed into view – a detection deserving disclosure and certainly nothing to be



Greater White-fronted Goose
Photo by Denny Granstrand

sheepish about, regardless of the quality of the September songs.

As we close out this months field reports, it seems odd that no raptors have been mentioned. Oh sure, there is that late Turkey Vulture but technically it may be closer to rails and cranes than to raptors. And there is that Turkey part of the name. Adult **Bald Eagles** were in the lowlands however. **Vera Backstrom** veered along Hwy 12 near the Naches Water Treatment Plant, as a Bald one was perched above the Naches River. **Ellen Stepniewski** eyed another just south of Union Gap. Ellen also ogled a Buchanan Lake late **Osprey** on the same commute.

As for member's yards, **Ron and Debie Brown** continued their fantastic fall foray of migrants when a **White-throated Sparrow** tarried at their Konnowac Pass birdbath. Over in Terrace Heights, **Alice and Mike Roper** roped a yard first **Anna's Hummingbird**. Of a cooler connotation, the Ropers also entertained a passing **Winter (brrr!) Wren**.



White-throated Sparrow
Photo by George Vlahakis

Lots of sugar will be passed out on Oct 31; those readers with active hummingbird feeders should endeavor to stock their nectar feeders as any hummingbird in the valley at this time of year would most likely be an Anna's Hummingbird that may be intent on over wintering.

US Fish & Wildlife Public Scoping Period continued from page 3

- (9) Biological information regarding requested covered species;
- (10) Monitoring and adaptive management that might be relevant to the project; and
- (11) Other plans or projects that might be relevant to this project.

Detailed information on the project is available at <http://www.fws.gov/wafwo/>.

Comments will be taken through Nov. 1 and public meetings are scheduled Oct. 19-27 to introduce the proposed action, explain the NEPA public participation process, and solicit public comment.

- Tues., Oct. 19, at Everett Community College, 2000 Tower Street, Whitehorse Hall, Room 105, Everett
- Wed., Oct. 20, at FWS and NMFS Office, 510 Desmond Drive, Sawyer Hall, Lacey

- Tues., Oct. 26, at Hal Homes Center, 209 N. Ruby Street, Teanaway Room, Ellensburg

- Wed., Oct. 27, at Spokane Valley Center Place, 2426 N. Discovery Place, Room 109, Spokane Valley.

FWS is accepting all comments through Nov. 1 on the scope of the EIS, the range of alternatives, and the impacts that should be analyzed. You can email your comments to: wdfwwlareahcp@fws.gov.

I will be reviewing the documents and attending the public meeting in Ellensburg, and will work with the Board to determine if we will officially submit comments in this process. We strongly encourage any of you who are interested to participate in this process, as the intent of NEPA is to have the public help shape environmental policy.

— Angie Begosh —

Election at October Chapter Meeting

At the October chapter meeting we will be having an election of officers, as specified by the YVAS bylaws. Here is the current slate of candidates for positions to be filled this year:

President-elect: (no candidate yet – your opportunity??)
 Secretary: Vera Backstrom
 Treasurer: Ellen Stepniewski

Angie Begosh assumed the Chair of the Conservation Committee, one of YVAS's most time consuming positions, in July. Angie also is one of our three Directors. Understandably, she is willing to relinquish her Director position. Should you be interested in any of the above positions, contact President Bill or any board member. YVAS could use your help and talents!

Warm up for the Christmas Bird Counts by participating in the Thanksgiving Bird Count — it's fun, it lasts only one hour, and you can do it anywhere you want!

Take part in the annual Thanksgiving Bird Count on Thanksgiving Day. The counter chooses the time that best fits his/her holiday schedule. The Count lasts for only ONE HOUR, and is made in a count circle only 15 FEET in diameter.

The location of the circle is determined by the counter. Actually, the circle can be considered a cylinder, since all birds seen on the ground (or water), in vegetation or flying over or through the circle can be counted.

Individual birds are to be counted only once during the hour, even if they continue to pay visits. Flocks should be estimated or counted and just the highest number observed at any one time used.

More information and a report form can be found on-line at:

<http://www.palouseaudubon.org/Checklists/THANKSGIVING.pdf>

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 _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

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**

COZY090Z

Send the form and your check to :
 YVAS Membership
 P.O. Box 2823
 Yakima, WA 98907-2823

If you have any questions, please call 248-1963.



Male Wood Duck (above)

Two stunning photos by Jim Christensen

Getting nice photos of birds in flight is extremely difficult. These two photos are about as good as they get. Both of the photos were taken along the Yakima Greenway.



Black-billed Magpie (right)

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.

2010 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD

President	Bill Drenguis (DRENGUIS@aol.com)	965-5808	Membership	Debie Brown Sturnella@aol.com	248-3878
Vice President	Open		Newsletter Editor	Elizabeth Bohn (elizabethannbohn@yahoo.com)	901-1886
Past-president	Kerry Turley (kdturley@embarqmail.com)	837-6930	Programs	Andy Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net)	877-6639
Secretary	Vera Backstrom (vback47@gmail.com)	731-2103	Special Committees:		
Treasurer	Ellen Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net)	877-6639	Bird Rehabilitator	Connie Hughes (CHbirdlady@msn.com)	457-5661
Directors:	Angie Begosh (mollybot5@hotmail.com)	834-1528	Bird Reports	Richard Repp (Rich712@aol.com)	965-1134
	Jan Gano (gano12@earthlink.net)	966-4539	Bluebird Trail	Richard Repp (sponsorship records)	965-1134
	Bob Wahl (reljwahl@msn.com)	452-9183	Courtesy	Open	
Standing (Voting) Committee Chairs:			Important Bird Areas	John Hebert hejohn1126@msn.com	965-8235
Audubon Hoegar Preserve	Leslie Wahl (reljwahl@msn.com)	452-9183	Publicity	Denny Granstrand (dgranstrand@gmail.com)	453-2500
Audubon Refuge Keeper	Kerry Turley (kdturley@embarqmail.com)	837-6930	Social	Open	
Bluebird Trail	Richard Repp (Rich712@aol.com)	965-1134	Volunteer Recognition	vacant	
Conservation	Angie Begosh (mollybot5@hotmail.com)	834-1528	Webmaster	John Hebert (hejohn1126@msn.com)	965-8235
Education	Jenny Snyder (jlsnyder001@hotmail.com)		Website	www.yakimaaudubon.org	
Field Trips	Denny Granstrand (dgranstrand@gmail.com)	453-2500	Toppenish NWR CBC	Andy Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net)	877-6639
Fund Raising	Dan Kinney (insur3@charter.net)	452-3260	Yakima Valley CBC	Denny Granstrand (dgranstrand@gmail.com)	453-2500
			Yakima Valley Audubon Voice Mail		248-1963