

The Pygmy Owl

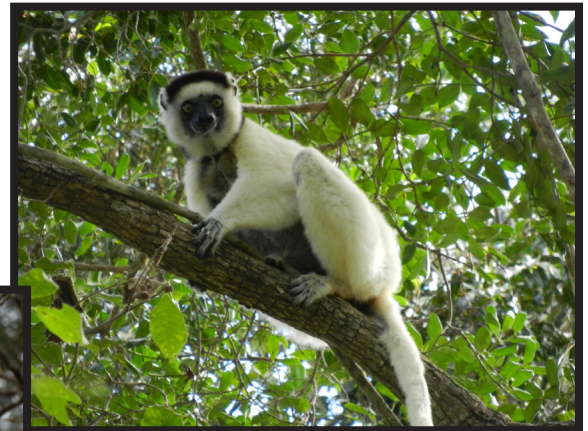
Volume 23
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The Newsletter of the
Spokane Audubon Society



Madagascar, the “Eighth Continent”

Madagascar, an island off the coast of southern Africa, separated from the continent over 88 million years ago. Since then it has gone its own evolutionary way, with 90% of the plant and animal species found nowhere else on earth. Unlike the Galapagos, it's heavily populated with people who have a strong and unique culture. In June of 2015, Ron Force traveled there on a tour looking for birds and wildlife, which he found. What else he found challenged his ideas about conservation and national development and raised questions which will become more common in a world of climate change and human population growth.



Ron Force: I got turned on to birding by my high school biology teacher. I majored in biology in college, but went in the Army as a helicopter pilot, then went to graduate school as a librarian (safer). I spent my career at Ohio State, WSU and 22 years at the University of Idaho, the last 14 as Dean. What with career and raising a family, birding became sporadic, but it picked up when I retired in 2006 and joined the local Palouse Audubon Society (and became president). I'm not a hard-core birder, but do enjoy running down new lifers. I enjoy traveling, and have been to seven continents, 48 countries, and all 50 states.

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Shrub-steppe Song Bird Surveys

This spring Spokane Audubon Society completed three surveys at 9 different sites scattered through Lincoln and Spokane Counties. Six of the sites had at least one of the three focal species: Sagebrush Sparrow, Sage Thrasher or Brewer's Sparrow. Across eastern Washington 50 sites were surveyed three times each by six chapters. Over 2000 volunteer hours were donated! We are already in the planning stages for next year's surveys and will be doing "ground truthing" this fall so we will be all ready when spring arrives. Several volunteers went to training at the end of July so that we can better use the ARC GIS system to fine tune the location of the observation site and parking. If you are interested in helping with this project either this fall or next spring please contact Lindell Haggin (lindell4118@comcast.net).



Sage Thrasher. Photo by Mick Thompson

Field Notes

Bird Sightings for the Inland Northwest, compiled by Jon Isacoff

This somewhat brief report covers mid-breeding season through early migration, so an odd mixture of different things reported. Anna's Hummingbirds continue their year-round presence in the region. Still insufficient evidence of breeding but it could be on the horizon! Fall songbird migration will be in full swing shortly and the potential will shoot up for rare bird sightings, so keep your eyes and ears open! Especially rare sightings are in bold and italics.

HARLEQUIN DUCK: Harvey Creek (TL-7/29)

SPRUCE GROUSE: Harrison Lake (JI-7/3); Myrtle Peak (CL-7/25); West Fork Creek (JI-8/10)

NORTHERN GOSHAWK: Little Pend Oreille NWR (MaB-6/30); Salmo Pass (WN-7/16); Starvation Lake (MC-8/14)

SANDHILL CRANE: Kootenai NWR (JI-8/9)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER: Newman Lake (TL-6/9); Eloika Lake (TL-8/3)

STILT SANDPIPER: Kootenai NWR (JI-8/9); Sheep Lake (TL-8/12); Soap Lake (MY-8/13)

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD: Spokane (CL-6/18 thru 8/10); Hayden (DW-7/16); Moscow (TG-8/4)

RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER: Tacoma Creek (MFM-6/26)

AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER: Salmo Pass (MC-7/23); Lake Leo (MC-7/24); Myrtle Peak (CL-7/25); Bunchgrass Meadows (TL-7/29); West Side Road (JI-8/10); West Fork Creek (JI-8/10)

BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER: Bunchgrass Meadows (TL-7/29)

BOREAL CHICKADEE: Salmo Pass (MC-7/23); Bunchgrass Meadows (TL-7/29); West Fork Creek (JI-8/10)

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK: Washtucna (JD-6/1)

NORTHERN PARULA: Kamiak Butte (RK-6/7)

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: Post Falls (DW-5/27); West Plains Spokane (TL-6/4); Newman Lake (MaB-6/30); Chewelah (MaB-6/30)

BREWER'S SPARROW: Rare in Northern Idaho - Post Falls (DW-5/27)

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL: Very rare outside of breeding habitat in May. Cheney (5/30-GF)

Observers: RB-R.J. Baltierra; MaB-Matt Bartels; TB-Tom Bragg; DB-Donna Bragg; BB-Ben Bright; MaC-Marlene Cashen; MC-Mike Clarke; MaC-Mark Crawford WC-Warren Current; JD-Jim Danzenbaker; RDC-Rich Del Carlo; MD-Mike Denny; MLD-Merry-Lynn Denny; ND-Nancy Dranzin; KD-Kas Dumroese; GF-Greg Falco; MF-Marian Frobe; RF-Russell Frobe; TG-Terry Gray; JF-Joe Fulton; JH-John Hanna; LH-Lisa Hardy; FH-Fran Haywood; BH-Bettie Hoff; RH-Ray Hoff; DH-Dave Holick; JI-Jon Isacoff; ; CJ-Chris Jannet; SJ-Steve Joyce; BK-Bob Kemp; RK-Russ Koppenderayer; DK-David Krefit; CL-Christopher Lindsey; JL-Joshua Little; TL-Terry Little; CoL-Corntney Litwin; CL-Carl Lundblad; BL-Becky Lyle; MFM-Mary Francis Mathis; CM-Cindy McCormack; AM-Alan McCoy; EM-Eliot Miller; WN-Walker Noe; PO-Peter Olsoy; TO-Tim O'Brien; JP-Jonathan Pafford; JR-Jethro Runco; MS-Mike Scott; SS-Sandy Schreven; HS-Herman Schreven; PS-Paul Sieracki; CS-Charles Swift; RT-Rick Taylor; NT-Norma Trefry; KT-Kim Thorburn; TW-TC Walker; DW-Doug Ward; TW-Tina Wynnecoop; MY-Matt Yawney; WY-Will Young

Spokane Audubon's next meeting will be:

Wednesday, September 14th at 7:30 p.m.

ACOW 2016 – Wenatchee, WA

Register now for the 2016 annual meeting of the Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW), hosted by North Central Washington Audubon Society and the Eastern Washington Chapters. ACOW is our annual state-wide meeting where members from all Audubon Chapters in Washington gather together for a weekend of information sharing, action opportunities, and fellowship. The theme of this year's meeting is the management of public lands and how the Audubon network can successfully engage in planning and management decisions to build resilient ecosystems that benefit birds and other wildlife.

Date: Saturday, October 8, 2016

Location: Confluence Technology Center, 285 Technology Center Way, #102, Wenatchee, WA

Agenda and Information: <http://wa.audubon.org/events/audubon-council-washington>

Registration: \$35 at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2564495>

Highlights at the 2016 ACOW meeting:

- The candidates for Commissioner of Public Lands – Dave Upthegrove and Hilary Franz – will speak about their vision for the management and care of Washington State public lands and waterways, and how they intend to engage Washington citizens with their plans.
- An update from Seattle Audubon on the Department of Natural Resource's Long Term Conservation Strategy for the Marbled Murrelet, and ways in which the network can take action during the upcoming decision making process.
- Agency experts from the US Forest Service, WA Department of Fish & Wildlife, WA Department of Natural Resources, and the Bureau of Land Management will partake in a panel discussion regarding fire ecology and management plans for Eastern Washington, followed by Q&A and potential ways in which the Audubon network can support sound fire management policies and programs in Washington State.
- A visit from David Ringer – National Audubon's first Chief Network Officer. David oversees the

health, vitality, capacity, diversity and strength of Audubon's vast distributed network. It's a tall order, but David is up for the challenge and excited to meet the effective Audubon network in Washington State! Additional weekend activities will include:

Education Workshop – Friday, October 7th

WSACC Meeting – Friday, October 7th

Friday Night Guest Speaker – Paul Bannick on his new book OWL

Field Trip – Sunday, October 9th, Fire Ecology in North Central Washington

Until October 7th - A block of rooms at \$158 (King) and \$178 (two Queen) per night is being held at the Comfort Suites at the Park, 195 E. Penny Road, Wenatchee, within walking distance of the Confluence Technology Center. Hotel reservations may be made by calling (509) 662-1818. AUDUBON is the group name.

Until September 17th - A second block of rooms at \$99 (one Queen) and \$109 (two Queen) per night is being held at Super 8 Wenatchee, 1404 N. Miller St., Wenatchee. Hotel reservations may be made by calling (509) 662-3443. AUDUBON SOCIETY is the group name.



SAVE
THE DATE

**Saturday,
October 8, 2016**

Audubon Council
of Washington

Confluence Technology
Center, Wenatchee

Hosted by North Central
Washington Audubon and
Eastern Washington Chapters

Photo: Andrew A. Reding

Putting a Price on Carbon – Why Audubon Washington Supports I-732 By: Gail Gatton, Executive Director, Audubon Washington

We know climate change is the number one threat to birds and here in Washington, we have an opportunity to do something about it. On your election ballot this fall will be Initiative 732 – a tax on the consumption of fossil fuels that is balanced with reductions in the state sales tax for consumers and the business and occupation (B&O) tax for manufacturers. We could be the first state in the nation to implement a tax on carbon pollution and lead the way to a clean energy future.

What is Initiative 732?

Initiative 732 works in this way:

- Tax pollution, not people. I-732 imposes a significant (\$25/ton) tax on carbon emissions. This tax rises every year, to a maximum of \$100/ton (in 2016 dollars) after 40 years. It is the most aggressive carbon pricing policy in the world and signals to the nation that it is possible to have meaningful climate policy that will reduce carbon emissions.
- Pay less at the cash register. I-732 will reduce the state sales tax by one percentage point, putting hundreds of dollars a year back into the pockets of each household in Washington.
- Fund an Earned Income Tax Credit for working families. I-732 funds the Working Families Tax Rebate to provide up to \$1,500 a year for 460,000 low-income households. It is the most progressive change to the Washington tax code since 1977.
- Reduce the Business & Occupation tax on manufacturing. I-732 will keep living-wage jobs in Washington by effectively eliminating the Business and Occupation Tax on manufacturing.

Why does Audubon Washington support Initiative 732?

Audubon Washington believes Initiative 732 provides swift and effective action to reduce carbon pollution. Throughout history, birds have been indicators of human and environmental health. Canaries were used in coal mines to detect fatal carbon monoxide and make sure the mines were safe for humans. Eagles were among the first to let us know the detrimental effects of DDT. Now it is time to pay attention to how birds are responding to a shifting climate.

Audubon science shows that climate change is the number one threat to North American birds, including 189 species at risk here in Washington. Birds have specific sets of environmental requirements governed by climate and, during the past 50 years, more than 60 percent of wintering North American bird species have shifted their winter ranges northward. Soon, they may have nowhere left to go.

As advocates for birds, there are two things we can do today to protect birds from the threat of global warming: 1)

protect the places on the ground that birds need now and in the future to be resilient in a warming world, and 2) prevent additional warming by reducing carbon emissions.

A tax on carbon emissions is a proven method to reduce the carbon pollution causing climate change. By putting a price on the sale or use of certain fossil fuels and fossil-fuel generated electricity, I-732 will promote the use of clean, renewable energy sources, effectively reducing the amount of carbon pollution emitted in the state.

Some have expressed concern regarding the potential for I-732 to cause a deficit in the state's budget. A recent analysis by the Sightline Institute, a highly respected sustainability research institute, concludes that I-732 is within 1% of being revenue-neutral and that "as time goes on, the legislature could honor the will of the voters to keep it neutral."

Others are concerned that a revenue-neutral carbon tax will not do enough to address the needs of those disproportionately affected by effects of climate change, including low-income working families and communities of color. In our opinion, one of the best things we can do to avert the worst impacts of climate change is to reduce carbon pollution as quickly as possible. The futures of birds and of people in a warming world are intertwined. Protecting clean air, water, and habitats that allow birds to thrive means that people can thrive in a healthy environment, too.

How did Audubon Washington come to support Initiative 732?

Audubon Washington, with our chapter network, spent more than a year exploring the carbon tax initiative, striving to really understand the pros and cons of being the first state to enact a carbon tax. We surveyed our Audubon membership to get a sense of what individuals were thinking about the carbon tax. We delved into the specifics at every spring regional meeting with leadership from all chapters. Our board did a deep dive during its annual strategic planning retreat and an ad hoc committee took all of this information and developed our position.

As someone who started the process convinced that I-732 wasn't good enough and that there would be a better option in the future, the thoughtful comments and insightfulness of our chapters and members convinced me otherwise. People who care about birds truly understand the urgency of the situation. Over and over, we heard the same refrain: We must do something now about climate change. Ultimately, this urgency led me to embrace the great opportunity offered by I-732: vote to put a price on carbon pollution and take action now that will benefit birds and people.

While this initiative will not complete all the work that

needs to be done, I-732 will help move Washington forward as a leader on enacting the solutions that birds and other wildlife need to have a chance in a warming world. When birds thrive, we all thrive. Let's take action now for future generations of people and birds.

Ready to take action? Please visit <http://wa.audubon.org/732> or contact Gail Gatton at ggatton@audubon.org.



Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week



*with a Community Work Day
at Turnbull National
Wildlife Refuge!*



Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, Spokane Audubon Society and Friends of Turnbull will host a community work party on Saturday, October 15, 2016. This is part of an ongoing community effort to restore native riparian habitat to benefit birds and other wildlife species. We have hundreds of native saplings to plant and fencing to erect to protect the trees from deer, elk and moose browsing.

Attention Groups: Please **call in advance to register**. It helps us in our planning if we know how many are coming. The Refuge will also host a “potluck” lunch. Please feel free to bring your favorite dish. Ask for Sandy (509) 235-4723 ext. 228.

Planting Time: 9 am to 12 p.m.

When: Saturday, October 15, 2016

Lunch: Potluck 12 p.m. (Friends of Turnbull will supply the hamburgers)

Where: Turnbull NWR Headquarters, 5 miles south of Cheney on Cheney-Plaza Road: turn left on Smith Road and drive 2 miles on gravel road to headquarters.

Clothing: Long-sleeved shirt, work pants, gloves, sturdy boots or shoes.

Equipment: (If you can) shovels and pliers.

Everyone is Welcome!



SAS Field Trips, September – December

September 10, 2016 Saturday
Sprague Lake Migrant Trip
Leader: Norma Trefry

This is a half day trip to the Sprague Lake area to look for migrating birds, and birds which often stray here in September. Meet at Coeur d'Alene Park at 6:15 a.m. We will leave the park at 6:30 a.m. There will be a \$5.00 charge per person if we bird at either of the private resorts on the lake. Please call Norma Trefry, 926-2533, or email, firsttrefry@gmail.com by Sept 6 if you plan to attend.

October 22, 2016, Saturday
Grant County Late Fall Migrant Trip
Leader: Gary Blevins

This is a beginning, intermediate and advanced birder-oriented trip to look for specialty birds, such as Arctic Gulls, Lapland Longspurs, and other hard-to-find-and-see north-

ern visitors. There may be some down time with little action in between bird sightings but potential for rarities is high. It is a full-day trip from sunrise to sunset. Contact Gary Blevins (533-3661 or garyb@spokanefalls.edu) by October 16 if you plan to attend.

November 19, 2016, 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; we'll 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. We will spend the night of November 18 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 14 if you plan to attend.

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

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: _____



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Send this form and your check to:

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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
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Plemons at davep_nublado@me.com,
or 413-1524.



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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>

December 10, 2016, Saturday
Coeur d' Alene area Eagles
Leader: TBD

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 a.m. start at Liberty Lake Albertson's parking lot.

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

Spokane Audubon's next program will be
Wednesday, September 14th at 7:30 p.m.

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