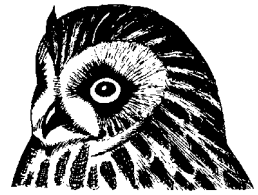


THE PRAIRIE OWL



PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 32, Issue 3, January 2004

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

One of the books I'm reading at the moment is *The Ingredients* by Philip Ball. Ball is an Editor at the prestigious journal *Nature* and *The Ingredients* is one of his many books that bring science and technology to the general public. *The Ingredients* is an introduction to the elements and, among other things, describes how some of the elements got their names. One of the general rules is that you don't name an element after yourself. You may have an element named after you but it is bad form to be so presumptive. One exception may be the element gallium. Frenchman Paul-Émile Lecoq discovered gallium in 1875. *Gallia* is Latin for France, but *gallus* is Latin for cockerel, which in French is *le coq*. So maybe Lecoq was indulging in a little self-aggrandizement.

Reading about elements and how they got their names I began to think more about *le coq* and how birds are named. The Grosbeak is one that is quite straightforward and comes from the French *gros*, "large", and *bec* "beak". For many species the origin of their English name differs from their Latin name. The coot is found worldwide. The name "coot" is supposedly imitative of their call (more so the Eurasian species than the American). The Latin name for the American coot is *Fulica Americana*—*fuligo* is Latin for "soot". The saying "bald as a coot" comes from the Eurasian species (*F. atra*), which has a forehead shield that is completely white. One bird that is perfectly named for the beginning birder is the yellow-headed blackbird. It is impossible to misidentify the adult male, even a non-birding friend of mine got this one right: "Look, there's a yellow headed black bird" he exclaimed on a trip to Turnbull Wildlife Refuge.

Some birds are named after people. These people haven't often made it into the general consciousness in the same way that the people elements are named after have. Albert Einstein and Marie Curie are names that are recognized far beyond the fields of physics and chemistry. Dr. William Gambel and Thomas Bewick are not names that are familiar to most people. But Dr. William Gambel and Thomas Bewick each have two birds named after them. (No person has two elements named after them!) Gambel's quail (*Callipepla gambelii*) is a southwestern species of quail that looks quite similar to the familiar California quail that is widespread in eastern Washington. The Mountain chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*) is also named after Gambel. This species is not as numerous in our area as the black-capped variety, but we usually get a few Mountain chickadees in the Christmas count. Gambel discovered

many new birds in the western U.S., but died of typhoid fever in California at quite a young age.

In 1804 Thomas Bewick wrote *A History of British Birds*. The eponymous swan is a Eurasian species and a winter visitor to the UK turning up usually in the eastern part of the country, known as East Anglia, and at the delightful Slimbridge wildlife refuge, which has a very nice pub just outside! Bewick's wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*) is a regular species seen on the Palouse. It is distinguishable from our other wren species by its prominent white eye stripe and the white spots on the tail edges. Good locations to find Bewick's wren include Steptoe Butte (the picnic area at the bottom) and at Wawawai Park.

Editor

CALENDAR

JANUARY (Happy New Year!)

- 1 – FIELD TRIP Lewiston area with Jane Westervelt
- 3 – LEWISTON-CLARKSTON Christmas Bird Count
- 5 – PALOUSE AUDUBON BOARD MEETING 7.30 pm
- 21 – PROGRAM - Undetermined at this time. Please watch for an announcement in the local newspapers or on our website at: <http://www.palouseaudubon.org/>
- 24 – FIELD TRIP Lewiston area

FEBRUARY

- 2 – PALOUSE AUDUBON BOARD MEETING 7.30 pm
- 14 – GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT
- 18 – PROGRAM *TAKING WING: Recent Advances in our Understanding of Migration* - Dr. Mike Webster, Associate Professor, Department of Biology, Washington State University and Gabe Colbeck, Washington State University Research Assistant
- 21 – FIELD TRIP Snake River Parks with Charles Swift

WSU RAPTOR CLUB INFORMATION

Shea Miller of the WSU Raptor Club is seeking information on owl, hawk and falcon nest sites. Oftentimes during the spring and summer, babies of these species are in the ward. Finding a foster nest for the chick provides the best chance for it's survival in the wild. Especially needed are nest sites of barn owls and great horned owls. Please report nesting sites to: Shea Miller at

smiller@vetmed.wsu.edu.

PROGRAMS

JANUARY

21 – PROGRAM - Undetermined at the time of printing. Please watch for an announcement in the local newspapers or on our website at: <http://www.palouseaudubon.org/>

FEBRUARY

18 – **TAKING WING: Recent Advances in our Understanding of Migration** – Dr. Mike Webster, Associate Professor, Department of Biology, Washington State University and Gabe Colbeck, Washington State University Research Assistant. This program by Dr. Webster on his research of migratory warblers will certainly be both educational and impressive.

Program meetings are held at the 1912 Building, 3rd and Adams, Moscow. Everyone is welcome. Meetings begin at 7:30pm.

FIELD TRIPS

JANUARY

- 1 – **2nd ANNUAL ANTI-FOOTBALL and PRE-CBC SCOUTING FIELD TRIP** - Jane Westervelt will be searching the Valley in preparation of Saturday's Christmas Bird Count. A great way to start out the new year. Participants should meet at 8:00 am at Rosauer's in Moscow or at 9:00 am at TERMINAL 2 in North Lewiston. For people wishing to meet Jane in North Lewiston, she will remain at the terminal until 9:15 am.
- 3 – **LEWISTON-CLARKSTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT** - Join us in the banana belt for a great day of birding. The *Lewiston/Clarkston Count* always yields large numbers of waterfowl, raptors, and wintering land birds. Novice birders are welcome and will be teamed with experienced counters. Meet at 7:00 am at the Lewiston Jack in the Box, 19th St, Lewiston. Contact Charles Swift at (208) 883-0553 for additional information.
- 24 – **FIELD TRIP LEWISTON AREA WINTER ROUNDUP** - Join us in search of wintering waterfowl and sparrows. Participants should meet at the Lewiston Jack in the Box, 19th St, Lewiston at 9:00 am. We will visit the levee ponds, Hells Gate State Park, Mann Lake and other areas in the valley. Contact Tom Weber at (509) 334-3817 for additional information.

FEBRUARY

14 – **GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT** - The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society are asking all bird enthusiasts across North America to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) by counting birds February 13 through 16, 2004. Instructions are available at the GBBC web

site, as are the results from previous counts. For more information, visit the Great Backyard Bird Count web site at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc> or contact either the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology at (800) 843-2473 or the National Audubon Society at (212) 979-3083. Applications will also be available at the Palouse Audubon, January 21, program meeting.

- 21 – **SNAKE RIVER PARKS** - This trip should feature a lot of birds and scenery. We will begin in Clarkston with stops anticipated at Chief Timothy, Central Ferry, Starbuck and Little Goose Dam, Lyons Ferry and Palouse Falls. Participants should meet at Swallows Park at 9:00 am in the last parking lot. Swallows Park is just south of Clarkston on SR129 next to the Snake River. For information, contact Charles Swift at (208) 883-0553.

REARDAN SLOUGH DEVELOPMENT

For those of you that may be unaware of recent developments on the Reardan slough (Audubon ponds) in Reardan, Lincoln Co., WA, the owner of the acreage on the east pond is planning to subdivide it and sell it for development. Fortunately, she contacted the Spokane Audubon Society first, and thanks to quick work by some dedicated people, the Inland Northwest Land Trust has made an agreement with the landowner to hold the property off the market until March 15th.

If we can come up with \$50,000.00, the property will then be held off the market for another two years – giving us time to come up with the remainder of the sale price (price to be determined after assessment completed).

We hope to acquire the 270-acre property and dedicate it as a bird sanctuary. We also hope to have better (safer) access for birders (and others!) in the future. Even with the limited access available now, there have been over 210 species of birds recorded at these ponds. They have been a major stop for birders in and traveling eastern Washington.

I hope that you, or someone you know, can help us meet the goal to preserve the Reardan Slough. We need bird lists, photographs of the ponds, photos of birders at the ponds, and, of course, donations. Any donations can be made to the Inland Northwest Land Trust (tax deductible!) <http://www.inlandnwlandtrust.org/>

Please contact me if you have any information, questions, or comments. Thanks!

Cindy McCormack, cbirds@comcast.net

FROM THE PREZ

Firstly, on behalf of myself, the officers, chairmen and trustees of the Palouse Audubon Chapter we wish for you a very **Happy New Year** filled with health, happiness and great birding. We look forward to seeing many of you at one of our great monthly programs or on a local field trip.

Secondly, I would like to personally thank all those who organized, lead or participated in our many activities during the past year. We continue to serve our communities and members with a variety of educational and exciting programs and even saw a few good birds along the way. Your participation is so vital to our success.

Our third annual Holiday Auction and program was well attended with a variety of wonderful items donated by many members. The income from the auction was a little over \$500. Mike and MerryLynn Denny traveled from Walla Walla to give a wonderful program on the *Birds of the Blue Mountains*. We are grateful for their delightful program and for coming so far to be with us. We are also most grateful to the many donors, bidders and participants that made the evening a success (despite the president's late arrival).

The income generated by the auction, however, has caused the Board to review in detail our future financial status. Our annual expense budget during the past four years has averaged about \$2,800. With your National membership dues no longer being shared with the chapter, we must find a way to generate money for our existence. This year's auction netted less than half of the total from last year's highly successful event. This fluctuation in income from the auction is entirely normal and has been experienced by other area chapters. Certainly additional forms of fundraising are possible, however, they often involve the same small group of individuals doing the work. Rather than asking a few to provide the support, the Board feels that all should share in the load.

Hopefully everyone can see the importance of a local Audubon chapter. With the National Society pretty much abandoning local involvement, it is up to the local chapters to continue grassroot conservation efforts in our communities. We do this through local conservation involvement; through education of our youth by financing Audubon Adventure Classrooms in our schools; by building within our communities an awareness of the importance of wildlife and birds; and by offering experience in that awareness through stimulating and education programs and lectures as well as through birding and wildlife field trips.

The Board agrees that a logical solution, and the one most equitable to the entire membership, is the institution of chapter dues. With a membership of roughly 300 members, an annual dues of \$10 or \$15 would adequately allow the chapter to continue our past missions. The Board doesn't fully expect all 300 members to participate, being aware that some may elect not to continue with a chapter membership in addition to the National membership – but we hope they will. Support of the local chapter is the only

way to become and stay involved. Your support of National Audubon is used primarily for a strong legislative presence.

So 2004 may bring some changes for the chapter but perhaps for the best. We hope that you will agree. A formal resolution will be published in our next *Prairie Owl* and an official vote conducted at our May program meeting. Wishing you a wonderful New Year.

Tom Weber, President



Enjoy birding at the Dungeness River Audubon Center and Railroad Bridge Park near sunny Sequim, Washington - an Important Bird Area within the lower Dungeness River riparian forest. We have informative exhibits showing the birds of the north Olympic Peninsula, plus riverside trails and beautiful parklands filled with birds and songs.

Guided bird walk every Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m.
Interpretive displays about local wildlife and the Dungeness River watershed
Educational programs for all ages
Natural history classes and presentations
Information about best local birding sites

Hours: Tues – Sat 10 - 4 p.m. and Sundays 12 - 4 p.m.
Call or come by for schedule of events and classes
2151 Hendrickson Road, Sequim, WA
360/681-4076

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

2004 Events

May 8th - Clallam County Migratory Bird Count
July 12 to 16 - Summer Nature Camp at Railroad Bridge
August 9 to 13 - Summer Nature Camp at Railroad Bridge
September 24 & 25 - Dungeness River Festival
December 20 - Sequim-Dungeness Christmas Bird Count

ABC PUBLISHES NEW BOOK - *The American Bird Conservancy Guide to the 500 Most Important Bird Areas in the United States*

This new book describes the top sites for birds and bird conservation in all 50 states, and provides key information to birdwatchers who want to visit them. The book is the culmination of six years of research by ABC scientists

working in collaboration with hundreds of biologists across the country. Complete with color illustrations, maps, and a comprehensive index, it is the perfect companion to all bird field guides and a must have for any bird enthusiast's collection.

The book is available from ABC's new online store at <http://shop.abcbirds.org/>, where a portion of all sales proceeds goes to support our conservation mission. Regular retail price is \$25.95. To find out more about ABC's work, please see their web site at: <http://www.abcbirds.org/>.

BIRDING BY EAR

by Harold Ward (first of a three part series)

Start with Common Birds

Get started by spending time on a regular basis just watching common birds. Birds, which are most comfortable around human habitation, tend to make a lot of sounds - some noisy and some melodic and pleasant.

Pay attention to the birds you already recognize and listen to the sounds they make. Get into the habit of noting the number of syllables each sound has and which ones the bird accentuates. For example, the Black-capped Chickadee's song has two or three notes, first accentuated. Its call (i.e., "chick a dee") usually has three or more syllables, first accentuated.

"Chickadee" is a transliteration; a made up word or phrase that sounds like a natural sound. Field guides include transliterations you may use to learn sounds. When you are hearing a bird sound, try to compare what you hear with the transliteration your field guide suggests. You might find that

the transliteration in your guide doesn't quite sound to you like what you're hearing from a bird. If you're sure which bird you're hearing, you may want to make up your own. Use whatever works for you.

Another tactic is to make up a mnemonic (a memory aid like the word "HOMES" used to help remember the names of the Great Lakes). If a bird's sound reminds you of something you are more familiar with (part of a song, a squeaky hinge, etc.), make a note of it. It may also be helpful if a sound you're trying to get down is done when the singer makes some gesture. Male red-winged blackbirds usually make quite a show in the wind up to delivering their songs. Seeing one perform is sometimes sufficient to cement the association of the sound with the bird's inflated gestures and wing patch display.

Don't get discouraged if you feel as if you need to relearn the sounds often; most everyone does. Take a few minutes to refresh your memory of the common birds each time you go out. Think of it as warm up exercises.

Belted Kingfishers often make a loud, shrill rattling sound especially when they're perching over a pond or stream in their territory. To hear it, visit the GEAS website at: <http://www.goldeneagleaudubon.org/birdID/BirdingbyEar/birdingbyear.htm>.

Getting started like this concentrates on building the list of sounds of birds you know so you can be more alert to the ones you still need to learn. Also, less common birds make sounds that are similar but distinct from the common birds so learning the common sounds well makes it easier to learn less common ones when you hear them.

The mission of the Palouse Audubon Society is to broaden the community's understanding of our natural world (focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats) through education and service.

Sponsor Audubon Adventures

The cost to sponsor a classroom is \$45.00. This award winning environmental education program really gets the Audubon message out to the students, teachers, and parents. Your support is greatly appreciated.

For more information, contact: Cathy Willmes, (208) 882-2649

I am enclosing \$ _____ to help sponsor Audubon Adventure classrooms.

If you know of a teacher or classroom that would like to participate in AUDUBON ADVENTURES, please note the information below. We will attempt to contact the teacher about future programs.

_____ School

_____ Teacher

_____ Telephone

Please make your tax-deductible donation payable to "Palouse Audubon Society" and send it to:
Cathy Willmes, 2152 Arbor Crest Rd, Moscow ID 83843-9106

Pullman-Moscow Count, Saturday, December 20, 2003

The following are the results for the Moscow, Idaho - Pullman, Washington Christmas Bird Count held on Saturday, December 20, 2003. Weather was rainy mixed with occasional snow throughout the day. In spite of the weather the count resulted in a new record high species count of 66 species, plus two races. The total individual birds counted was 10,246 - the second highest individual total ever recorded for this count area. An entry in bold below is a new record for the species being listed.

The results of the count are posted on the web at: <http://www.birdsource.com/>. The four-letter code for this count is IDMP. With this being our 33rd consecutive count and some results going back to 1914 for this area, there is some fascinating data, if numbers are your thing. My thanks to our field participants and feeder watchers for turning in another successful winter event.

Dave Holick, Count Coordinator.

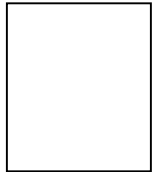
Great Blue Heron 10	Mourning Dove 389	Marsh Wren 2
Canada Goose 1019	Barn Owl 12	Golden-crowned Kinglet 12
Green-winged Teal 6	Great Horned Owl 17	Townsend's Solitaire 2
Mallard 705	Barred Owl 1	American Robin 133
Common Goldeneye 1	Short-eared Owl 4	Varied Thrush 2
Duck, (species?) 10	Long-eared Owl 1	Bohemian Waxwing 28
Bald Eagle CW	Belted Kingfisher 4	Cedar Waxwing 293
Northern Harrier 9	Downy Woodpecker 8	Northern Shrike 9
Sharp-shinned Hawk 2	Hairy Woodpecker 6	European Starling 3056
Coopers Hawk 7	Red-shafted Flicker 88	Spotted Towhee CW
Red-tail Hawk 112	Pileated Woodpecker 1	American Tree Sparrow 12
Red-tail Hawk (Harlan's) 1	Steller's Jay 4	Song Sparrow 95
Rough-leg Hawk 22	Blue Jay 1	White-crowned Sparrow 8
Buteo (species?) 12	Black-billed Magpie 463	Dark-eyed (Slate)Junco 8
American Kestrel 104	American Crow 1	Oregon Dark-eye Junco 518
Merlin 4	Common Raven 44	Dark-eyed Junco, form 88
Prairie Falcon 1	Black-capped Chickadee 127	Red-winged Blackbird 32
Falcon (species?) 1	Mountain Chickadee 17	Gray-crowned Rosy Finch 32
Gray Partridge 57	Chestnut-backed Chickadee 13	Cassin's Finch 3
Ring-neck Pheasant 208	Red-breasted Nuthatch 35	House Finch 502
Wild Turkey 52	White-breasted Nuthatch 5	Common Redpoll 83
California Quail 624	Pygmy Nuthatch 47	Pine Siskin 34
American Coot 1	Brown Creeper 9	American Goldfinch 161
Common Snipe 2	Bewick's Wren 15	House Sparrow 663
Rock Pigeon 186	House Wren 1	66 SPECIES (10,246 individuals)

Idaho Count Participants: Eric Carpenter, Jerry Cebula, Tiffany Cooper, Kas Dumroese, Christine Gray, Terry Gray, Dave Holick, Paul Holick, Curt Martyn, Barbara Morgan, Sara Robson, Joel Sauder, Debra Stenkamp, Charles Swift, Jane Westervelt. Feeder watch participants: Tom Besser, Albert Stage, Marjorie Stage.

Washington Count Participants: George Ball, Kelly Cassidy, Marie Dymkaski, Doug Flansburg, Alex Hammond, John Kramer, Kelle Van Ness, Hart Sturgeon-Reed, Tim Reed, Tom Weber, Rick Wekenman, Claire Wiser, Sharon Wiser. Feeder watch participants: Barbara Hammond.

Palouse Audubon Society

PO Box 3606
University Station
Moscow ID 83843



PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY - NEW MEMBERSHIP ONLY

Includes *National Audubon Society* membership, an annual subscription to *AUDUBON MAGAZINE* and *THE PRAIRIE OWL* Newsletter. Send your check payable to **National Audubon Society** to: Palouse Audubon Society, PO Box 3606, University Station, Moscow ID 83843. Please include this coupon. For more information call: (509) 334-3817

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE (____) _____

Membership Category (mark ONE):

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introductory Membership (1 yr) \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership \$1,000.00 | Y05 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student & Senior Citizen (62+) \$15.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> PAS Newsletter Only \$10.00 | 7XCH |

PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY

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(509) 334-3817, tweber@wsu.edu
Diane Weber, Publicity
(509) 334-3817, catbirdz@adelphia.net

MEETINGS

BOARD - 1st Monday (normally)
1/5, 2/2, 3/1, 4/5, 5/3, 6/7
MEMBERSHIP - 3rd Wednesday
1/21, 2/18, 3/10, 4/21, 5/19

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