



The Prairie Owl

Volume 38 Issue 2

November-December-January 2010

EVENT CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- 14—Valley Hot Spots Field Trips
- 18—Program: *The Reproductive Ecology of the Eastern Box Turtle in Central Virginia*

DECEMBER

- 5—Lewiston-Clarkston Pre-Christmas Count
- 19—Pullman-Moscow Christmas Bird Count

JANUARY

- 2—Lewiston-Clarkston Christmas Bird Count
- 20—Program: *Bat Research*

PALOUSE AUDUBON

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SHORT-EARED OWL

Our newsletter, the Prairie Owl, gets its name from the Short-eared Owl—a species once abundant in the Palouse grasslands.

Short-eared Owls inhabit open terrain in all seasons. They use shrub-steppe, grasslands, agricultural areas, marshes, wet meadows, and shorelines. They are often seen perched on fence posts or pieces of driftwood. The owls are medium-sized owls with mottled brown and buff plumage. Their facial disks are light, with dark patches at the eyes. They have short ear-tufts that are usually held down, out of view. They are light underneath, with finely streaked chests and bellies. Males are paler than females. Short-eared Owls have dark markings at the wrist on both the underside and upper side of the wings. In flight they can be hard to tell from the closely related Long-eared Owls, except by behavior and habitat.

Short-eared Owls living in cold regions

are migratory. Their migration pattern is irregular and nomadic. They appear to concentrate where prey is abundant. Most Short-eared Owls in the western Washington lowlands valleys and along the coast are winter visitors. In eastern Washington, they are uncommon breeders in appropriate habitat and appear to be more abundant and easier to find during the winter. During the winter, look for them in stubble and CRP fields. Short-eared Owls are sometimes irruptive, and numbers vary from year to year.



Fluctuations in the Short-eared Owl population, due most likely to cyclical variation in the population of voles, make it difficult to determine long-term trends. However, declines have been recorded from many parts of the owls' range, and Short-eared Owls are listed as an at-risk species by Partners in Flight. Development and agriculture, which result in loss of habitat, are the most significant threats to the population in Washington.

FROM THE PREZ

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have paid local dues to the Palouse Audubon Society (approximately 160 members). Many of you also donated extra money that will be put to good use. Palouse Audubon Society is funding two grants for graduate students in support of research fulfilling our chapter's mission statement. Applications must be received by April 15. Awards will be announced at the May Palouse Audubon Program Meeting. See page 3 for additional information.

Terry Gray

PROGRAMS

November 18—*The Reproductive Ecology of the Eastern Box Turtle in Central Virginia*—Gordon Wilson, Senior Fellow of Natural History at New Saint Andrews College.

Gordon Wilson received his Ph.D. from George Mason University in Environmental Science and Public Policy in 2003. He earned a Master of Science degree in Entomology and a Bachelor's degree in Education (Secondary Education-Biology) from the University of Idaho. He worked as a Scientific Aide in molecular biology at the U of I for about two and a half years before taking a faculty position in the Department of Biology at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, from 1991 to 2003. He is currently a Senior Fellow of Natural History at New Saint Andrews College and has been on faculty since 2003. His dissertation research focused on the reproductive ecology of the eastern box turtle/*(Terrapene carolina carolina)*. He and his wife Meredith have four children.

DUE TO THE MANY SOCIAL ACTIVITIES DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, THERE WILL BE NO PROGRAM DURING DECEMBER.

January 20—*Bat Research on the Olympic Peninsula*—Patrick Adam.

Some of the issues Pat will be talking about will be the differences in bat wing structure and resulting flight patterns, basics of echolocation, and some of the different environmental adaptations of bats found in the Pacific Northwest.

Program meetings are held at the 1912 Building, FISKE ROOM, 3rd and Adams St, Moscow ID, at 7:30

MEMBERSHIP

Palouse Audubon Society, PO Box 3606, Moscow ID 83843-1914, is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Our mission 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.

General membership meetings are held at the 1912 Building, FISKE ROOM, 3rd and Adams St, Moscow ID, at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month, September through May. The board of directors meet at the 1912 Center at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month.

The Prairie Owl is published every other month, August through April. Material for the Owl should be sent to the editor, Tom Weber, 230 SE South St, Pullman WA 99163, or email tweber@wsu.edu by the 20th of the month. Subscription problems should be addressed to the membership chair, James Storms, PO Box 235, Garfield WA 99130, (509) 635-1272 or email nbutte@pullman.com. Visit the Palouse Audubon Society website at <http://www.palouseaudubon.org/>

FIELD TRIPS

November 14 – *Valley Hot Spots*, Terry Gray. We will visit Terminal 2, the island north of Potlatch Mill, the Levee ponds, Chief Timothy HMU and several other locations. Meet at 8:00 am at the north parking lot of *Sports Authority* in Lewiston to carpool. This trip could last all day so bring warm clothes, a lunch and water.

December 5—*Lewiston-Clarkston Valley Pre-Christmas Count*; Terry Gray. Meet at the north parking lot of Sports Authority in Lewiston at 8:00 am. We will visit the hot spots in the Lewiston-Clarkston count. This can be an all day trip or a half-day trip if you wish.

December 19—*Pullman-Moscow Christmas Bird Count*. The Christmas Bird Count is a fun day for both the birding enthusiast and the novice alike. Held between December 14 and January 5 each year, the CBC is an opportunity to see wintering birds

Treasurer's Report— 11/3/09

Checking Balance 7/31/09	\$4,250.75
Dues	\$1,095.00
Donations	\$340.00
National Audubon	\$909.25
National Audubon Grant	\$7,500.00
Rental (meetings)	(\$170.70)
U/I Publishing	(\$70.18)
Mailing and Post Office	(\$132.00)
Rental (tractor)	(\$104.00)
Checking Balance 11/3/09	\$13,618.12

Certificate of Deposit	\$5,188.45
Tri-State Gift Card	\$192.56

Liabilities

Norcross Grant	(\$1,471.74)
Wetlands Grant	(\$88.88)
National Audubon Grant	(\$7,500.00)
Tri-State Gift Card	(\$192.56)
Total Assets:	\$9,745.95

Membership Report—11/1/09

National & Palouse Audubon	256
Palouse Audubon (paid & pending)	85
National Audubon (only)	89
Total Membership	430

PAS Membership Year—Sep 1 to Aug 31
2009-2010 DUES ARE DUE!

(Continued on page 3)

FIELD TRIPS (continued from page 2)

rarely seen by most people. All count data is incorporated into a national database. This will be the 109th annual Christmas Bird Count and the Palouse Audubon Chapter's 38th year of participation. The count is being coordinated by Dave Holick and Tom Weber. Everyone is welcome to participate.

Please contact Dave <daveholick@moscow.com> or Tom <tweber@wsu.edu> for details.

January 2—**Lewiston-Clarkston Christmas Bird Count.** The 11th annual Lewiston-Clarkston count is being coordinated by Terry Gray. Everyone is welcome to participate. Please contact Terry <clgtlg@moscow.com> for information.

RESEARCH GRANTS AVAILABLE

Palouse Audubon Society has established two grants in the amount of \$500 each in support of research fulfilling the chapter's mission statement. One grant is available for a graduate student at Washington State University; the other for a graduate student at the University of Idaho.

Applications must be received by April 15. Awards will be announced at the May Palouse Audubon Program Meeting. There are no restrictions on how the grant money is to be used however; in order for Palouse Audubon to share in the activities supported by the grant and to let the students share some of their findings, we strongly encourage that the recipient present a program on their research results at a future program meeting.

The grant application is available at: <http://www.palouseaudubon.org/business.htm>. Contact Tom Weber, 230 SE South St, Pullman WA 99163-2329, (509) 334-3817, tweber@wsu.edu; or Terry Gray, 890 Stefany Lane, Moscow ID 83843, (208) 882-1585, clgtlg@moscow.com for additional information or questions.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

C9ZY050Z

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY (New only)

Includes *National Audubon Society* and *Palouse Audubon Society* membership and subscriptions to *AUDUBON MAGAZINE* and *THE PRAIRIE OWL* newsletter. Send check payable to **National Audubon Society**

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introductory Membership | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student & Senior Citizen (62+) | \$15.00 |

Palouse Audubon Society

Financially supports the programs and activities of the Palouse Audubon Society and includes an annual subscription to *THE PRAIRIE OWL* newsletter. Send your check payable to **Palouse Audubon Society**

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Membership | \$15.00 |
| For additional information call: (509) 635-1272 | |

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ State _____ Zip _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Return this form with your check to: Palouse Audubon Society, PO Box 3606, Moscow, ID 83843-1914

PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Palouse Audubon Society
PO Box 3606
Moscow ID 83843-1914



HAPPY THANKSGIVING

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

**We're on the Web (and
in **COLOR**) at:
www.palouseaudubon.org**

A CALL FOR SERVICE

It's time to think about new officers for 2010-2011. President Terry Gray has served our chapter with distinction for 5 years and will be stepping down on July 31, 2010. A number of chairmen have been serving for a like amount of time and are willing to pass on their appointments.

Although our current officers and chairmen have done much to advance the chapter, new officers and chairpersons would bring fresh ideas and interests to the chapter and cause us to advance even further.

You don't need to be a "birder" to offer your service. The only requirement is a desire to promote our mission of education, conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems - focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats - for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

Won't you consider serving as an officer or chairperson? It doesn't involve that much time—just a commitment to serve. And besides, it is fun and enjoyable. You will meet so many wonderful new friends most of which share your interests, goals and objectives.