

# The Pygmy Owl

Volume 27  
Issue 5  
Jan. 2019

The Newsletter of the  
Spokane Audubon Society



## Antlers and Antler Art

Nick Jeffries

Nick will discuss the normal antler growing and hardening process, abnormalities and deformations, as well as the mating season and shedding process.

Nick will also explain the shed hunting process, which has become a sizable industry (including importing antlers from all over the U.S., Canada and Alaska, even South America.)

Nick Jeffries  
Landowner Assistance Forester  
WA State Department of Natural Resources

Nick assists private landowners with management techniques regarding both forest health and wildfire fuels. In recent years he also has spent a lot of time on fire suppression crews battling wildfires. (Over 40 fires in 2017 alone.)

Nick has a lifelong interest in hunting, collecting shed antlers, etc. In 2008 he started "Custom Antler Designs. Much of his work is sold on "Etsy" (<https://www.etsy.com/shop/CustomAntlerDesigns>). He makes antler chandeliers and lamps, as well as smaller items.



**Antler Chew Toys For Dogs.**  
Dogs love the bone marrow in these treats and chew toys. When choosing for your dog, density makes a huge difference - the darker, denser antler will be the hardest; the lighter, faded horns with small cracks are the softer, more easily eaten treats.



**Spokane Audubon's next meeting will be:  
Wednesday, January 9th at 7:30 p.m. Social get-together at 7:00**

# The Pygmy Owl

Volume 27 Issue 5~ Jan. 2019

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

Spokane Audubon Society  
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Alan McCoy [spokaneaudubon.org](http://spokaneaudubon.org)

February Pygmy Owl  
Deadline January 20th

# Membership Report

by Dave Plemons

Update of Members' Nesting through December 18, 2018:

We welcome our new nester, Sabrina Wood. Many thanks to our returning nesters: Marlene & Bob Cashen, Earl & Marilyn Elias, Ann Hurst, Carla Joyal & Family, Larry & Patty Marsh, Karen Santora, John Scott & Kaye Bartholomew, Kris & Kit Singletary, Liz Deniro & Paul Swetik, Norma Trefry, Terry & Linda Vanhoozer, Darcy Varona & Family as well as Sylvia Wilson

Many nesters chose to not receive a hard copy of the Pygmy Owl. If you could help us reduce costs and save paper and energy by switching to our electronic full color publication, please contact me. You already have access on the Spokane Audubon WebSite on the Pygmy Owl page of the website. To receive a personal PDF copy for your own file, we will need your Email address. Mine is [davep\\_acer@msn.com](mailto:davep_acer@msn.com). Legibility is critical. I cannot make out correctly some Email addresses.

## *Rocky enjoying his peanuts!*



*A friend of Alan McCoy's*

# Field Notes

Bird Sightings for the Inland Northwest, compiled by Jon Isacoff

Winter is here in the el Nino style. Warm, wet, and dreary. It may be a completely brown Christmas for the first time in a few years. Gulls on Coeur D'Alene Lake continue to entertain birders. The winter finch showing has been abysmal, as in literally no birds in the region, even in the Northern locations closer to Canada. That said, an interesting or exciting bird could be anywhere any time so enjoy the banana belt holiday season and, with luck, Santa will send us some nice birding gifts!

Snow Goose: Wandermere (11/23-LH); Mill Canyon (12/3-JI)

Greater White-fronted Goose: Silver Lake (12/15-SS and MW)

Trumpeter Swan: Bull Lake (11/25-BK); Hayden (11/28-NR); Wilbur (11/30-TL); Calispell Lake (12/2-JS)

Red-breasted Merganser: Coeur D'Alene (11/25-CL); Trestle Creek (12/7-TL); Clark Fork (12/8-ER); Silver Lake (12/15-SS and MW)

Anna's Hummingbird: Hayden (12/4-DW)

Mew Gull: Mica Bay (11/24-JE); Wolf Lodge Bay (12/5-DY)

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Higgins Point (12/4-DW)

Glaucous Gull: Wolf Lodge Bay (12/11-JI)

Pacific Loon: Heyburn SP (11/23-JI)

Northern Goshawk: Cheney (12/-BH)

American Three-toed Woodpecker: ?

Peregrine Falcon: Harrison (12/11-CL and NP)

Say's Phoebe: Darby Road (12/15-NP)

Blue Jay: Steptoe Butte (11/28-RB); Coeur D'Alene (12/17-DY)

Harris's Sparrow: Moscow Mountain (11/18-KD)

White-throated Sparrow: Heyburn SP (12/17-MC)

Swamp Sparrow: Heyburn SP (11/23-JI); Wolf Lodge Bay (11/29-TL)



**Red-breasted Merganser-Male**  
© Even Lipton



**Red-breasted Merganser-Female**  
© Daniel Grossi

Observers: JA-Jon Anderson; DB-Don Baker; MB-Missy Baker; RB-R.J. Baltierra;; DB-Donna Bragg; BB-Ben Bright; TB-Travis Brakefield; SC-Shay Caflin; MaC-Marlene Cashen; WC-Warren Current; ED-Evan Dalton; RDC-Rich Del Carlo; KD-Kas Dumroese; TD-Tim Durnell; Jacob Elonen; JF-Judy Ferguson; FF-Fred Forssell; MF-Marian Frobe; LH-Lindell Haggin; BH-Bea Harrison; MH-Michael Hobbs; CH-Carrie Hugo; JI-Jon Isacoff; SJ-Steve Joyce; BK-Bob Kemp; JK-Jaan Kolts; RK-Russ Koppendrayer; RL-Richard Laubach; SL-Sherry Lee; TL-Terry Little; CoL-Courtney Litwin; CL-Carl Lundblad; CM-Cindy McCormack; NM-Nancy Miller; TO-Tim O'Brien; NP-Neil Paprocki; ER-Eric Rassmussen; NR-Nick Rischs; ShS-Shane Sater; SS-Sandy Schreven; JS-John Stuart; CS-Charles Swift; MS-Mark Stromberg; JV-Joe Veverka DW-Doug Ward; NW-Nancy Williams; MW-Michael Woodruff; DY-David Yake; MY-Matt Yawney

# Opportunities for the New Year!

Lindell Haggin

## Waterfowl Surveys

We will be doing waterfowl surveys again this year starting in Mid-February. Ducks Unlimited has been organizing the surveys in Spokane, Lincoln and Adams Counties with the help of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. The data collected will be used to help obtain grant funds to purchase easements and enhance wetlands. Spokane Audubon Society will focus its efforts at Reardan Audubon Lake. The surveys will continue weekly until the end of April. It's a good way to get out and sharpen your birding skills while collecting valuable data. People will go out in pairs. It is helpful if you have a good pair of binoculars and/or spotting scope. If you just want to be a recorder, that works too.

## Sagebrush Songbird Surveys

This will be our final year of doing the Sagebrush Songbird Surveys. Spokane Audubon started assisting with this project in 2015. Together with other chapters in eastern Washington, we have surveyed more than 200 sites. WDFW will be using the data to assess the health of the Shrub-Steppe Habitat. In order to finish up this year, we will need all hands on-deck. We, the chapters of Eastern Washington, hope to survey 70 sites three times each during the spring season. Training will take place in early April, with the first survey to follow in mid-April. We've got some nice sites to look forward to. There is a limited number of bird songs you need to become familiar with, but CD's and apps are available to assist with that. We have a wonderful core of experienced birders, but would welcome some help. Standing out in the middle of Eastern Washington in the early morning listening to bird songs is a wonderful way to start a spring day. Come join us!



## Birding Puns (Contributed by Gary Lee)

An accomplished birder friend of mine, an attorney, recently gave me a great birding tip. She pointed out that you can only tell if it's a murder of crows ...if there's probable caws.

Another friend shared a story about his neighbor (who has a legal grow permit). This fall a huge flock of terns landed in the guy's field and ate his entire crop. Apparently, there was not a single Tern left unstoned.



And you probably heard about Lindell's recent sighting of several large birds huddled around a dark object, a bit too far to away to get a good ID. When she got closer, she realized the object was a somewhat tattered Bible. She's now convinced they were birds of pray.



## Golden-Crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*)

by Lindell Haggin

The Golden-crowned Kinglet is a dainty, olive-colored, little bird that typically flits around in the tops of spruce and fir. Kinglets spend their time moving quickly, gleaning a variety of insects from the branches and under the bark. If you are fortunate enough to still hear very high pitches, their call and song will alert you to their presence. After their broods have fledged, they disperse more widely to a variety of habitats. This fall I have been very pleased to have a small flock hanging around the edge of the Little Spokane River in the willows and red osier dogwood bushes. This has made it much easier to see its yellow crown and dark streak through the eye, which is characteristic. The yellow crown is much easier to see than the ruby crown of its larger cousin. They both have a white streak on the wing.

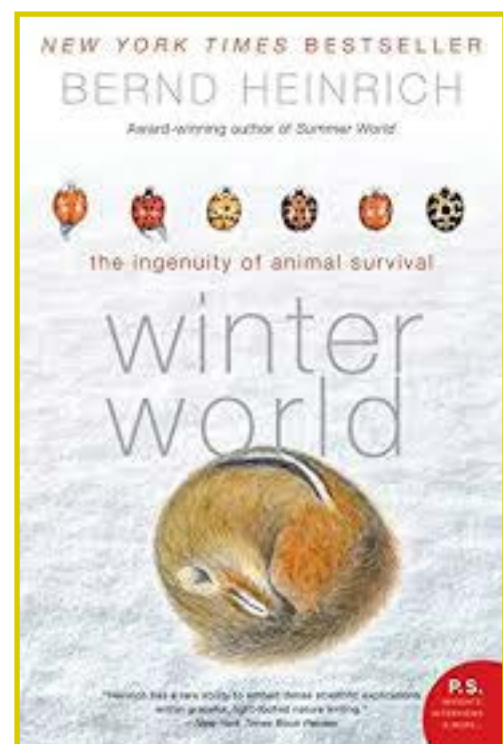
While the Ruby-crowned Kinglet heads south for the winter, the Golden-crowned stays in colder climes despite its small size. It is not much bigger than a hummingbird, being 3-4 inches long, with a weight of 0.1-0.3 oz. (4-8 g). It can survive winters of  $-40^{\circ}$ . It is estimated that it must eat 2-3 times its body weight in order to maintain a normal temperature of  $110^{\circ}$  in the winter. Bernd Heinrich has observed Kinglets huddling together in the tops of thick conifers. They also might find a cavity or brush pile in which to spend the night, several staying in the same location to help preserve body heat. Kinglets may forage later into twilight to help them survive through the longer night. Heinrich notes that many of them do die in frigid temperatures, but since they are prodigious breeders, their numbers are holding better than many species.

The Golden-crowned Kinglets are monogamous and despite breeding in short summers of the boreal and montane forests, they still usually raise two broods. The female lays 3-11 eggs at a time after they both help construct the nest. Only one day after their first brood fledges, the female will start laying eggs for the next brood while the male continues to feed the first brood.

Their conservation status seems to be stable and they actually appear to be expanding their range into more southern conifer stands in the midwest and the Appalachians. If you would like to know more about the Golden-crowned Kinglets, you can read *Winter World* by Bernd Heinrich.



Golden-crowned Kinglet  
© David Turgeon



# The Great Backyard Bird Count

February 15-18, 2019

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time.

Now, more than 160,000 people of all ages and walks of life worldwide join the four-day count each February to create an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds.

We invite you to participate! For at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, February 15-18, 2019, simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see. You can count from any location, anywhere in the world, for as long as you wish!

If you're new to the count, or have not participated since before the 2013 merger with eBird, you must create a free online account <https://secure.birds.cornell.edu/casso/login> to enter your checklists. If you already have an account, just use the same login name and password. If you have already participated in another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use your existing login information, too.

## Why count birds?

Scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Bird populations are dynamic; they are constantly in flux. No single scientist or team of scientists could hope to document and understand the complex distribution and movements of so many species in such a short time.



Wild Birds Unlimited, founding sponsor of the Great Backyard Bird Count!



# Upcoming Events



20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
**Snow Goose Festival** of the Pacific Flyway  
 January 23-27, 2019  
 CHICO, CA  
 snowgoosefestival.org

Let Us Take You Under Our Wing & Show You the Magic of the Pacific Flyway!

Wildlife Education • Exploration & Birding Adventures  
 Informative & Hands-on Workshops • Wildlife Art Show  
 Free Nature Activities for the Entire Family  
 Special Saturday night silent auction & banquet with keynote: "Point Reyes & the Farallon Islands: A Mecca for Birds and Birders" by Naturalist & Birding Guide David Wimpfheimer.

PHOTO BY MIKE PETERS



Klamath Basin Audubon's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
**WINTER WINGS FESTIVAL**  
 Save the dates!  
 February 14-17, 2019  
 4 days of field trips, workshops, & presentations for birders, photographers, & families  
 WinterWingsFest.org

**SAVE THE DATE:** The 40th Annual Klamath Basin Winter Wings Festival, February 14-17, 2019. Enjoy over 50 guided birding and photography field trips, workshops, receptions, keynotes, and more throughout the Klamath Basin in Oregon and California. Our featured speakers are Pepper Trail, George Lepp and Julie Zickefoose. To learn more, visit [www.WinterWingsFest.org](http://www.WinterWingsFest.org). Registration opens December 15th at 9 am PST.

## Spokane Audubon Society Membership Form

Local Membership Dues:

Individual: \$20/year \_\_\_\_\_

Couple & Family: \$25/year \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \$10/year \_\_\_\_\_

Lifetime: \$300 \_\_\_\_\_

**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\\_acer@msn.com](mailto:davep_acer@msn.com), or 413-1524.



The Pygmy Owl  
**Spokane Audubon Society**  
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January 2019

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 Bldg  
 2117 E. North Crescent Avenue

**From West Spokane & South Hill**

- 1-90 East to Exit 281 toward US-1 E/US-395 N (Newport/Colville)
- Follow US-2 E/US-395 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 Dr.

**From North Spokane**

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

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

- Follow E. Upriver Drive to N. Crestline Street
- Turn Left on N. Crestline Street
- Turn Right on E. North Crescent Drive
- Proceed to entry on left showing numbers 2015-2145



Limited parking is available by the Village Community Building. Overflow parking is along E. North Crescent Ave.



BirdNote can also be heard on KEWU 89.5 FM 8 a.m. daily

