



The Curlew

The newsletter of the Lower Columbia Basin
Audubon Society

Items of Interest

- AOU Name Changes
- Birding by Kayak
- Who Was Alexander Wilson?
- First Saturday Birdwalk Update
- Water, Wind & Fire Tour

Upcoming Events

Oct 2 - Board Meeting, 6:15 PM at Richland Public Library

Oct 7 - First Saturday Bird Walk, 8:00 AM at W. E. Johnson Park. For details, visit lcbas.org.

Oct 24 - Membership Meeting, 7:00 PM at First Lutheran Church, Kennewick

Nov 4 - First Saturday Bird Walk, 8:00 AM. Location to be announced. For details, visit lcbas.org.

Nov 6 - Board Meeting, 6:15 PM at Richland Public Library

Using Applied Research to Manage Russian Olives and Increase Avian Diversity

Jim Castle

October 24, 2017 at 7:00 PM

First Lutheran Church

US 395 and Yelm, Kennewick

Russian olive trees form dense thickets in riparian areas, crowding out native plants and excluding the birds that rely on them. Some birds, however, love to eat Russian olive fruits. Russian olives spread easily and are difficult to remove – what is the best way to reduce their effect on the environment? Through Jim's work with the Army Corps of Engineers, they have discovered that a mosaic of habitats is a good approach. They showed increased bird diversity when they removed about half of the Russian olives in a way that created patches of native and non-native habitats.



Purple Finch eating Russian olive fruits
by Larry Umthun

Water, Wind & Fire: Saving our farms, forests, and fish while strengthening our economy

Scientific studies led by scientists at National Audubon have confirmed that climate change is the number one threat to birds, including the Long-billed Curlew (our chapter's mascot).

Audubon Washington and Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) are working together to find solutions that will work for birds and people, one that will produce a healthy environment and a healthy economy.

As part of this effort, these groups are embarking on a tour of eastern Washington and the Idaho panhandle to talk about how we can move past partisanship to address the challenges of plentiful and affordable energy, a growing economy with good jobs, and managing risk as a result of climate change.

You are invited to be part of the conversation when the tour comes to the TriCities!

When: November 3, 7:00 PM

Where: Benton PUD Auditorium, 2721 W. 10th Avenue, Kennewick

Who:

- Dr. Steve Ghan, climate scientist and group leader of Richland CCL
- John Sandvig, aerospace engineer and business executive, member of the CCL "Conservative Caucus"
- Dr. Sara Cate, family physician and climate advocate

For more information visit their website at <http://tinyurl.com/waterwindfiretour>



Wilson's Warbler
by Ivar Husa

Alexander Wilson

The Father of American Ornithology

A warbler, a plover, a snipe, and a storm petrel... what do these birds have in common? They (and many more) are named for Alexander Wilson (1766 - 1813), an artist and naturalist.

Wilson, a Scottish immigrant, arrived in the United States in 1794. By 1803, he had begun the enormous task of describing and illustrating all the birds of his adopted country. This classic work, *American Ornithology; or, the Natural History of the Birds of the United States*, was published in nine volumes between 1808 and 1814.

To accomplish his goal, Wilson wandered throughout the country, logging tens of thousands of miles on horseback, by boat, and on foot. He was intrigued by the diversity, colors, and numbers of birds he saw. All told, he described 268 of the 350 bird species in the eastern US, including 26 that were new to science. Wilson's contributions to ornithology are unparalleled.

Reference: Weidensaul, S. 2007. *Of a Feather: A brief history of American birding*. Harcourt Publishing: New York.

Want a Closer Look at Birds? Hop in a Kayak!



Jane in her kayak



Black-necked Stilt



Parasitic Jaeger

Seeing birds from cockpit of a kayak is a great way to see them up close

by Lori Wollerman Nelson

A challenge for many birders is getting close enough to see details: the color of the scapular feathers, the shape of the bill, the tips of the primary feathers. LCBAS member Jane Abel has solved that problem – she birds by kayak. According to Jane, “Most shorebirds allow me to pull up to the shore and start clicking away.” Birding by kayak has its difficulties too – getting hit with waves from the wakes of motor boats can make identifying birds a challenge. The pictures that Jane shares with local birders through the LCBirds-2 Yahoo group show that kayaking can allow for unparalleled looks at birds that are often hard to see from land – well worth the challenges involved!

To see more pictures like these from Jane and other bird photographers in our area, join LCBirds-2. From www.lcbas.org, click on “LCBirds-2 Bulletin Board” in the menu on the left side. Sign up for the bulletin board and to receive email notices of posts. It is a great way to see beautiful photographs and to hear about local bird sightings.



A Caspian Tern, carrying a satellite tag

Oregon State University tracks Caspian Terns with satellite tags and numbered leg bands.

Report sightings to <http://agsci-labs.oregonstate.edu/cate-tracking/about-the-project/>

Report: First Saturday Bird Walk

W. E. Johnson Park bird walk

Saturday, Sept 2, 2017

by Lisa Hill

Bateman Island has been closed to the public since July 16 when a devastating fire burned 60-70% of the vegetation in the middle of the island. To the casual observer, the island appears to be unscathed because the green outer perimeter did not burn. A date for opening the island is unknown. It could be several months to a year or more. In the meantime, we will have 1st Saturday birdwalks in various sites around the Tri-Cities.

On Sept 2, a group of about 10 birders ventured into W. E. Johnson Park in Richland. The 225-acre site is a designated natural area and is open only to walkers, bicyclists and horseback riders. Multiple wide pathways meander through the park and lead through several types of habitat: riparian, wooded, sage and a small bit of Yakima River shoreline. It is possible to see about 40 bird species in a 3-hour walk, but we found 32 species. Overall, the park was rather quiet, with low numbers of birds in general.

We did come up with five warbler species: YELLOW, ORANGE-CROWNED, MACGILLIVRAY'S, WILSON'S and TOWNSEND'S. Several WESTERN TANAGERS gave their distinctive chirrup call, and multiple RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES voiced their slow-paced "yank-yank" call in the wooded areas. Other reports from the park indicate a higher than usual number of nuthatches this year. Everyone got a very good look at an OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER perched at the top of a large tree which is their preferred insect-hunting position. We also found a GRAY CATBIRD, WARBLING VIREO, several DOWNY WOODPECKERS and a DUSKY/HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER.

The next bird walk will be Saturday, Oct 7 at 8am at WE Johnson Park in Richland. For details visit www.lcbas.org or our Facebook page.



Red-breasted Nuthatch
by Larry Umthun



Grasshopper sparrow singing
by Ivar Husa

Donate to LCBAS when you shop

Fred Meyer - Link your Rewards Card to LCBAS and we'll receive a donation every time you have your card swiped at the store. Stop by the Customer Service desk at any Fred Meyer or visit their website to connect your card to LCBAS. You can use our name or our ID number (89875).

www.fredmeyer.com/topic/community-rewards-4. Click on "Link Your Rewards Card Now" to sign up.

Yoke's - Register for an escrip card and link it to LCBAS. Every time you have your card scanned, we'll receive a donation. You can register using our number (500745676) or our name.

www.escrip.com/howitworks/

AmazonSmile: Shop at Amazon through smile.amazon.com. Choose "Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society" as your charity and we'll receive 0.05% of your purchase total.



Bullock's Oriole
by Mike Guthrie

Good bye, Thayer's Gull!

Hello, Cassia Crossbill!

Welcome back, Rivoli's Hummingbird!

AOU Checklist 2017 Changes Highlights

by Jason Fidorra

Each summer, the American Ornithologist's Union reviews updates to species taxonomy in North America. The results entertain and sometimes frustrate us as field guides begin using new arrangements and species names. "Are you still calling that bird a Northern Oriole?" Species "splits" and "lumps" are based on convincing research and genetics, but what's convincing sometimes changes over time. The 2016 update split Western Scrub-Jay into the coastal California Scrub-Jay (found in WA), and Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay of the American southwest.

This year, the AOU update has a few major changes. One is the absorption of Thayer's Gull into Iceland Gull. While Thayer's are the normal winter visitors on the west coast, distinguishing Thayer's, Iceland, and the intermediate Kumlien's subspecies was giving East Coast birders enough headaches that the AOU undid the 1973 decision that split the species. Thayer's Gulls are Iceland Gulls of the subspecies *thayeri*. Take one tick off the life list.

Sad about that? Head to Idaho, where the USA's newest endemic species is found: the Cassia Crossbill! Pronounced *cash-uh*, this species is endemic to the South Hills and Albion Mountains in southern Idaho. Road trip! Of the 10 Red Crossbill types recognized, this was the only sedentary type in the US and can be found south of Interstate 84 and east of Hwy-93 year round. But watch out as 2 Red Crossbill types still inhabit the area and only subtle differences in call notes can separate the species, but Cassia Crossbill has the thickest bill if you happen to have some calipers and birds in hand. It is the only crossbill to evolve without squirrels and the large bill is the result of an evolutionary arms race against its cone bearing food trees.

More good news was the long awaited removal of Yellow-breasted Chat from the wood-warbler family. Genetic research shows that the chat is not a warbler, it's a....chat! Our noisy chat is now the only member in the family Icteriidae (annoyingly similar to Icteridae, the blackbirds). At least this sort of solves that mystery. One last change was the split of Magnificent Hummingbird. This Arizona specialty is now *again* called Rivoli's Hummingbird (as it was called prior to 1983), while Talamanca Hummingbird is what you've seen if you've been to Panama or Costa Rica.

Too confusing to keep up with? Get your life list into a program like eBird which automatically updates your data and is free! Stay tuned for next year's update where Myrtle and Audubon's Warblers are rumored to reappear.

Name that Group!



Most birders know that a group of birds is a flock – but do you know some of the more obscure names for groups of our favorite birds?

Match the bird with the correct collective noun. Can you get them all right?

- Quail:** covey or flight?
- Ducks:** raft or herd?
- Hawks:** conclave or kettle?
- Geese (flying):** skein or charm?
- Cranes:** dance or team?
- Catbirds:** mewling or bevy?
- Chickadees:** flotilla or banditry?
- Loons:** scold or asylum?
- Terns:** cotillion or wedge?
- Wrens:** spring or chime?

Did you know the prism binocular was invented in 1854 by Ignazio Porro and that's why they're called Porro prism binocs? Roof prism binoculars didn't appear until about 50 years later.



Pacific wren
by Lori Wollerman Nelson

Answers to the quiz (from The Spruce at thespruce.com)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Wrens: chime | Hawks: kettle | Quail: covey |
| Terns: cotillion | Ducks: raft | |
| Loons: asylum | Catbirds: mewling | |
| Chickadees: banditry | Cranes: dance | |
| | Geese: skein | |

Pledge to be a Lazy Gardener!

The Nature Conservancy and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology are gathering pledges from gardeners who promise to be lazy this fall!

You can create a bird-friendly yard year-round by waiting until Spring to clean up your garden.

Why wait?

Dried seed heads on flowers and fruits that remain on shrubs provide food for sparrows, finches, and robins over the winter. Leaves and dried vegetation offer places for insects and spiders to hide and offer meals for hungry insect-eating birds like wrens and warblers. Overgrown grassy areas and unkempt shrubs provide warm nooks for sheltering during during cold and wet weather.

As an added bonus, your messy winter yard will provide protection to overwintering insect pollinators, like native bees.

For more information on how to be a lazy gardener and to pledge to keep a messy yard this fall, visit <http://content.yardmap.org/special-pages/pledge-to-be-a-lazy-gardener/>

“I value my garden more for being full of blackbirds than of cherries, and very frankly give them fruit for their songs.”

*- Joseph Addison
(1672-1719)*

Upcoming Bird Festivals

Ridgefield BirdFest and Bluegrass

October 7
Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge
in Ridgefield, WA

Birding, family-friendly events, live bird show – all to benefit the Ridgefield NWR. Contact: ridgefieldfriends.org/events/birdfest-bluegrass/



Olympic BirdFest 2018

April 13-15
Sequim, WA

Discover birds of coastal Pacific Northwest. Guided field trips, boat cruise in Strait of Juan de Fuca, gala banquet, speaker: nature guide/photographer Claudio Vidal. The festival with the most spectacular setting! Contact: www.olympicbirdfest.org.

From the American Bird Conservancy

Greater Sage Grouse Management Plan takes a step back

Conservation of one of the nation's fastest-disappearing birds took a step back in August when the U.S. Department of the Interior ordered revisions to Greater Sage-Grouse management plans, opening the door to expanded development across the American West. (Interior's statement is available at www.doi.gov/pressreleases/secretary-interior-ryan-zinke-statement-sage-grouse-report.)



Greater Sage Grouse
CC0 Creative Commons license

"Habitat protection for the grouse is already at a minimum level based on the plans put in place just two years ago," said Steve Holmer, Vice President of Policy at American Bird Conservancy. "Weakening these plans puts the grouse at grave risk of further population declines."

at stake. The existing grouse conservation plans were designed to halt the loss of sage grouse habitat and to balance conservation with limited oil and gas drilling, mining, and renewable energy development. They also include safeguards for adaptive management and mitigation should grouse populations continue to decline, bolstering the decision not to list the Greater Sage-Grouse under the Endangered Species Act (<https://abcbirds.org/program/esa-and-public-lands/the-endangered-species-act/>).

In addition to one of the West's most iconic species, more than 350 species of High Plains birds and wildlife are also



Sagebrush Sparrow
by Ivar Husa



Great Horned Owl
by Mike Guthrie

Bird-related Events at the Hanford Reach Interpretive Center

Birds of Prey Exhibit Opening – October 7, 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM

This new exhibit in the rotating gallery allows visitors to learn about the lives of owls and raptors and how these birds interact with humans. This exhibit is possible because of support from US Fish & Wildlife, Blue Mountain Wildlife, and LCBAS.

Screech at the Reach – October 27, 5:30 - 8:00 PM

Come to the REACH for some fun that focuses on owls, bats, spiders and all things creepy crawly (in the best possible way). There will be live animals, a photo booth, crafts, night hikes and more!

Watercolors: Birds of Washington – November 7 - 17

Watercolors from local artists will be displayed in the entry hall.

“Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls”

by Paul Bannick – November 9, 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Paul Bannick will be promoting his new book about owls, which incorporates images, science, and first-hand experience of these interesting birds. Learn more about owls’ lives in all seasons from courtship and mating to foraging.

All events will be at the **Hanford Reach Interpretive Center**, 1943 Columbia Park Trail, Richland. For more information, visit the REACH website at visitthereach.org.

Found a bird that's injured? Here's what to do.

First, call **Blue Mountain Wildlife** at 541-278-0215. They will help you figure out if the bird is in need of help or not.

If the bird does need to be rescued, they will give you further instructions and put you in touch with a local volunteer who can pick up the bird. If the bird is small enough to pick up, use a towel to handle it and put it in a towel-lined box or crate that has air holes, and secure the lid. Keep the animal in a dark, quiet, cool place. Do not feed it. Call Blue Mountain Wildlife right away for further instructions.

LCBAS is a proud donor to Blue Mountain Wildlife. For more information visit their website (www.bluemountainwildlife.org).

For information about baby birds out of the nest, visit:

- www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/attracting/challenges/
- www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/birds/baby-birds-out-of-the-nest



Immature Black-crowned Night Herons
by Lori Wollerman Nelson

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ADDRESS CHANGES: Please send address changes (postal address or email address) to Rich Barchet at subscriptions@lcbas.org so that your subscription is not interrupted. You can mail address changes to LCBAS, PO Box 1900, Richland, WA 99354.

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

LCBAS OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS		
Position	Name	Email
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Vice President	Ken Campbell	vicepresident@lcbas.org
Treasurer	Charlie Burgess	treasurer@lcbas.org
Secretary	Debbie Berkowitz	secretary@lcbas.org
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Communications Chair	Lori Nelson	communications@lcbas.org
Conservation Chair	Dana Ward	conservation@lcbas.org
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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 here to 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

<https://action.audubon.org/donate/chapter-membership?chapter=Y01>.