



THE PRAIRIE OWL

Volume 29, Issue 2, November 2000

PROGRAMS

NOVEMBER 15, 2000 - 7:30 P.M.

Moscow Community Center

The Natural History of Bats

Janean Creighton - Wildlife Extension

Coordinator, Washington State University - will discuss the natural history of these fascinating and beneficial creatures. Discussion will include many aspects of bat ecology, from where they live to how they raise their young. Designs for building bat boxes will be supplied.

DECEMBER 20, 2000 - 7:30 P.M.

Moscow Community Center

Photographing Osprey and Great Blue Herons

Roger and Janice Inghram - Palouse Audubon

Society - have been avid bird watchers and photographers for the past 30 years. This spring they photographed both osprey and great blue heron nests from blinds on Dworshak Reservoir and Lower Granite Lake. Their program will incorporate many of the excellent photographs taken this past season.

JANUARY 17, 2001 - 7:30 P.M.

Moscow Community Center

Ponderosa Pine Ecosystems

Rita Dixon - Idaho Department of Fish and Game

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- 4 Lewiston/Clarkston Birding Field Trip
- 6 PAS Board Meeting - 7:30pm,
230 SE South St, Pullman, WA
- 7 ELECTION DAY
- 14 Washington State Trust Lands Conference
- 15 Program - *Natural History of Bats*
- 23 Thanksgiving Bird Count

DECEMBER

- 4 PAS Board Meeting - 7:30pm
- 16 Christmas Bird Count (Pullman/Moscow Circle)
- 20 PAS Membership Meeting - 7:30pm, -
Photographing Osprey and Herons
- 30 Christmas Bird Count (Lewiston/Clarkston Circle)

JANUARY

- 8 PAS Board Meeting - 7:30pm
- 17 PAS Membership Meeting - 7:30pm
Ponderosa Pine Ecosystems

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

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

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.

OWL BOX BUILDING PROJECT - By popular demand, the chapter will again be constructing owl nest boxes during early 2001 for a project to increase nesting possibilities for several owl species known to be declining in our area. We will be making large boxes for barn owls and smaller boxes appropriate for saw whet and western screech owls. Al Stage, our project leader, is looking for locations to install owl nest boxes. If you have a site or building suitable for a barn owl or small owl family, please give Al a call.

From the Prez:

It's somewhat sad to see our many spring and summer feathered friends depart for warmer climates but with their departure arrives others who we haven't seen for what seems too long. The juncos and waxwings arrived in Pullman almost simultaneously during the first days of October. It is good to hear their scolding and buzzing once again. The elderberry and hawthorn has been very prolific this year and we look forward to the birds taking advantage of the bounty.

The Fire Effects Symposium at the U/I Commons during October was truly a joy to attend. On behalf of the chapter, I wish to thank the presenters James Peek, Bruce Rieman, Leon Neuenschwander, Penelope Morgan, Ben Zamora, and Robbin Johnston for six outstanding presentations on the role of wildfires on the area's wildlife, fish, plant life, culture, and society - both in the past and in the future. Also to Harold Osborne and James Peek for leading the field trip to the University of Idaho Experimental Forest. I, for one, learned an awful lot - particularly about fire, policies, and even my own prejudices about fire. A special thanks to Judy Ferguson, the chapter's past president, and especially to Trish Heekin, our former program chairman, for their untiring efforts to make the seminar such a success. Thank you for a great program.

There are several opportunities during the coming months to participate in local bird counts. These counts are both enjoyable for the participant and beneficial for the record keepers. Consider taking part in one, two, or all three of the counts. The first count on Thanksgiving Day is short and easy - it doesn't even require that you leave your easy chair. The other two are all day functions - but certainly a good excuse to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Birders are always needed and experience is not required.

Don't forget to exercise your right to vote on November 7 and I hope to see you at an upcoming program or field trip.

Tom Weber

BITS AND PIECES

NEW WEBSITE - Thanks to Charles Swift, the chapter has a new internet address. During this past month, Charles arranged for the purchase of a domain name and free internet server access from EnviroWeb, an environmental organization offering services to similar non-profit organizations. Our web pages have been moved to the new server and all links from the National Audubon server have been updated. Visit us at our new website address: <http://www.palouseaudubon.org/>

CRUISES TO PROTECTION ISLAND (WA)

AVAILABLE - Protection Island, a National Wildlife Refuge at the mouth of Discovery Bay, is the home to many breeding, nesting, and flyway populations of loons, phalaropes, mergansers, merlins, bald eagles, oystercatchers, harlequin ducks, murrelets, auklets and other bird species. It also plays host to numerous marine mammals. In all, over 85 bird species and eight mammal species, including sea lions, elephant seals, whales and porpoises have been sighted on or near the island.

For six years, the Port Townsend Marine Science Center has scheduled cruises to Protection Island during the fall migration season. Trips are scheduled for 1:00 p.m. till 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 4 and 25 (Thanksgiving weekend) and on Sunday, December 31 (New Year's Eve). Departures are from Point Hudson Marina in downtown Port Townsend aboard the 65-foot motor yacht, *Glacier Spirit*. The vessel is enclosed, warm and has large windows with great outside decks. An on-board naturalist provides excellent commentary on the island's biology, geology and history as well as bird identification, behavior and ecology. Tickets are \$40 per person (**\$35 for Audubon members**). Child & group rates are easily arranged. For information contact the Marine Science Center at (360)385-5582 or email them at: ptmsc@olympus.net.

WASHINGTON STATE TRUST LANDS

CONFERENCE - At statehood, as with other states, Washington was granted lands by the federal government to help support specific beneficiaries - to build public schools, universities and other institutions. In accepting the lands, Washington's constitution expressly declared that all the public lands granted to the state are to be held in trust for all of the people. In the 1920's and 30's, other lands, known as Forest Board lands, were deeded to the states by counties and added to the portfolio of lands managed in trust. The trust duties as to these lands have been patterned after those for the federally granted lands. In the new millennium, new and creative ideas are needed on how the state will continue to provide substantial support to current and future beneficiaries, while protecting the important natural resource and other values of the lands for all of the people of Washington.

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Washington, the University of Washington Evans School of Public Affairs, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, and the Washington Environmental Council, the Washington State Trust Lands Conference is a one-day, symposium-style conference which provides interested parties the opportunity to come together to discuss the stewardship of Washington State's trust lands, to examine and sharpen the principles that govern management of these lands, and to investigate new and innovative ways to

address the many and growing demands on trust lands, including fiduciary trust support, as well as public use and habitat and watershed protection.

The Conference will be held on Tuesday, November 14, 2000, at the Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Avenue in Seattle (corner of 8th and Seneca) beginning at 8:30 a.m. The keynote speaker is Jennifer M. Belcher, Commissioner of Public Lands. For further information, contact Hudson Dodd or Christie Raschke at (360) 671-9950 or visit the website at <http://www.ecosystem.org/conference.html>

THANKSGIVING BIRD COUNT - This is one bird count which can be done from the comfort of your home and only involves an hour of your time. The Thanksgiving Bird Count takes place on Thanksgiving Day and was begun in 1966 by Dr. Ernest Edwards of Lynchburg, Virginia. The counter chooses an hour which best fits in the holiday schedule and selects a 15 foot diameter circle in which to count. Actually, the circle can be considered a cylinder, since all birds seen on the ground or flying overhead through the circle may be counted. Count circles are usually located around whatever attracts birds - feeders, baths, covers, etc. Most participants establish a count area visible from a comfortable spot near a window. Individual birds are to be counted only once during the hour, even if they continue to pay repeat visits. Flocks should be estimated or counted and the highest number at any one time used.

Last year 440 counts were conducted in 11 western states with 161 species tallied. The top five species were the English Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, House Finch, Black-capped Chickadee, and European Starling. As predicted, the Pine Siskin dropped out of the top five last season, but should be more numerous this year. The same count circles should be used each year. We hope that you will participate by using the enclosed report form. Reporters are requested to send in the completed form even if no birds were seen.

CHAPTER NEWS

MEMBERSHIP - Diane Weber, Chairperson, reports that the chapter needs to become much more active in recruiting new members. Last year, National Audubon recruited 84 of our 85 new members. Unfortunately, the retention rate of the nationally recruited member is very low. Locally recruited members are much more likely to remain members during subsequent years because of community and local involvement. They are also more likely to become active members and officers.

To encourage more local recruitment effort, the National office is offering the chapter \$30 for each member they recruit between now and the end of the year.

The chapter's immediate plans are to participate in the Non-Profit Weekends offered at the Palouse Mall and to distribute membership materials at all chapter functions. The chapter is also in the process of developing a brochure to assist in advertising our involvement within the community and in local conservation and habitat issues. If you would like to assist the chapter in recruiting members, please contact Diane - and even more importantly, pass on to a friend the application found on the newsletter cover. New members should receive a free back pack with their membership. We are anxious to hear from you.

EDUCATION - Cathy Willmes, Chairperson, reports that she recently received a copy of the material being distributed to the 17 Audubon Adventure Classrooms sponsored by the Chapter. The material (which is directed to grades 4 through 6) is divided into four subjects and mailed to the classroom on quarterly intervals. Each classroom can accommodate up to 32 students. Sponsorship costs \$35 per classroom and has been funded by personal donations from our members. Classrooms are located in Colton, Deary, Genesee, Grangeville, Julietta, Moscow, Orofino, Palouse, Potlatch, Pullman, St. John, and Troy. If you would be interested in supporting a Classroom, or if you know of a classroom that would be interested in joining the program, please contact Cathy.

CONSERVATION - Bill Warren, Chairman, has been involved in gathering information and requirements for the Important Bird Area (IBA) designation. The IBA initiative is a nationwide program of the National Audubon Society to identify areas in each state that are significant in providing essential habitat for breeding, wintering or migrating birds. The program is intended to promote proactive habitat conservation by providing a "blueprint" for statewide conservation planning. The Palouse Chapter has been asked to identify potential IBA's in Whitman County, Washington.

One or more of the following criteria must be met for a site to qualify for an IBA in Washington state: provides habitat for, and regularly holds significant numbers (of individuals) of, threatened or endangered species or species of special concern; regularly holds significant breeding or wintering populations of "Watchlist" species; regularly holds an assemblage of species associated with a rare or threatened natural community type (e.g. Palouse prairie remnant); has a long history of bird research and monitoring contributing to long-term bird conservation; or is a place where birds regularly concentrate in significant numbers (i.e. for gulls, waterfowl, raptors, and shorebirds numbers must be in the thousands or hundreds depending on season and species). Well documented information on species presence and abundance is critical for site nomination under any of the five criteria. In addition, to be considered an IBA the site

must be of statewide significance. Even if a site has a documented presence of Listed or Watchlist species the abundance of such species must constitute a significant percentage of the total number of such species in the state.

Bill requests that anyone knowing of a site that might qualify as a Washington IBA to contact him with the information. If you know of a site that you think is important for avian conservation, but does not meet the criteria above, we would still like to get the information, particularly if the site occurs on private land. The Palouse Land Trust has expressed a desire for information on bird habitats of local significance to assist them in setting conservation priorities during their current strategic planning process. If the Palouse Chapter can arrange the gathering of avian abundance data on a site that would otherwise qualify as an IBA, we could use this information to nominate the site in the future. This information would also provide a record of presence and abundance trends of important bird species in our area that we could use for future conservation efforts, as well as contribute to state and national databases on such species.

FIELD TRIPS

LEWISTON-CLARKSTON BIRDS - Nov 4

A field trip to the Lewiston-Clarkston area is scheduled for Saturday, November 4. Scheduled stops include the North Lewiston marsh, the Levee Ponds along the Clearwater River, and Hells Gate State Park. Participants are to meet at Rosauer's in north Moscow at 8:00am.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - December 16 and 30

Come join local birders as they participate in the 101st annual Christmas Bird Count. Count day for the Pullman-Moscow Circle is December 16 and is being coordinated by Dave Holick and Tom Weber. Count day for the Lewiston-Clarkston Circle is December 30 and is being coordinated by Charles Swift. Please call (208)883-0553 or (509)334-3817 for additional information. Everyone is welcome.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

MANN LAKE - September Saturdays

During each of the five Saturdays in September, field trips were led to Mann Lake by various birders (Charles Swift, Kas Dumroese, Carol Vande Voorde, Winnie Hepburn, Keith Carlson, and others). Although reservoir levels were not conducive to large numbers, the groups did see a wide variety of waterfowl and shorebirds during the month. The following is a partial list of birds

reported by the trip leaders:

Pied-billed Grebe	Sanderlings
Horned Grebe	Semipalmated Sandpiper
Red-necked Grebe	Western Sandpiper
Eared Grebe	Least Sandpiper
Western Grebe	Baird's Sandpiper
Great Blue Heron	Pectoral Sandpiper
Canada Goose	Long-billed Dowitcher
American Wigeon	Common Snipe
Mallard	Ring-billed Gull
Green-winged Teal	Caspian Tern
Canvasback	Common Tern
Common Merganser	Mourning Dove
Ruddy Duck	Belted Kingfisher
Osprey	Barn Swallows
Northern Harrier	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Red-tailed Hawk	American Pipit
Ring-necked Pheasant	Yellow-rumped Warbler
American Coot	Common Yellowthroat
Black-bellied Plover	Spotted Towhee
American Golden Plover	Song Sparrow
Semipalmated Plover	Red-winged Blackbird
Killdeer	Brewer's Blackbird
Spotted Sandpiper	Finches

COUER D'ALENE TRIP - Saturday, October 7, 2000

Following a report of an Arctic Loon sighting on Hayden Lake, a group of 15 Palouse Audubon and Canyon birders met Shirley Sturts CDA Audubon group at Hayden Lake and spent several hours looking at loons and grebes along the south shore of the lake. They encountered one or two Pacific Loons along with several Common Loons and a variety of grebes but were unable to confirm the presence of the target species.

After Hayden Lake, the field trip made a quick stop a Wolf Lodge Bay on Lake CDA but quickly continued on to Harrison due to road construction. They found loads of puddle ducks in the sloughs along the CDA River delta and also the following shorebirds: Killdeer, Long-billed Dowitcher (~15), Pectoral Sandpiper, and Sanderling (2). The final stop was at the St. Maries Sewage ponds where they observed another slug of ducks including Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked, Redhead, Common Goldeneye, and Ruddy Ducks.

BOOKS AVAILABLE

The Chapter has a great supply of birding resource guides available at some great prices. They would make perfect Holiday gifts. Books are available at our meetings or by calling Diane Weber.

Palouse Audubon Society
PO Box 3606
University Station
Moscow ID 83843

PALOUSE AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP - NEW OR RENEWAL

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

Y05-7XBP

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

Membership Category (mark ONE):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Individual Membership \$35.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Student & Senior Citizen (62+) \$15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introductory Membership (1 yr) \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership \$1,000.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introductory Membership (2 yr) \$30.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> PAS Newsletter Only \$10.00 |

PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY ***2000-2001***

OFFICERS

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MEETINGS

BOARD - 1st Monday (normally)
11/6, 12/4, 1/8, 2/5, 3/5, 4/2, 5/7, 6/4
MEMBERSHIP - 3rd Wednesday
11/15, 12/20, 1/17, 2/21, 3/21, 4/18

CHAIRMEN

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WEBSITE

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BIRDING HOTLINE

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