



THE PRAIRIE OWL

PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 29, Issue 5, May 2001

PROGRAMS

MOSCOW COMMUNITY CENTER

MAY 16, 2001 - 7:30 P.M.

Palouse Prairie Restoration: Reintroducing native plants into former croplands - Dave Skinner, USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Center at WSU. This program will discuss the rapidly vanishing Palouse Prairie, and the efforts of conservation scientists to re-introduce native plants into former croplands.

A field trip to the USDA Plant Introduction Station, the Forest Sciences Lab, Kas Dumroese's place on Paradise Ridge, and the PCEI Moscow Community Garden will follow on Saturday, May 19. See inside for details on the field trip.

SEE INSIDE FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND VISIT US ON THE WEB AT:

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

CALENDAR

MAY

- 3 Palouse Prairie Foundation - 7:00pm
- 7 PAS Board Meeting - 7:30pm
- 12 International Migratory Bird Day
- also National Keep Your Cat Indoors Day
- also Benton Meadows Trip – Frances Cassirer

- 16 PAS Membership Meeting - 7:30pm
- Palouse Prairie Restoration: Reintroducing native plants into former croplands.*

- 19 Steptoe Butte/McCroskey Park Field Trip
- also Palouse Prairie Field Trip – Trish Heekin

- 25-28 Wenas Creek Audubon Campout
- 26 Orofino Field Trip – Carole Vande Voorde

JUNE

- 2 Coyote Grade / Potlatch River Field Trip
- 4 PAS Board Meeting - 7:30pm
- 9 Cataldo / Kootenai County Field Trip

The mission of the National Audubon Society is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems
- focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats -
for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity

OFFICERS & CHAIRPERSONS WANTED –

The Audubon year runs from July 1 to June 30. Elections of officers for the 2001-2002 year will take place at our May program meeting. If you would like to serve as an officer or chairperson please let any of the current officers or chairpersons know. There is always room for interested and enthused members. In particular we are in need of a **Newsletter Editor**. The *Prairie Owl* is published five (or six times) per year and mailed before the

first day of July (optional), September, November, January, March, and May. Editor duties include collection of articles and interesting materials, layout and final hard copy. Copying, folding, labeling, and applying stamps are not a part of the job description. A committee is also being formed to give our website a face lift. If you have **HTML publishing skills** or **web design experience** and would like to participate, please contact Tom Weber at (509)334-3817 (tweber@wsu.edu).

CHAPTER NEWS

From the Prez:

It appears that Spring has finally arrived – at least the birds are telling us so. Once again we are being treated to their marvelous vocal displays and territorial defenses. Young Killdeer have found their legs and are keeping mom and dad busy with parenting, and many of the bluebirds have completed their nest building. With the arrival of warmer weather and the associated insect production, baby bluebirds should be arriving soon. The last inspection of our bluebird trail near Albion, netted over 20 nests and 13 pair of Western Bluebirds. Sadly our Mountain Bluebird pair has not re-appeared. They had been nesting in the same box for four seasons and their absence may indicate that one or both of the adults have perished. We had always thrilled at seeing them. The male's color is truly indescribable. We still hold out hope for their or their offsprings return. Their box is still available and has not yet been claimed by any of the Western pairs.

International Migratory Bird Day is May 12 and I hope that you get out and participate in some of the events being scheduled. Last year Diane and I participated in the North American Migratory Count and spent from dawn to dark birding Whitman county. We tallied over 2,449 birds and 76 species for the day. It was an exhausting, yet really fun day and we look forward to participating again this year.

As this is the last newsletter until September, I wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone that made our year a success. In particular, I wish to thank those who presented or arranged our programs and activities: Judy Ferguson, Trish Heekin, Janean Creighton, Al Stage, Roger Inghram, Rita Dixon, Ed Guzman, George Hatley, Frances Cassirer, Kevin Pullen, and Dave Skinner. Also thank you to our officers and chairpersons for their dedication and leadership. But, most of all, thank you to the members who participated in and supported our many Audubon activities and programs. Many of you have supported the Adventure Classrooms, others have contributed towards the Raptor Reward Fund, and still others provided support for the Owl Nest Box project. Thank you one and all. Together we make a difference in conserving and restoring natural ecosystems for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. Have a great summer and I look forward to seeing you at our May and September programs.

Tom Weber

EDUCATION –Thanks to the generosity of members of the Palouse Audubon Society, a number of elementary school classrooms in our region enjoyed a subscription to *Audubon Adventures*. This is the award-winning environmental education program of the National Audubon Society, aimed at students in grades 4-6.

Early last fall, each participating classroom received individual student copies of four issues of the *Audubon Adventures* newsletter. The topics in this year's newsletters were

- Nature's Banquet: Fruits and Seeds
- The Living Ocean
- Owl Prowl
- From Dying to Thriving: Endangered Species

Each classroom also received an educational videotape from the Disney Channel series and a teacher's resource manual. The cost of the program is shared by the National Audubon Society and regional chapters. Sponsorship donations of \$35 from members of the Palouse Audubon Society have allowed the support of an increased number of subscriptions in each of the last few years. Seventeen classrooms in Moscow, Pullman, and nearby communities participated in the program this year.

Deary fourth grade teacher Marcielle Ratzlaff told us, "the children and I enjoy the program very much, and we do many of the activities in the resource manual." "The children and I love this program," was the assessment of Carey Fulfs, who teaches sixth grade at Pullman Middle School. When we called Jay Iverson, he told us that he was about to contact us with a request for a renewal of the subscription for his fourth grade class in Palouse. Genesee fourth grade teacher Cheryl Bielenberg commented on the nice match of an article about the Mountain Blue Bird with her unit on Idaho History.

Audubon Adventures has provided an exciting curriculum supplement for the participating classes, and is helping to increase the environmental awareness of these youngsters. If you would like to help support a classroom, send your \$35 tax-deductible donation to Palouse Audubon, PO Box 3606, University Station, Moscow, ID 83843.

MEMBERSHIP - The chapter continues to welcome and recruit new members to the Audubon family. We are very pleased with the numbers of individuals who have chosen to join us this year. We are confident that they will find membership both enjoyable and worthwhile. If you know of a person who may be interested in joining, please pass on the application found on the cover of this

newsletter or contact Diane Weber, Membership Chairman. New members receive a subscription to the award winning *Audubon Magazine* and the *Prairie Owl Newsletter*. Our success as an organization depends on our membership growth and their involvement in our mission and grass-roots conservation activities. Your participation in membership recruitment and retention is of vital importance to that success.

CONSERVATION – Members of the Palouse Audubon Society (PAS) met with Rita Dixon, Idaho Fish and Game Non-Game Biologist, on Monday, April 30. The purpose of the meeting was to elicit her input on the development of the PAS Strategic Plan for Bird Conservation in the Palouse – Clearwater Region. Rita also talked to us about her ongoing non-game programs, and discussed how we could collaborate in promoting conservation efforts. Rita has pledged to send us the latest information on avian conservation needs within our region to use in completing our conservation plan.

Although the PAS Strategic Plan is still in draft form, and will likely not be final until sometime next fall, we discussed several priority projects where Audubon member volunteers could provide assistance to Rita. Because only a relative few are present at conservation and Board meetings, there is an urgent need for more PAS members to become involved. There is a limitless amount of field work to be done. Much of the work can be very enjoyable and will make a direct contribution to wildlife conservation in our area.

Below is a partial list of priority conservation projects for which volunteer help is urgently needed this season:

- Monitoring Great Blue Heron rookery sites
- Monitoring known Northern Goshawk nests
- Searching for new Northern Goshawk nests
- Identifying important bird habitats (those that have rare habitats and/or harbor species of special concern)
- Conducting Breeding Bird Surveys
- Conducting white headed woodpecker surveys along the Salmon River above Riggins, Idaho
- Conducting white headed woodpecker surveys in Ponderosa pine stands in wilderness and roadless areas.
- Making and erecting signs offering rewards for shooting raptors
- Documenting the locations of rare/important bird species to provide information for the creation of a regional bird distribution atlas
- Harlequin duck monitoring
- Shore Bird surveys at Mann Lake
- Raptor surveys

This is only a partial list of the conservation projects for which volunteers are needed. It really doesn't matter if you only have a little time - or if you can help only once per season - the more that volunteer, the more that gets done. If you, or someone you know, is interested in volunteering for a project, please contact either Rita Dixon, Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game, Lewiston Region II Office, 208-799-5010, rdixon@idfg.state.id.us or Bill Warren, PAS Conservation Chair, 509-335-5898, warrenw@mail.wsu.edu

FIELD TRIPS

BENTON MEADOWS, May 12 – Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Fish and Game parking lot, 1540 Warner in the Lewiston Orchards. Frances Cassirer, IDFG, will lead an all day field trip to Benton Meadows and Waphilla Ridge. Warblers and sparrows should be abundant and migrants should still be around. Those who wish to stay late may be treated to some owls. Great Gray, Screech and Saw-Whet Owls nest in the area. This will be a long day and it may still be cold up there. Be prepared with plenty to eat and drink and layered clothing. Due to driving distances, this will not be a good trip for those who wish to quit early.

STEPTOE BUTTE and MARY MINERVA McCROSKEY STATE PARK, May 19 – A half-day to all day trip for neotropical migrants including flycatchers, vireos, warblers, Lazuli Bunting, Black-headed Grosbeak, bluebirds, and others. The field trip, led by Charles Swift, will visit a variety of habitats from shrub steppe to mixed conifer. Many species will be singing and you will have a chance to work on your bird identification by ear. Meet at Dissmore's IGA, 1205 N Grand Ave in Pullman at 8:00 a.m.

PALOUSE PRAIRIE RESTORATION, May 19 Arranged by Trish Heekin, this half-day field trip will tour area sites and research stations specializing in native Palouse Prairie. Participants are to meet at the USDA Plant Introduction Station, located at the corner of Highway 270 and Airport Road in Pullman, at 8:00 a.m. The tour will then proceed to the Forest Sciences Lab at the University of Idaho; then to Kas Dumroese's place on Paradise Ridge; and finally to the PCEI Moscow Community Garden to view plantings of Palouse Prairie natives. All are welcome.

OROFINO, May 26 – This field trip, lead by Carole Vande Voorde of Canyon Birders, will meet at 8:00 a.m. at Jack-In-The-Box at the foot of 21st Street in Lewiston. Please meet at the back of the

parking lot near the gravel area fronting Highway 12. We will stop at the sewage ponds and then go up Lower Ford's Creek looking for riparian species. We will have time to visit other spots nearby and then head up into the mountains. This will be a long day so lunches are needed. If it gets late, we will have an evening meal in Orofino before heading home.

COYOTE GRADE & POTLATCH RIVER,

June 2 – Palouse Audubon and Canyon Birder member, Jane Westervelt will lead this field trip to one of the best spring birding spots near Moscow. Species likely to be seen or heard include: Bank Swallow, Rock Wren, Veery, Western Kingbird, and many others. If you have never been down Coyote Grade in June, you won't want to miss this trip. Meet at Rosauer's on N. Main in Moscow at 8:00 a.m. or at the grocery store in Genesee at 8:30 a.m. For additional information leave a message for Jane at (208) 882-8597.

CATALDO & KOOTENAI COUNTY, June 9 –

This trip to the Cataldo area of Kootenai County will also be lead by Jane Westervelt. The area boasts a variety of habitats from wetlands to woodlands and fields. Expected species include Osprey, Wood Duck, bluebirds, Lazuli Bunting, and others. Bobolinks are also possible. This is one of the best areas in north Idaho to see them. Meet at Rosauer's on N. Main in Moscow at 7:30 a.m. For additional information leave a message for Jane at (208) 882-8597.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ETC.

PALOUSE PRAIRIE FOUNDATION, May 3 –

The second meeting of the Foundation will take place on Thursday, May 3, at 7:00 p.m. at the Latah County Grain Growers' Building, 317 W Sixth St, Moscow. Meeting discussions will focus on objectives, activities, and review of a proposed mission statement. In order to promote conservation and restoration of the Palouse Prairie Bunchgrass Ecosystem within the center of its historic bio-region, a group of interested scientists and citizens have organized the Palouse Prairie Foundation. The Foundation will serve to promote a broader awareness of this unique ecosystem; provide a venue for the exchange of information; assist in securing funding for further research; and act as a leader or consultant in Palouse Prairie restoration efforts. Anyone interested in getting more palouse prairie on the ground is welcome to attend.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY is an annual event created by Partners in Flight; a coalition of federal and state agencies; bird clubs; corporations; non-governmental organizations; and individuals; whose mission is to conserve migratory birds. One way to achieve this mission is by increasing public awareness of the factors that may contribute to declines in bird populations. The theme for this year's International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) is shade-grown coffee. Shade coffee is a choice you can make to help provide habitat in Mexico, Central, and South America. So your morning cup of coffee could help birds thousands of miles away. Activities planned for the day include:

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY EXHIBIT - Rita Dixon, Idaho Fish & Game, has put together exhibits and all kinds of fun stuff to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day. The event is co-sponsored by Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Latah Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service and will take place at the Moscow Community Center, Third and Washington Streets, Saturday, May 12th, from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Participants include the Moscow Food Coop, Book People of Moscow, Prairie Bloom Nursery, Good Migrations, and the Washington State University Raptor Rehabilitation Club. Book People, Good Migrations, and the Food Coop will sponsor a coffee-tasting of shade coffees. Good Migrations will offer free samples. Book People will also have a display of books about birds, including several field guides. Prairie Bloom Nursery will showcase plants important to birds, and the NRCS and LSWCD table will include many pamphlets and information on plantings designed for wildlife as well as soil and water conservation. At 11:00 a.m. the WSU Raptor Rehab Club will present live birds during their presentation on raptors. The day's events will also include a demonstration of birding software and mist-netting. For more information, call Rita Dixon, at Idaho Department of Fish and Game, 208-799-5010.

NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATORY COUNT – You are invited to participate in the spring migration count being held across the United States on Saturday, May 12. You don't have to be an "expert" birder (in fact, this is a good opportunity to pick up some birding knowledge by partnering with experienced birders) and there is no fee. If you are unable to get out and about, you can participate at home by counting birds at your feeders. Important data is gathered during this count regarding the abundance and distribution of bird species. If you wish to hookup with a group, or need additional information, contact Tom Weber.

In addition, information may be found at:
<http://www.audubon.org/sa/birdathon/hlpmigr.html>

NATIONAL KEEP YOUR CAT INDOORS DAY - May 12, aims to educate cat owners that both cats and wildlife benefit when cats are kept indoors. This event is sponsored by the American Bird Conservancy and Wild Bird Centers of America. Additional facts and program information may be found at: <http://www.abcbirds.org>

RAPTOR REHABILITATION CENTER SUPPORT – Recently the chapter received a thank you from the WSU Foundation and from the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences in recognition of our donation to the Raptor Rehabilitation Program. The donation was made in gratitude for their presenting small owls and raptors during the Owl Nest Box Project last February. The Center has always been in need of additional funding but, under new department leadership, that situation may change. The department chairman is very supportive of the Raptor Rehabilitation Program and has goals to expand the program and to further emphasize wildlife support and needs in the curriculum. Letters of support by citizens and organizations detailing the benefits and services received from the Rehabilitation Program would be a huge asset in efforts to generate additional funding. The chapter has written a letter of support and urges other members to also write. Letters should be addressed to Dr. Richard M. DeBowes Jr., Department Chairman, Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences, Pullman WA 99164-6610.

2001 WASHINGTON STATE AUDUBON CAMPOUT – The 37th Annual Washington State – Wenas Creek Audubon Campout will take place at the Hazel Wolf Bird Sanctuary/Boise Cascade Campground on May 25-28, Memorial Day weekend. The purpose of the Wenas Campout is to provide Audubon members and their friends with a variety of natural history and recreation opportunities in a truly beautiful location. The area supports a fascinating assortment of flora and fauna as well as provides the spiritual fulfillment of celebrating spring in the great outdoors. Everyone, whether a member of Audubon or not, is welcome to attend. Usually 300-400 men, women, and children, as well as a larger number of birds attend the event.

The weekend includes an assortment of FREE birding field trips, wildflower field trips, hikes,

demonstrations, workshops, nocturnal adventures, and campfire programs. For more information about the event, wildlife checklists, or directions to the Wenas Campground, visit the website at: <http://www.nwlink.com/~cyrus/wenas.html>

WEBSITE ADDITIONS - The Rare Bird Alert Hotline report **(208)882-6195** is transcribed and updated each Friday evening by Kas Dumroese. The report is available on the website along with field trip reports, CBC results, editions of the *Prairie Owl*, and on-line membership application.

REMINDER – A reminder that the new *Access Stewardship Decal* is needed for any use of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife sites. The decal costs \$10, but is free with the purchase of a hunting or fishing license. The new decal is valid from April 1, 2001 thru March 31, 2002. You can become a Conservation Patron by donating \$20 or more to the WDFW. The Conservation License was abolished by the 1998 legislature. Washington State hunting and fishing licenses are available in Pullman at KEASAL'S CHEVRON, 485 E Main. Additional Washington locations may be located by visiting the website at: <http://www.wa.gov/wdfw/lic/vendors/vendors.htm>

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

*IT'S NOT SO IMPORTANT
HOW BUSY YOU ARE –
BUT WHY YOU ARE BUSY.*

*THE BEE GETS PRAISED
FOR HIS BUSY WORK.*

*THE MOSQUITO GETS
SWATTED.*

- Marie O'Connor

Palouse Audubon Society
PO Box 3606
University Station
Moscow ID 83843

PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY - NEW MEMBERSHIP ONLY

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

Y05

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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student & Senior Citizen (62+) \$15.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> PAS Newsletter Only \$10.00 |

PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY

2000-2001

OFFICERS

Tom Weber, President
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Harold Ward, Vice-President
(208)882-3268
netwings@turbonet.com
Phyllis Wicks, Treasurer
(208)882-8746

MEETINGS

BOARD - 1st Monday (normally)
1/8, 2/5, 3/5, 4/2, 5/7, 6/4, 9/10
MEMBERSHIP - 3rd Wednesday
1/17, 2/21, 3/21, 4/18, 5/16, 9/19

CHAIRMEN

Diane Weber, Membership
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Bill Warren, Conservation
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Cathy Willmes, Education
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WEBSITE

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

BIRDING HOTLINE

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