



# The Curlew

The newsletter of the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society

## Upcoming Events:

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

**February 25:** Monthly LCBAS Chapter Meeting @ 7:00 PM

**March 1:** LCBAS First Saturday / Bateman Island Walk. See page 2

**March 4:** LCBAS Board Meeting

**March 25:** Monthly LCBAS Chapter Meeting @ 7:00 PM

**LCBAS events are always open to the public. Please join us!**

## Other local events:

**February 22:** McNary Winter Birds [friendsofmcnary.org/events](http://friendsofmcnary.org/events)

**March 21-23:** Othello Sandhill Crane Festival: Celebrate their return and learn why nearly 35,000 cranes choose Othello, WA., as a spring migration stopover.  
[othellosandhillcranefestival.org/](http://othellosandhillcranefestival.org/)

## Volunteer Opportunities:

We have a number of volunteer opportunities to help LCBAS, and with community projects. In January, in conjunction with the Columbia Native Plant Society, a work party at Leslie Groves North completed trimming and raking in the native plant garden. There will be more volunteer opportunities this spring to help out. We are also seeking people who would like to contribute in other areas. See page 3 for more information!

## Audubon WA Bird Conservation Plans: Shrub-steppe Conservation in Eastern WA

**LCBAS Chapter Meeting:**  
**Tuesday, February 25, 2024, 7:00 PM**  
**First Lutheran Church, 418 N. Yelm, Kennewick, WA**

**With Seth Hulett**

Don't miss this opportunity to learn how Audubon Washington is working to protect the birds and landscapes of Eastern Washington!

Join us for a presentation with Seth Hulett, Senior Program Manager for the Columbia Plateau at Audubon Washington, as he shares the organization's priorities for bird conservation in Eastern Washington.

Seth will introduce Audubon Washington's updated Sageland Strategy and discuss the vital role private lands play in sustaining bird populations. He will highlight innovative conservation initiatives, including the Audubon Conservation Ranching Program and the Conserving Greater Sage-Grouse in South-Central Washington project, both of which are bringing new opportunities for habitat restoration and sustainable land management to the region.

With a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife from Oregon State University and over a decade of experience working with private landowners in the Columbia Plateau, Seth specializes in habitat restoration and sustainable land stewardship.



## First Saturday / Bateman Island Bird Walk February 1, 2025

By Lisa Hill

We have been so lucky this winter with good weather for the Bateman Island bird walks, and the February walk was no exception with blue skies and plenty of sunshine. Twenty birders were eager to find as many winter birds as possible and we came up with another great list of 57 species.

An AMERICAN AVOCET in non-breeding plumage was out on a mudflat with a small flock of DUNLIN. RING-NECKED PHEASANT live on the island but we are usually unaware of them if they are quiet. We heard three males calling which is a high number. A PACIFIC WREN chattered away at us in the same place as last month. A few people caught good looks at a VARIED THRUSH, HERMIT THRUSH, RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET, BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE and SPOTTED TOWHEE. RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS were already busy singing and making their usual clucking noises. Waterfowl had a big impact on the list total with nearly twenty species present. A large flock of TUNDRA SWANS were in their usual feeding site just off Columbia Point. Hundreds of NORTHERN PINTAIL, AMERICAN WIGEON, GADWALL, WOOD DUCK, BUFFLEHEAD, COMMON GOLDENEYE, COMMON MERGANSER and HOODED MERGANSER filled the Yakima delta area.

CANVASBACK and REDHEAD along with LESSER SCAUP and RING-NECKED DUCK gave us the opportunity to do some comparison of male identification features.



Male Canvasback (L) and Male Redhead (R)  
Photos by Larry Umthun

Canvasback have a white body and flanks (think sail canvas), black breast, deep brick-red head and a nearly black bill. From a distance, Redhead look very much like Canvasback but the back is grayish, the head is brighter red and the bill is very light blue with a black tip. In profile, the two species are easier to separate. Canvasback have a flattened, tapered bill that merges straight into the forehead. The Redhead has a very rounded head with a more typical curved duck bill.

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**The next Bateman Island bird walk is Saturday, March 1st, beginning promptly at 8:00 AM.**

**Please come a few minutes early to sign in. The main parking lot for Wye Park has been closed, so give yourself a couple of extra minutes to arrive in case you need to park further away.**

**Please join us! Both the public and LCBAS members are always welcome. Binoculars are available, first come, first served. No registration is required.**



## Continued from page 2: First Saturday / Bateman Island Bird Walk

Lesser (or Greater) Scaup and Ring-necked Duck are a bit trickier to separate. Side-by-side the Ring-necked Duck is smaller with a more pronounced tuft on the crown and back of the head and has a white ring near the black tip of the bill. The shape of the white flank is different than Scaup, coming to a point near the neck. The Ring-necked Duck name can be confusing since the ring on the bill is far more noticeable than the ring on the neck. In good light the neck ring can be seen as a purplish sheen. Scaup heads appear more rounded with a greenish-purple sheen and they have no ring on the bill.



Male Lesser Scaup (L) and Male Ring-necked Duck  
Photos by Larry Umthun

## Upcoming Bird Festivals

There are many birding festivals and events throughout the state. For more information on bird festivals and events in WA state, visit:

[wa.audubon.org/bird-festivals-0](http://wa.audubon.org/bird-festivals-0)

**February 22:** McNary Winter Birds  
[friendsofmcrrw.org/events](http://friendsofmcrrw.org/events)

**March 14-16:** Wings Over Water NW Birding Festival. [wingsoverwaterbirdingfestival.com](http://wingsoverwaterbirdingfestival.com)

**March 21-23:** Othello Sandhill Crane Festival  
Celebrate their return and learn why nearly 35,000 cranes choose Othello, WA., as a spring migration stopover. [othellosandhill-cranefestival.org/](http://othellosandhill-cranefestival.org/)

**April 10-13:** Olympic Bird Fest  
[olympicbirdfest.org/](http://olympicbirdfest.org/)

**April 25-27:** Gray's Harbor Shorebird Festival  
[www.shorebirdfestival.com/](http://www.shorebirdfestival.com/)

**May 15-18:** Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest  
<https://wenatcheeriverinstitute.org/bird-fest/>

## Volunteer to Help LCBAS

Would you like to get involved with running LCBAS and/or contribute to outreach, education, events, publications, Curlew articles, and other areas?



We would love to have you! Please inquire through the LCBAS website contact page: [www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/contact](http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/contact), contact a board member for information how to get involved, or come to a board meeting (always open to the public). You can help us, our local communities, and the birds we love and protect.

## Audubon Washington's 2025 Legislative Priorities: Protecting Birds, People, and Our Future

At Audubon Washington, our Healthy Birds, Healthy Planet agenda means we are focusing on bold, strategic policies to combat climate change and habitat loss, and strengthen communities. Our 2025 legislative priorities ([wa.audubon.org/news/audubon-washington-2025-legislative-priorities](http://wa.audubon.org/news/audubon-washington-2025-legislative-priorities)) emphasize safeguarding ecosystems, advancing clean energy, and protecting biodiversity.

This year, we are advocating to accelerate the development of clean energy and transmission in ways that balance habitat protection, tribal resources, and community benefits. We are also leading efforts to protect Washington's unique shrub-steppe ecosystem through a proposed Shrub-steppe Conservation Grant Program. In Puget Sound, we are supporting policies that promote habitat conservation, restoration, and nature-based solutions in a changing climate.

Join us in advocating for these vital policies that will protect our landscapes, wildlife, and communities for generations to come.

Of specific interest to those living in our area is the Washington Shrub-steppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative. Audubon Washington is leading a proposal for a Shrub-steppe Conservation Grant Program which will channel resources into protecting critical habitats, connecting landscapes, and restoring biodiversity.

This type of program has been identified as a priority of the Washington Shrub-steppe Restoration and Resilience Initiative ([wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/habitat-recovery/shrubsteppe](http://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/habitat-recovery/shrubsteppe)) and will help ensure that working lands continue to support both wildlife and livelihoods. This legislative session, we are also supporting [SB 5203](#), which will help ensure connectivity for Washington wildlife through safe habitat passages.



WDFW Photo

## Friends of Mid-Columbia River National Wildlife Refuges Present: Winter Birds 2025

**Saturday, February 22,  
9:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
64 Maple Street, Burbank, WA**



Join the Friends of Mid-Columbia River National Wildlife Refuges at a family friendly event at McNary NWR.

Planned events include:

- Bird banding demonstrations with long-time LCBAS members Bill and Nancy LaFramboise
- Guided behind-the-scenes tours focusing on raptors (arrive early to sign up--van tours will fill up)
- Speakers from USFWS officers
- Waterfowl viewing from the blind, and while walking along the paved, accessible Quail Trail (up to two-miles long, self-guided).
- Wood carving
- Children's crafts



**LCBAS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:** The Curlew digital newsletter 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 newsletter without interruption. Renewing online is easy, quick and safe:

[www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/join-renew-donate](http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/join-renew-donate) or you can use the form included with this newsletter.

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Please send address changes (email address) to [www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/contact](http://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 hope you will support Lower Columbia Basin Audubon by joining the local chapter, which is locally funded. Please become a paid subscriber and add your voice to our bird protection, conservation, and education efforts. Doing so is fast, easy, and secure at our website:

[www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/join-renew-donate](http://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@gmail.com">president.lcbas@gmail.com</a>                                 |
| Vice President        | Chuck Hedel                | —  |
| Treasurer             | Dan Hansen                 | <a href="mailto:treasurer.lcbas@gmail.com">treasurer.lcbas@gmail.com</a>                                 |
| Secretary             | Debbie Berkowitz           | <a href="mailto:secretary.lcbas@gmail.com">secretary.lcbas@gmail.com</a>                                 |
| Birding Events        | Jason Fidorra              | —  |
| Communications Chair  | Charlene Burge             | —  |
| Conservation Co-Chair | Dana Ward and Rick Leumont | —  |
| Education Chair       | Kelly Doyle                | —  |
| Finance Chair         | Dan Hansen                 | <a href="mailto:treasurer.lcbas@gmail.com">treasurer.lcbas@gmail.com</a>                                 |
| Fundraising Chair     | Marcie Daines              |  |
| Membership Chair      | <b>OPEN</b>                | <b>To contact anyone without a dedicated email address, please use the contact form on our website:</b>  |
| Program Chair         | Lori Nelson                |  |
| Director at Large     | Robin Priddy               | <a href="http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/contact">www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/contact</a> |

#### OTHER CONTACTS:

|                     |                           |  |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Curlew Editor       | Charlene Burge            |  |
| Membership Database | Rich Barchet              |  |
| LCBAS Website       | Lori Nelson and Lisa Hill |  |
| Publicity Chair     | <b>OPEN</b>               |  |



**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 our digital newsletter “The Curlew” and priority registration for space-limited field trips. LCBAS is a 501c(3) organization and dues are tax deductible.

\_\_\_\_\_ Regular membership (Individual or family at the same permanent address) (\$20)

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

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

Total: \_\_\_\_\_ (If paying with a check, please make check payable to **LCBAS**)

**Register and pay online via PayPal at [www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/join-renew-donate](http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/join-renew-donate)**

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

\_\_\_ 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)