

# The Curlew

The newsletter of the Lower Columbia  
Basin Audubon Society

## Upcoming Events:

For more information see  
[www.lcbas.org](http://www.lcbas.org)

**October 24:** LCBAS Monthly  
Membership Meeting at 7:00 PM

**November 4:** First Saturday Bird  
Walk at 8:00 AM. Please take note of  
location information on page 2.

**November 7:** Monthly Board Meeting  
at 6:30 PM.

**December 30:** Christmas Bird Count  
See Page 2

**In November--a silent  
fundraising auction to benefit  
LCBAS! See page 5**

**Oct. 26: Yakima Audubon** invites  
LCBAS to join their monthly program,  
available through Zoom or in person.  
"Bluebird Country"  
[yakimaaudubon.org/](http://yakimaaudubon.org/)

### National Audubon Society members:

Joining LCBAS supports local  
conservation efforts, meetings, bird  
walks, and other events! Please  
consider joining. **See page 7**

### Columbia Basin Chapter of the WA Native Plant Society

The local native plant society is a great  
resource to learn more about our  
native plants, and they can help you  
choose native plants to support birds,  
pollinators and other wildlife in your  
garden. For upcoming meetings and  
walks, and other information:  
[www.cbwnps.org/](http://www.cbwnps.org/)

## Sharing our Space: Learning to Love Creepy Crawlies

**October Membership Meeting: Tuesday, October 24th,  
at 7:00 PM, in person meeting  
First Lutheran Church, 418 N. Yelm, Kennewick, WA**

### Dale Jansons, Science Educator and the Bug Guru

We are surrounded by fascinating animals that are overlooked. They go about their complex lives, often under our very noses, perhaps a few feet from where you are reading this.

Sadly, some of these creatures are wrongfully hated and are actively removed from their spaces without thought. While some deserve to be removed or even destroyed, most are beneficial to our homes, gardens, and environment.

We will observe, talk about, and interact with several arthropods to better understand them and their place in the world. Some will be animals from far away while others you can find in your own backyard or on a short walk.

My name is Dale Jansons. I have a Master's Degree in Biology where I worked with mosquitoes and their diseases. My interest in insects and other creepy crawlies goes all the way back to elementary school when I got the Ants book by EO Wilson and Burt Holldobler. While in college, I learned I like to share my knowledge of critters with others. After working in several science fields, I decided to make my own space in science education by becoming the Bug Guru. As the Bug Guru, I bring interesting arthropods and reptiles to schools and other venues to grow the love of these fantastic animals.



**Blue Death Feigning Beetle--so named because they will play dead when threatened.**

## First Saturday / W.E. Johnson Park Bird Walk October 7, 2023

By Lisa Hill

W. E. Johnson Park (WEJP) was the site of the October First Saturday Bird Walk due to the recent closure to the public of Bateman Island. After battling two fires in recent months, authorities are uncertain when Bateman Island will reopen. It was a gloriously sunny and pleasant morning for the walk and we found 43 species which isn't too far off of my all-time high of 51 species for a walk in the park. I am fortunate to live near the south entrance to the park and have walked there hundreds of times over the last 18 years. It's hard to believe, but I have documented over 160 species on 743 eBird checklists!

A slightly unusual call, reminiscent of Snow Geese, had us all looking up to the sky to see a large flock of CACKLING GEESE. There were several WOOD DUCKS on the Yakima River along with AMERICAN WIGEON and GREEN-WINGED TEAL. Other water birds included GREAT BLUE HERON, three high-flying AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS and a few DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS that looked to be heading toward Horn Rapids Dam.



Purple Finch  
Photo by Larry Umthun

We all got great looks at a male ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD posturing at the top of a small tree. A beautiful VARIED THRUSH and a HERMIT THRUSH and ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER were nice finds. WEJP is a great place to see PURPLE FINCH from October to April as they feast on seeds of green ash. That tree has proliferated greatly throughout the park. My first sighting of Purple Finch in the park was during the January 3, 2009 Christmas Bird Count. They have been seen every CBC since then.

WEJP is a Richland city park designated as a natural open space. The city named the park for Wilfrid E. Johnson who was a brilliant mechanical engineer employed by General Electric. He moved to this area in 1948 when he became the manager of the Hanford Atomic Products Operation, which GE was contracted to operate. (That's where HAPO credit union gets its name.) He served as a commissioner of the Atomic Energy Commission from 1966-1972. He was born in England in 1905, and after emigrating to the U.S. at age 15, became an accomplished equestrian who loved horses and was involved in the establishment of the Richland Riders Club in 1949. The Club operates out of the stables on Van Giesen Street at the north end of the park, and has designated equestrian trails in the park. Johnson died in West Richland in 1985.

Stay tuned for information about the First Saturday Bird Walk on November 4<sup>th</sup>, location to be determined. Check the LCBAS web site, Facebook page and the Tri-Cities Birders Facebook page soon for the final details.

## Christmas Bird Count – December 30, 2023

The annual Christmas Bird Count will be held Saturday, December 30, 2023. All are welcome to participate. The count has been conducted in the Tri-Cities in the same count circle since the 1960's, and is a significant contributor to the local, regional, and national knowledge of winter bird populations.

The count circle is divided into three sections, with three leads:

**Richland:** Lisa Hill (509-869-6715)

**Kennewick:** Rich Barchet (509-430-0053)

**Pasco:** Dana Ward (509-545-0627)

**Christmas Bird Count Coordinator:** Bill LaFramboise (509-531-3768, billnan321@gmail.com), is our new coordinator. Please contact any of the above for questions or information about participating in the 2023 Christmas Bird Count!

Right: The Tri-Cities (WATC) count circle, #58223



## Conservation Update -- Proposed Benton County Solar Project

By Dana Ward, Conservation

The Conservation Committee had a Zoom meeting with OneEnergy personnel on October 5<sup>th</sup> for about one hour to discuss the proposed solar array (field) in Benton County near the Columbia River eight miles west of the Interstate 82 Bridge to Umatilla.

The proposed solar array would cover 422 acres of degraded lands formerly disturbed by agriculture. The site has a few scattered areas of shrub-steppe and one area of about seven acres containing an artificial wetland that has been created by irrigation wastewater. OneEnergy's proposed construction plan would not utilize these areas for solar panels, structures, roads or transmission lines which would allow bird species and other wildlife to utilize these areas.

During our conversations it was noted, with our endorsement, that OneEnergy personnel participated in Washington States Least-Conflict Solar group. This was a year-long action that brought together farmers, ranchers, conservationists and the solar industry representatives to determine where in Eastern Washington State solar arrays could be constructed with the least conflict to the values that each group supported. LCBAS members participated in these discussions and helped to develop the maps that can be used by solar developers to avoid critical habitat, migration corridors and sensitive species.

We tasked OneEnergy with a flood of questions concerning fences around the facility that could prohibit movement of small creatures such as rabbits and ground squirrels. The fences will have a ground clearance of four inches which will allow the free flow of these animals.

OneEnergy will also plant native species under the solar panels using hydro mulch which will increase the chances of revegetation success. We were happy to hear about this process. Long term monitoring will be conducted to assure success, and one surprise was that sheep will be grazed at the solar array once a year to prevent plants from growing too tall and interfering with the solar collectors.

One item that some of us learned was that the panels have photo collectors on both sides (biface solar) so that they collect reflected light off the ground-based vegetation as well as directly from the sun.

OneEnergy felt that all components of the solar panels could be recycled as they contain important elements that will continue to be needed by industry. The solar industry is advancing by leaps and bounds, and current solar collection panels may be superseded by more advanced panels in the future.

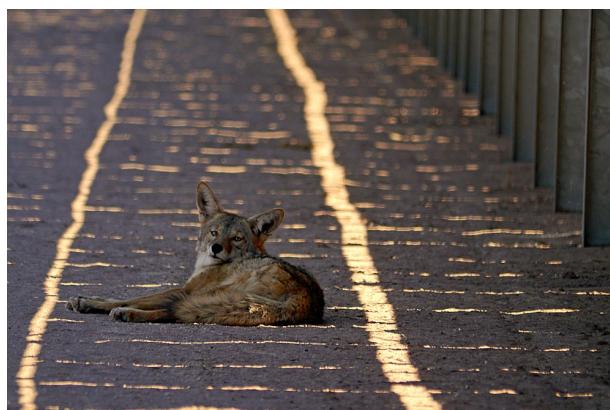
We discussed mitigation for any disturbances that cannot be avoided. OneEnergy will work with the local Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine the type and extent of mitigation.

Audubon was also invited to participate where we felt a need.

The Conservation Committee was informed that OneEnergy would be approachable during all phases of the project and during the 30-year projected operation. The Conservation Committee felt that this Zoom call was very positive. A future site visit is an option that was discussed when OneEnergy personnel are visiting the site.



**Solar Panels -- flickr.com Creative Commons  
photo by Jonathan Cutrer**



**Wildlife species readily utilize the shelter of solar panels when egress is allowed. Imperial Valley CA  
Coyote Photo by Charlene Burge**

## The Voices of Birds and the Language of Belonging – David George Haskell

### Podcast Review by Robin Priddy

This is such a lovely podcast; I've listened to it many times already and hear something new each time. His writing is so extraordinary; I'm offering excerpts from the transcript. I just can't bring myself to paraphrase his work, it's too beautiful. ~ Robin

David George Haskell is author of *The Songs of Trees: Stories from Nature's Great Connectors*, winner of the 2020 Iris Book Award, the 2018 John Burroughs Medal, and named one of the Best Science Books of 2017 by NPR's Science Friday. His first book, *The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature*, was winner of the National Academies' Best Book Award for 2013, finalist for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize in nonfiction, winner of the 2013 Reed Environmental Writing Award, and winner of the 2012 National Outdoor Book Award for Natural History Literature. His latest book, *Sounds Wild and Broken: Sonic Marvels, Evolution's Creativity, and the Crisis of Sensory Extinction*, was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. He is a professor at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee.

<https://emergencemagazine.org/essay/the-voices-of-birds-and-the-language-of-belonging/>

David G. Haskell enters the intricate and generative soundscape of the world of birds, inviting us to join in a practice of cross-species listening as a bridge to kinship.

FOR MILLENNIA, the language of birds has called us to cross divides. In the Qur'an, Solomon received a bounty and blessing when he was given the language of birds. Job exhorts us to hear the wisdom of the fowls of the air. News of the human world was carried into the divine ear by the speech of Norse Odin's ravens and the bluebirds of the Taoist Queen of the West. In the voices of birds, we hear augury, portent, prophesy. We are drawn across boundaries into other places, other times.

Song spills from open beaks, flowing from the birds' chests. There, at the confluence of windpipes, sitting directly over the heart, sits a sound-making organ of unique and marvelous design. This syrinx is only the size of a lentil or bean. Into this tiny space are interwoven a dozen rings of bone and two dozen muscles, all connected to membranes and lips of soft flesh. The muscles are among the fastest known, capable of contracting up to 200 times per second.

But we do not hear as they do. For at least 300 million years, mammals and birds have been on separate evolutionary paths. Our common ancestors, amphibian-like creatures of swampy Paleozoic forests, had ears adapted to water.

Bird and mammal hearing, then, is grounded in two different architectures, more linear and direct in birds, segmented and coiled in mammals.

Here are parallel worlds of experience. The same sound vibration is received and understood in profoundly different ways by birds and mammals.

That bridge is made from the gift of our attention. Sometimes attention is focused into science, but mostly it is an opening to the languages of birds in the everyday.

What do we hear in the bird voices of our homes? Every species has a sonic signature, and individuals within species have their own unique voices. In this diversity of acoustic expression are embedded many meanings.

First, the particularities of species, each with its own cadence and tempo. House wren. Bald eagle. Song sparrow. Raven. By noticing and naming, we take the first step into friendship and understanding, crossing the gulf between species.

Bird sounds reveal the polyrhythms of a living Earth.

This language of bird species also discloses the physical diversity of the world. A gull's call slices through the turbulent winds of the ocean shore. In a mossy forest, the ruffed grouse looses deep territorial calls that flow unimpeded by the dense vegetation. High in the mountains, bushtits call to one another with notes that cut through the whoosh of wind in spruce trees. On the open prairies, meadowlarks throw their lance-like song over the thick grasses.

Yet, attentive bird-listeners hear the edges of meaning. Individuality in bird sounds is not random or accidental; it reveals the personality of each bird.

Continued on page 5

## The Voices of Birds and the Language of Belonging – David George Haskell

Continued from page 4

When we understand the meanings of a sound made by a bird, nerves in two different brains touch and signal. The link between nerve cells is made from vibrating air, a connection as strong and real as the chemical links among nerves in a single brain. Bird sounds, then, are sonic neurotransmitters that leap across species boundaries.

This leap is creative. When bird and human minds connect, a new language is born. This expansive language weaves many species into a communicative whole, a web of listening and speech.

Language-learning is indeed for everyone. It unites us. And so we return to the invitation offered to us by the birds around our homes. In their voices we hear the many rhythms of the seasons and the varied physicality of habitats.

We learn the individual stories of each bird. We understand how our community is changing and what we should remember from this present moment. We hear and create Earth's universal grammar.

Let's answer the birds' invitation, stepping outside to give them the simple gift of our attention. Listen. Wonder. Belong.

## Come on out and give us a hand!

Get involved in the good work we do and help us to be a vibrant and viable Audubon chapter! Please consider volunteering to bring your great ideas and help us continue into the future. We'll provide training, guidance, and moral support to new board members. The time commitment for the positions vary, but is flexible.

We also welcome help in other areas, such as with bird events and Curlew newsletter input.

**We have many critical board positions open:**

- **Vice President,**
- **Education Chair / Junior Audubon**
- **Membership Chair**
- **Programs Chair**
- **Publicity**



Your help is needed!  
Burrowing Owl  
Photo by Charlene Burge

## LCBAS Fundraiser Silent Auction

We will hold a fundraising silent auction at the LCBAS November Membership Meeting.

There will be several framed bird pictures and other items available for you to bid on!

Anyone wishing to donate an item for this fundraising auction please contact Marcie Daines at 509-627-4854 or via email at [mdthd@frontier.com](mailto:mdthd@frontier.com)



An example of a few items available for the silent auction. There will be lots of great stuff for you to bid on!  
Photo by Marcie Daines

**It's been a slow couple of years for fundraising, so we hope you'll all come out to help support LCBAS!**

### Other fundraising opportunities:

At this time we are unable to have a seed sale, as Columbia Grain and Feed closed last spring. We are hoping to have a new partnership soon--stay tuned!

We are also hoping to schedule a flapjack fundraiser.

## National Audubon's Bird Migration Explorer

Last year National Audubon launched a new Bird Migration Explorer. This is a great tool which will help you follow your favorite bird species, or hundreds of them, on their migration! If you didn't check it out last year, maybe this year it's time to do so. Follow the link for more information:

<https://www.audubon.org/magazine/fall-2022/the-bird-migration-explorer-lets-you-interact>

## Birdcast Migration Forecast Site

A website called BirdCast, through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, uses radar-based data to develop and maintain tools that predict and monitor nocturnal bird migration in the contiguous United States. You can access the website here: <https://birdcast.info/> to see what is forecast, as well as an estimate of what birds have already migrated through on the date you search!

For example, I input Franklin County on October 14th, and found out that approximately 1,100 birds had crossed through Franklin County already on that day, and an estimated 10,000 were in flight over the county at the time I searched! They were heading SE, at an elevation of about 4,400 feet, and flying on average 16 mph.

Further, expected migrants are listed on the website--on this night, Dark-eyed Junco, Snow Goose, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Sandhill Crane, Greater Yellow-legs, Long-billed Dowitcher, Varied Thrush, Greater Scaup, and other species were expected to be part of the migrants coming through our area.

Other parts of the site show graphs of nightly averages and when the migration will peak and then start to taper off.

## Leslie Groves Park Long Range Planning

Discussions are currently being held about a long-range plan for Leslie Groves Park which includes the stretch from Hains/River Rd to Ferry Rd. The proposal and survey are at [www.richlandparksandrec.com/about-us/leslie-groves-park-long-range-plan](http://www.richlandparksandrec.com/about-us/leslie-groves-park-long-range-plan). The survey and comment period are open until Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023. If you have further questions or comments, you can contact Julie Piper at the link. You can also contact the Parks & Rec Director, Laura Hester: [lhester@ci.richland.wa.us](mailto:lhester@ci.richland.wa.us).

One concern we have with this proposal involves the possible introduction of a manicured lawn between the bike path and pedestrian path, rather than introduction of managed areas that provide habitat, such as more extensive pollinator gardens or heritage gardens. Other concerns include what is meant by 'vegetation management', the proposal to remove additional vegetation east of the pedestrian path for views (there are already a number of view corridors to the river), and the proposal to put a non-motorized boat dock in a location where there is a lot of milkweed/ monarch habitat (there are other possibilities).

Please consider completing the survey and adding additional specific comments on aspects of the plan that concern or please you.

## Citizen Science: Winter Raptor Surveys

If you can identify raptors in our area and enjoy having another reason to spend time out birding (but, seriously, who needs reasons?), you should consider joining the Winter Raptor Survey.

The 20th season for the East Cascades Audubon Society's Winter Raptor Survey Project will get underway November 1st for optional surveys, and December 1st for the main survey season.

The project, thus far, has recorded 31 species of raptors, and all data collected is provided to The Peregrine Fund to include in their raptor database for research and population monitoring purposes. This data, as well as data from eBird and research projects, are painting a picture of raptor use and population trends in our western states.

These routes are currently available for this year:: Prosser South, Prosser West, Touchet North, Walla Walla East.

**Contact Jeff Fleischer** to get involved: [raptorrunner97321@yahoo.com](mailto:raptorrunner97321@yahoo.com)

**Editor's Note:** Several members of LCBAS have conducted Winter Raptor Survey routes the last few winters and found it an enjoyable opportunity to get out and birdwatch while contributing to an important, and long running, citizen science project.

You do not need to be an expert in survey techniques, just know your raptors, have good attention to detail, take your time, follow the simple directions provided for the surveys, and accurately fill out simple survey forms. Easy peasy and lots of fun!

**LCBAS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:** **Postal Curlew subscribers** can see the year/month their subscription expires by looking on their Curlew label. **eCurlew subscribers** are alerted to the impending expiration of their subscription by email. Please renew your subscription on or before the month your subscription expires to continue to receive the Curlew without interruption. Renewing online is easy, quick and safe: <https://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/join-renew-donate> or you can use the form included with this newsletter.

**Consider receiving the eCurlew instead of a paper copy!** See all the photos in color, receive your Curlew sooner, and save paper and other resources. To switch to the eCurlew: <https://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/contact>

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Please send address changes (postal address or email address) to <https://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/contact> so that your subscription is not interrupted. You can also mail address changes to LCBAS, PO Box 1900, Richland, WA 99352.

**NEW NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERS:** We have been sending you complimentary issues of The Curlew newsletter to keep you up to date on local happenings. After three issues, the complimentary mailings end. To continue to receive The Curlew newsletter without interruption, please become a paid subscriber. Doing so is fast, easy, and secure at our website <https://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/join-renew-donate>

The **LCBAS Privacy Policy** is available at our website. Find out more at [www.lcbas.org](http://www.lcbas.org) or [www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org](http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org)

### LCBAS OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
President	Dana Ward	<a href="mailto:president@lcbas.org">president@lcbas.org</a>
Vice President	OPEN	—
Treasurer	Dan Hansen	<a href="mailto:treasurer@lcbas.org">treasurer@lcbas.org</a>
Secretary	Debbie Berkowitz	<a href="mailto:secretary@lcbas.org">secretary@lcbas.org</a>
Birding Events	Jason Fidorra	—
Communications Chair	Charlene Burge	—
Conservation Co-Chair	Dana Ward and Rick Leaumont	<a href="mailto:conservation@lcbas.org">conservation@lcbas.org</a>
Education Chair	OPEN	—
Finance Chair	Dan Hansen	<a href="mailto:treasurer@lcbas.org">treasurer@lcbas.org</a>
Fundraising Chair	Marcie Daines	
Membership Chair	OPEN	To contact anyone without a dedicated email address, please use the contact form on our website:
Program Chair	OPEN	
Director at Large	Robin Priddy	
<b>OTHER CONTACTS:</b>		
Curlew Editor	Charlene Burge	
Membership Database	Rich Barchet	
LCBAS Website	Lori Nelson and Lisa Hill	
Publicity Chair	OPEN	

**Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society****PO Box 1900****Richland, WA 99352****Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Membership Form**

LCBAS membership benefits include a year's subscription (10 issues) to The Curlew and priority registration for space-limited field trips. LCBAS is a 501c(3) organization and dues are tax deductible.

\_\_\_\_\_ Regular membership (\$20)

\_\_\_\_\_ Full-time student membership (\$10)

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to make an additional donation of \_\_\_\_\_.

Total: \_\_\_\_\_ (Make check payable to **LCBAS**)

**Mail your form and dues to: Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society, PO Box 1900, Richland, WA. 99352**

I want to save resources and postage and receive my newsletter by email

I do not want to receive e-alerts for last minute activity changes, important issues, and volunteer opportunities (check for opt-out).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Membership in LCBAS is separate from membership in the National Audubon Society.  
To join the National Audubon Society, please go to [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)