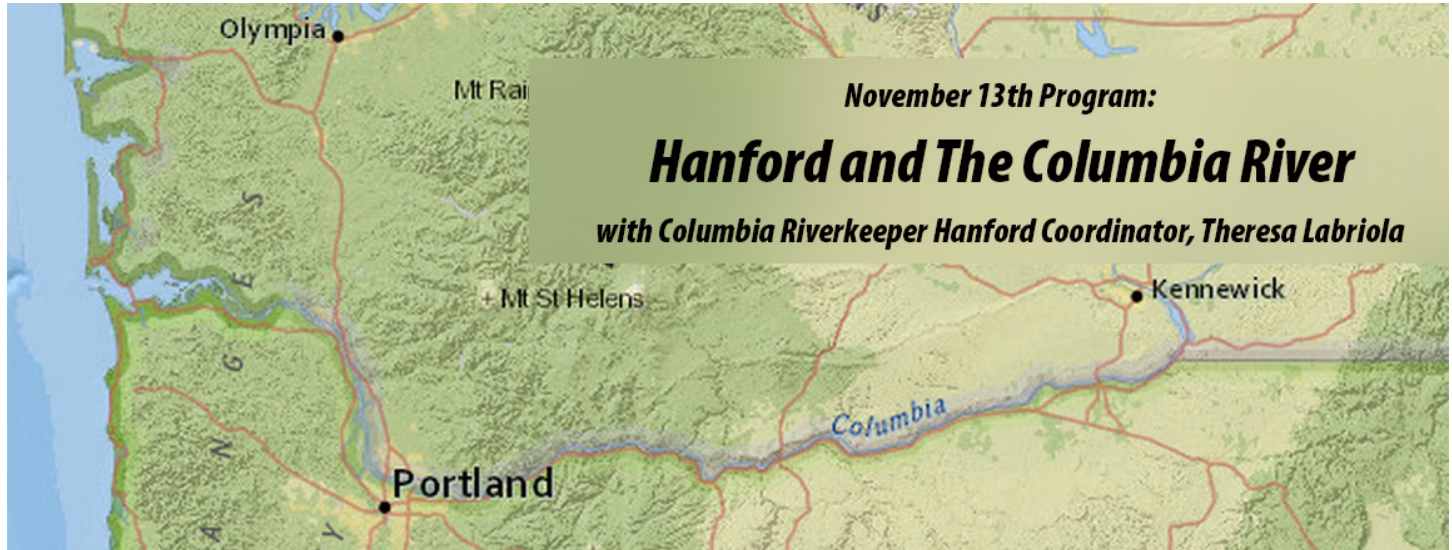


Volume 21
Issue 3
November 2013

The Pygmy Owl

The Newsletter of the
Spokane Audubon Society



November 13th Program:

Hanford and The Columbia River

with Columbia Riverkeeper Hanford Coordinator, Theresa Labriola

Join us on Wednesday, November 13th, for a program featuring Columbia Riverkeeper's Hanford Coordinator, Theresa Labriola. Her presentation will focus on the troubling relationship Hanford has with the Columbia River. Historically, Hanford has discharged contaminated wastewater directly into the Columbia, resulting in its designation as the most radioactive river in the United States. Hanford's pollution didn't just run downstream, it affected the fish, wildlife and communities that rely on the river.

Theresa will detail Hanford's dirty history and the current state of disrepair of the cleanup. She will talk about the continuing impact of Hanford waste on the Columbia River, its surrounding communities and wildlife. She will touch on what Riverkeeper is doing to stop further contamination of the Columbia River by Hanford, and what we can do to help.



Theresa Labriola has an extensive background in advocacy, pursuing legal and grassroots solutions to environmental pollution and the over-exploitation of our natural resources. As an environmental litigator, she prosecuted lawsuits against some of the worst polluters of our air and water. Before joining Riverkeeper, Theresa worked on a campaign to protect our oceans by protecting forage fish, an important link in the marine food chain.

Spokane Audubon's November program will be held at the Riverview Retirement Community, Village Community Building (see page 8 for directions), Please join us at 7 p.m. for refreshments and friendly conversation. The program will begin at about 7:30 p.m., after announcements.

The Pygmy Owl

Volume 21, Issue 3 ~ November 2013

The Pygmy Owl, the newsletter of the Spokane Audubon Society, is published monthly, September through June.

Spokane Audubon Society
P.O. Box 9820
Spokane, WA 99209-9820

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Formal vote to be taken at the November meeting.

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Letter from a Volunteer for President, Fran Haywood

Back before Brad and I retired and took to the road we were very involved in Spokane Audubon. We served as field trip chairs for six years and also mailed the newsletter for six years. We also led several field trips.

Then we traveled for almost 10 years and really just played, although we did volunteer at the Valley Nature Center in South Texas one day a week.

For the last couple of months, we have watched the board continue, but without a president or vice president. I kept thinking someone should step up and then realized, why not me? I didn't want to take on the responsibility and really didn't want to try and follow in the very big shoes of our last few presidents. Kim, Katie and Joyce all did a tremendous job, and it is scary to think of following them and the many people who came before them.

On the other hand, all of the board members are terrific. What is needed is someone to head meetings, make agendas, check the mail and stay abreast of the latest issues. Thankfully, we have a new and wonderful conservation chair, Greg Gordon. I know everyone will continue to contribute, so with their help, I will do my best.

For my first act as Spokane Audubon's president, I'm asking our members to consider serving on the board. We meet the second Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. before the general meeting. Most of us are of the volunteering generation and we really would love some "young blood," folks in their 20's, 30's and 40's, to contribute a new perspective or ideas about how we can make our local Audubon chapter even stronger.

Spokane Audubon is a vibrant organization. It takes all of our members to make it what it is, and to help it become what we know it can be.

~ Fran

Thanksgiving is on the way!
In order to avoid mailing delays, we'll
publish a little bit early next month.

The December newsletter deadline will be
Friday, November 15

Please send material to
carmen@floreo.com

Sights & Sounds

Bird Sightings for the Inland Northwest by Cindy McCormack

There always seems to be a few lulls in bird activity in October—I consider those the doldrums of the birding world. But things are picking up! The ducks are back to looking normal, are plentiful, and usually have something fun mixed in the rafts! The ‘odd’ gulls (for those that enjoy them!) and other winter birds are arriving. I’ve already had my first Rough-legged Hawk (early-October) of the season (welcome back!). Soon we will be hearing about the first Snowy Owls and Gyrfalcons...

Interesting Sightings for October

Common Loons are frequently found on our large bodies of water in the fall and winter, but occasionally we get some more unusual loons: Lake Chatcolet Marina (off of Hwy 5 near St. Maries, ID) had an immature **RED-THROATED LOON** with the Common Loons (CL), and a juvenile **PACIFIC LOON** was reported at Spring Valley Reservoir near Moscow, ID (TG).

We are so used to seeing our typical Canada Geese, it is always a great treat to see the others! A **ROSS’S GOOSE** was visiting the ponds at 57th & Palouse Hwy Spokane’s South Hill (JI); **SNOW GEESSE** have been reported at Sprague Lake (>50) (MC), (102) (JI); Reardan, and Mann Lake (KC). **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESSE** have been seen at several locations, including Philleo Lake (CW); Mann Lake, Lewiston, ID (KC). Although I don’t have the late fall migrant trip report yet, I’m sure they also located some of these geese!

Scoters are here! These sea ducks are always fun to pick out of a duck “scan”! **SURF SCOTERS** have been seen at Deer Lake (JI); Lake Cocolalla (CL); Potlatch (CS); Mill Canyon (JI); north end of Silver Lake (near Medical Lake) (TO); Sprague Lake (27) (JI); Newman Lake, WA (TL); four at TwoRivers (Walla Walla Co.)MMD; Mann Lake, Lewiston, ID (KC); and Central Ferry (4) (MMD). A **WHITE-WINGED SCOTER** was found at Chief Timothy Park, Clarkston (DJ).

A single **HARLEQUIN DUCK** was recorded at Soap Lake (MY).

An adult **THAYER’S GULL** has been reported at Swallows Park in Clarkston, which seems to be a fairly reliable location for them in the winter months. **BONAPARTE’S GULLS** have been seen across river from the Clarkston grain terminal (MC), at Swallows Park(KC), Mann Lake (KC); and Sprague Lake. Lake Coeur d’Alene should start having a greater diversity of gulls soon!

Oh, I was sorry to miss this one! A **PARASITIC JAEGER** was reported at Potholes (MY) in early October. It’s always fun to find these guys away from the ocean. (There’s much less seasickness involved, too! Hahaha!)

Among the few shorebirds still being reported have been

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER at Sprague Lake (JI) and Mann Lake (2) (KC).

A Dark-morph **FERRUGINOUS HAWK** was identified by Palouse Audubon trip participants along Hwy 23 east of Steptoe, WA (MC).

Keep an eye (and ear) out for these guys! **BLUE JAY** reports seem to becoming more frequent each fall! Sightings have come from Genesee, ID (2) ND, Palouse Falls State Park (BB); Lyons Ferry Park (CR); Spokane County near Cheney (GF); Lewiston, ID (ND); Harrison, ID (TG); UI Arboretum, Moscow, ID (JW); and Tubbs Hill, Coeur d’Alene, ID (MH).

A lovely **ANNA’S HUMMINGBIRD** has been recorded visiting the yard of the Cashens in Veradale, WA (MaC/BC).

Check those blackbird flocks carefully! You never know if you might find something like the **RUSTY BLACKBIRD** found near Oden Bay (north shore of Lake Pend Oreille, ID) (CL).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS have been seen at the confluence of Spokane/Little Spokane River (TL); Hayden, ID (DW), and at Kootenai NWR (JI). An even more unusual find was a **HARRIS’S SPARROW** hanging out with a flock of White-crowned Sparrows at Central Ferry (MFM). A **GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW** was found with the White-crowns along Countryman Rd near St. John, WA (RJB); and along Mill Canyon (JI). Make sure to check those White-crowned Sparrow flocks closely for these other sparrows!

AMERICAN TREE SPARROWS have started to arrive, with sightings at Eloika Lake (TL), Sprague Lake (JI); and Kootenai NWR (JI).

Two **LAPLAND LONGSPURS** were sighted near the summit of Mt Spokane (TL); Sprague, WA (JI); Sheep Lake (MC); and the Clark Fork River delta (CL).

A **SNOW BUNTING** was found in early October on the south Feryn property (Peone Wetlands) (TL). It seems a bit early for these guys, so maybe we will have a great winter for them!

Last, but not least, a **PINE GROSBEEK** was spotted at Mt. Spokane (TL) and Iller Creek (CM).

BB: Blair Bernson; BC: Bob Cashen; BD: Bob Derting; BH: Brendon Higgins; BW: Brad Waggoner; CL: Carl Lundblad; CM: Cindy McCormack; CR: Carol Riddell; DH: Dave Hayden; DJ: Dick Johnson; DW: Doug Ward; GF: Greg Falco; GG: George Gerdt; JF: Joe Fulton; JH: John Hanna; JI: Jon Isacoff; JW: Jane Westervelt; LH: Lindell Haggin; MaC: Marlene Cashen; MC: Mike Clarke; MFM: MaryFrances Mathis; MH: Mike Haldy; MMD: Mike & MerryLynn Denny; MY: Matt Yawney; ND: Nancy Draznin; NM: Nancy Miller; NT: Norma Trefry; RJB: RJ Baltierra; SD: Scott Downes; TB: Tim Brennan; TL: Terry Little; TM: Tom Mansfield; TO: Tim O’Brien; WC: Warren Current.

Great Birding!

Cindy McCormack — nwbirder@gmail.com

Common Birds of the Spokane Region and Where to Find Them

Editor's Note: We're starting a new feature in the Pygmy Owl, a "Bird Forecast" to keep tabs on the comings and goings of some of our feathered friends. To kick things off, here is a list of some of the most often seen birds in our region. The list, compiled by Jim Acton and Fran Haywood, features both residents and migrants.

All photos by Spokane Audubon members. A couple of them are featured in the 2014 Spokane Audubon Calendar!

Swimming

Trumpeter Swan
Wood Duck
Pintail
Mallard

Ponds, Marshes, Lakes, Rivers, Streams or nearby

Sora
Virginia Rail
Great Blue Heron
Killdeer
Violet-Green Swallow
Tree Swallow
Red-winged Blackbird
Yellow-headed Blackbird



Yellow-headed Blackbird by Bob Cashen

Osprey
Bald Eagle
American Avocet
Black-necked Stilt
Black Tern
Marsh Wren
Common Yellowthroat

Pastures, Fields, and Prairies

Song Sparrow
Western Meadowlark
Chipping Sparrow
Vesper Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow
California Quail



California Quail by Lindell Haggin

Say's Phoebe
Sharp-tailed Grouse
Black-billed Magpie
Turkey Vulture
American Kestrel
Western Bluebird
Mountain Bluebird
American Pipit

Trees and Brush, usually near water

Gray Catbird
Spotted Towhee
Cedar Waxwing
Black-capped Chickadee
Mountain Chickadee

Wilson's Warbler
 Yellow Warbler
 Cassin's Vireo
 Bullock's Oriole

Red-shafted Flicker
 Hairy & Downy Woodpeckerst
 Cooper's Hawk
 Black-headed Grosbeak
 Great-horned Owl
 Barn Owl
 White-throated Swift
 Dark-eyed Junco

Larger Trees, particularly Yellow Pine

Pygmy Nuthatch
 Red-breasted Nuthatch
 Golden-crowned Kinglet
 Brown Creeper
 Stellar's Jay
 Pileated Woodpecker



Pileated Woodpecker by Ron Dexter



Dark-eyed Junco by Bob Griffith

House Finch
 American Robin
 Northern Pygmy Owl

Learning to Bird?

Birds come in all shapes and sizes and live in every kind of habitat.

Start by looking at a bird's size, body shape, beak shape
 coloration and/or field marks, posture and habitat!

Quick Reference: Size & Shape



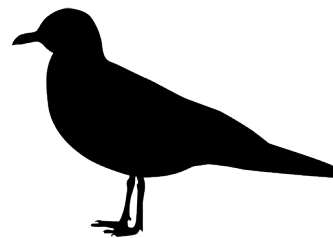
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
 Length: 4.25 in
 Wingspan: 6.75 - 7.5 in



House Sparrow
 Length: 5.5 - 6.5 in
 Wingspan: 9.5 - 10 in



European Starling
 Length: 8.5 in
 Wingspan: 15.5 in



Ring-billed Gull
 Length: 18-19 in
 Wingspan: 48 in



Red-tailed Hawk
 Length: 19 - 25 in
 Wingspan: 46 - 58 in

***Holiday Gift Idea:
Spokane Audubon Society
2014 Calendar!***



Steller's Jay, by Ron Dexter

Birds of Eastern Washington

featuring photos by
Spokane Audubon members.

If you purchase them
at a meeting, they're

\$10 each

That's the same price as last year!

Calendars are available at meetings, by mail
or through spokaneaudubon.org (using PayPal).

Shipping charges apply for all mail/online orders:

- 1 calendar: \$10 + \$2 s&H = \$12
- 2 calendars: \$20 + \$4 s&H = \$24
- 3 - 6 calendars: \$30 + \$6 s&H = \$36

Contact Spokane Audubon for
shipping costs for 7+ calendars.

To order by mail, send check to:

Spokane Audubon Society
15418 Little Spokane Drive
Spokane, WA 99208

Make checks payable to *Spokane Audubon*.

**November & December
Field Trips and Events**

November 4, Monday

Documentary Film Screening: *A Fierce Green Fire*

Time: 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

The Gonzaga University Department of Environmental Studies will present a film screening of *A Fierce Green Fire: The Battle for a Living Planet*, a big-picture exploration of the environmental movement.

This event is free and open to the public.

The film's director, Mark Kitchell will be on hand to give discussion and commentary between each of the movie segments.

Mark Kitchell's previous film, *Berkeley in the 60s*, was nominated for Academy Award for best documentary. Event location:

Wolff Auditorium, Jepson Center
Gonzaga University

Light refreshments will be provided courtesy of Sodexo.

<http://www.afiercegreenfire.com>

November 23, Saturday

Douglas Plateau Northern Visitors Trip

Leader: Kim Thorburn

The Waterville Plateau is a challenging but high-quality destination for rarities during the late fall and winter months. We will work the rolling steppe of the Plateau in search of unusual raptors, owls, and passerines and also bird along the Columbia River in hopes of finding rare Arctic Gulls and saltwater waterfowl, such as scoters, Long-tailed Duck, and Pacific Loon. If attendees are interested, we will spend the night of November 22 in Brewster for an earlier start with the birds during this short daylight season. Contact Kim Thorburn (465-3025 or kthorburn@msn.com) by November 16 if you plan to attend.

Note: This trip will be dependent on weather and road conditions.

Target Birds: Loons and grebes; scoters and rare wintering waterfowl; wintering raptors; Glaucous, Thayer's, and Glaucous-winged Gulls; Snowy Owl; Northern Shrike; Snow Bunting; Lapland Longspur; Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. We will hunt for elusive rarities, including Gyrfalcon and Northern Hawk Owl.

November 23, Saturday

West Valley Outdoor Learning Center Open House

Time: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The West Valley Outdoor Learning Center provides outdoor education to more than 10,000 people a year, but because the OLC belongs to the school district, it's only open to the public for monthly open houses. Drop by for family-friendly activities and tours of the classrooms and raptor sanctuary, and meet the snakes, tortoises, lizards, guinea pigs and raptors of the OLC!

The West Valley Outdoor Learning Center is located on the grounds of Pasadena Park Elementary School on Upriver Drive. The address is 8706 E Upriver Dr, in Spokane Valley.

December 14, Saturday

Winter Lake and Wetbelt Trip

Leader: Joyce Alonso

This trip takes us around Beauty Bay on Lake Coeur d'Alene, where the Bald Eagles feeding on spawned-out salmon are always a sight to behold. Weather permitting,

those interested may drive down to the Thompson Lake/Harrison region where a variety of birds winter in a slightly warmer zone. Probable particulars: 8:00 am start at Liberty Lake Albertson's parking lot. Contact Joyce Alonso (448-2447) by December 9 if you plan to attend.

Note: This trip will be dependent on weather and road conditions.

Target Species: Bald Eagles, several duck and grebe species, American Dipper, Pacific Wren, Pileated Woodpecker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Tundra Swans, Northern Pygmy Owl

December 29, 2013, Sunday

2013 Spokane Christmas Bird Count

All SAS members as well as new birders are always welcome to join the Christmas count, which encompasses the Spokane Count Circle Center: 47° 43' N by 117° 25' W (approximately Division St. and Francis Avenue). Please contact Alan McCoy (509-448-3123) for information about the Spokane CBC.

**Spokane Audubon Society
Membership Form**

Local Membership Dues:

Individual: \$20/year _____

Couple & Family: \$25/year _____

Student: \$10/year _____

Lifetime: \$300 _____

National Membership Dues: \$35/year _____

Individual + National Dues: \$55/year _____

Couple + National Dues: \$60/year _____

Your local membership provides you with *The Pygmy Owl* and supports your local chapter's many conservation and education activities. You will also be eligible for website privileges.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____



Please make check payable to:
Spokane Audubon Society
Send this form and your check to:

Audubon Membership
Attn: Dave Plemons
1224 W. Riverside #1101
Spokane, WA 99201

Current members may renew memberships from our web site::

<http://spokaneaudubon.org>

Receiving duplicate newsletters? Errors or other changes needed on your mailing label? Contact Dave Plemons at davep_nublado@me.com, or 413-1524.



The Pygmy Owl
Spokane Audubon Society
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November 13th Program:
Hanford and The Columbia River,
 with Columba Riverkeeper's Theresa Labriola
 7:30 p.m.

To:

The Spokane Audubon Society provides resources and services to educate people about birds, wildlife, and the importance of habitats, and to advocate and support public policies and actions that conserve and restore wildlife habitats.

Visit our website: <http://spokaneaudubon.org>

Directions to the General Meeting:

*Riverview Retirement Community, Village Community Building
 2117 E. North Crescent Avenue*

To get to Riverview Retirement Community:

From West Spokane & South Hill

- I-90 East to Exit 281 toward US-2 E/US-395 N/Newport/Colville
- Follow US-2 E/US-395 N to E. Mission Ave.
- Turn Right at E. Mission Ave.
- Turn Left at E. Upriver Drive

From Spokane Valley

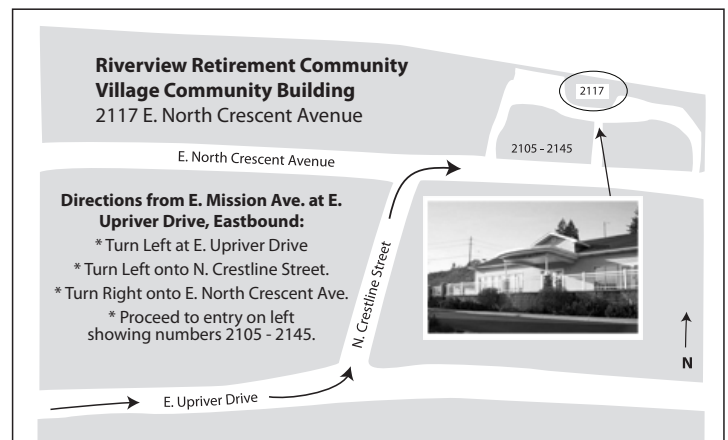
- I-90 West to Exit 282A
- Follow N. Hamilton St. to E. Mission Ave.
- Turn Right at E. Mission Ave.
- Turn Left at E. Upriver Drive

From North Spokane

- Take US-395 S to E. Mission Ave.
- Turn Left at E. Mission Ave.
- Turn Left at E. Upriver Drive

Once you're on E. Upriver Drive (see map below):

- Follow E. Upriver Drive to N. Crestline Street
- Turn Left at N. Crestline Street
- Turn Right on E. North Crescent Drive



- Proceed to entry on left showing numbers 2105-2145
 Limited parking is available by the Village Community Building.
 Overflow parking is along E. North Crescent Ave.