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Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Global Warming: What to Believe?

**Membership Meeting
Tuesday, October 26,
2010, 7:00 p.m.
Kennewick First Lutheran
Church
Corner of Yelm and
Highway 395**

Our October membership meeting of LCBAS will feature Dr. Charles N. Long, TWP (Tropical Western Pacific) Site Scientist for the U.S. Department of Energy's Atmospheric Radiation Measurement (ARM) Program. Dr. Long earned a Ph. D. in Meteorology from Penn State University. He specializes in the study of clouds and their effect on the surface radiation energy balance of the Earth-atmosphere system. Dr. Long has participated in many field campaigns, which are efforts taking instruments somewhere to measure different phenomenon of interest. His work has taken him many fascinating places around the world: islands in the tropical Pacific and Indian Oceans, the Arctic, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, Spain, Canada, Switzerland. Dr. Long has made measurements at sea level, but more interestingly

at higher elevations and on top of mountains. He just got back from installing instruments on top of Storm Peak near Steamboat Springs, CO elevation 3200 meters (10,500 ft). Dr. Long has to date published 51 papers in peer-reviewed atmospheric science journals, plus 17 technical reports and over 80 conference proceedings. In our age of communication and the Internet, there is considerable information available on the subject of global warming with opinions both that it is real and occurring, or conversely that it is not. So it is difficult for anyone to make heads or tails of it all, and know what to believe. Scientific explanations for either side can be complicated and hard to understand, especially when both sides use the same or very similar examples yet purport opposite conclusions to the public. In this talk, we will examine as many of these statements and examples as time permits, and try to

use simple language and concepts to get to not only the "truth," but also why and how some wrong conclusions are being drawn. In the end, you should have a better understanding of what the relevant (and non-relevant) issues are, and be better equipped to draw your own conclusions about the existence of global warming.

Please bring cookies or another treat to share before our interesting speaker begins his presentation around 7:45 p.m.

Help Plan Local Field Trips

If you would like to help plan some local field trips during the 2010-2011 birding season, please participate in a short survey which you can find at our website lcbas.org. Rich Barchet, our local field trips coordinator, is anxious hear your preferences. Many thanks.



Merlin by L. Umthun

“Compare the Merlin above with the Sharp-shinned hawk below, both may be seen in the area. Merlin are more common in the winter months.”



Sharp-shinned hawk by L. Umthun

Bateman Island Bird Walk *with Lisa Hill*

October 2, 2010. It was another gorgeous day in the neighborhood for the October Bateman Island bird walk. A large crowd of nearly 50 birders came up with a species list of 58, nearly as long as the September walk list of 61. Ducks, shorebirds and other water birds were the most numerous. Most were found off the western shore of the island and included WESTERN GREBE, PIED-BILLED GREBE, NORTHERN PINTAIL, GADWALL, AMERICAN WIGEON, GREEN-WINGED TEAL, NORTHERN SHOVELER, WOOD DUCK and RUDDY DUCK.

Lots of sandpipers and other shorebirds poked around in the mud: SEMI-PALMATED PLOVER, BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, SPOTTED SANDPIPER, WESTERN SANDPIPER, GREATER YELLOWLEGS, LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER, BLACK-NECKED STILT and RED-

NECKED PHALAROPE.

We started out slow with raptors, but ended up with a quite a few including BARN OWL and MERLIN which are not often seen on the island. Others included RED-TAILED HAWK, SHARP-SHINNED HAWK and COOPER'S HAWK. A resident BELTED KINGFISHER and a late WARBLING VIREO posed beautifully for some first-time birders.

Despite the name, an uncommon juvenile COMMON YELLOWTHROAT was spotted on the north end of the island in the dense brush, although it was at first mistaken for an Orange-crowned Warbler. YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS were all over the island with the petite RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET, GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW, WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW, SPOTTED TOWHEE, and CEDAR WAXWING.

The next Bateman Island Bird Walk will be Saturday, November 6, at 8:00am. We meet at Wye Park above the causeway to the island. All are welcome; beginning birders are invited to join in. Please bring binoculars for a more enjoyable adventure.

Website Revision

Our website is being revised. Please take a look at the home page at lcbas.org from time to time (it will be changing) and send your comments to the webmaster. You can do this through the website. It's especially important to let the webmaster know if you find broken links. The new website will make its appearance in January. As always, if you have something you want to post on lcbas.org, please send it to the webmaster.

McNary Environmental Education Center Second Saturday Event!

When: Saturday November 13, 2010, 9am-noon

What: We'll pop popcorn while we enjoy some wonderful nature movies together in the Education Center!

The McNary Education Center will also be open for those who wish to view the taxidermy or walk the trails to observe the fall migration. The Education Center is located off Highway 12 near Burbank. From Tri-Cities take Highway I-182 East/Highway 12 East to Burbank. Turn left onto Humorist Rd. at second stoplight after the Snake River Bridge. Turn left onto Lake Rd. Look for Education Center on the left.

Bird Sightings – September 2010

Angela Harding - (gela.harding43@gmail.com)

*“ I hope you
have been having
a great Fall so far,
it's been so
exciting seeing all
our winter friends
coming back
through the
Columbia Basin
again!”*

Hello fellow Birders!

I hope you have been having a great Fall so far, it's been so exciting seeing all our winter friends coming back through the Columbia Basin again!

Enjoy the list and Happy Birding!
~Angela

1. September 1st, 2010. Richland, Jacqui Seiple. Two Eurasian Collared Doves in yard.

2. September 3rd, 2010. W.E. Johnson Park, Lisa H., Nancy L and Jordene L. Two Black-throated Gray Warblers, Warbling Vireos and Wilson's Warblers, and a Red-Eyed Vireo, a new addition to the park's list. Sabine's Gull, seen flying downstream over the Yakima River. Yellow-breasted Chats, Gray Catbirds and Black-headed Grosbeaks. Saw the first Yellow-rumped Warblers and a White-crowned Sparrow since last winter. Still have Black-chinned, Rufous, and Calliope Hummingbirds in Lisa's yard next to the park.

3. September 5th, 2010. McNary NWR, Lisa H. **Canada Warbler**. There are few, if any, records of them in Washington State.

4. September 6th, 2010. McNary NWR, Barbara. Several dozen White-front Geese at Dead End Road. At Headquarters a Kestrel and a Coopers Hawk sitting in the same tree. A Kingfisher, both Red Wing and Yellow-headed Black Birds. A Virginia Rail calling. Song Sparrows, Gold Finches, House Finches and White-crown Sparrows. Coots, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, and an American White Pelican.

5. September 6th, 2010. Hanford Reach, Regan. Several small rafts of Wilson's Phalaropes (largest group was 15), Great Egrets – at least 10-15, 1 Great Blue Heron, several groups of Common Mergansers, an Osprey, and a number of Pelicans, Cormorants, Widgeon, Killdeer, Canada Geese, Mallards, etc.

6. September 10th, 2010. Bateman Island, Regan. A Western Wood Pewee, Wilson's Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, 3 Phalaropes, a Kestrel, Cooper's Hawk, and a Catbird.

7. September 10th, 2010. North Richland, Keith & Jane A. Heard first Sandhill Cranes of the Fall.

8. September 11th, 2010. W.E. Johnson Park. Larry U. and Lisa H. Lewis's Woodpecker, another new species for the park list.

9. September 12th, 2010. Bassett Park, Washtucna, Wa. Tony G. Adult Broad-winged Hawk!

10. September 14th, 2010. Richland, Bill & Nancy L's yard, White-crowned Sparrows have returned. One of the banded birds in the yard had been banded as an immature bird last year. One immature Golden-crowned Sparrow was among the White-crowned.

11. September 15th, 2010. Rancho Reata, Richland, Wa. Tony G. Western Screech Owl in yard.

12. September 18th, 2010. Bateman Island, Kathy C. & Nancy L. A

September Bird Sightings *continued*

Sabine's Gull, 3 Common Tern, 2 Marbled Godwit, 1 Bonaparte's Gull. 1 Wilson's Warbler. Yellow-rump Warblers.

13. September 17th, 19th & 21st, 2010. Richland, Larry U. & Lisa H. yard. Anna's Hummingbird seen then confirmed. 2 Rufous Hummingbirds on the 21st also.

14. September 21st, 2010. Richland, John & Jordene L. yard. First White-crowned Sparrow of the season and 5 Pine Siskins.

15. September 21st, 2010. Bateman Island, Chad M. Mostly Yellow-rumped Warblers and White-crowned Sparrows. The highlights for Chad were a Swainson's Thrush and a Red-naped Sapsucker. Saw thirty species total.

16. September 21st, 2010. Richland, Bill L. & Nancy L. yard. First Dark-eyed Junco of the season and the first Spotted Towhees 3 days earlier.

17. September 22nd, 2010. Badger Mountain trail. Keith & Jane A. Found a small group of Mountain Bluebirds at the top near the various antenna buildings.

18. September 24th, 2010. Bateman Island. Bob W. A Belted Kingfisher, 3 Downy Woodpecker, 4 Northern Flicker, Gray Flycatcher, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Barn swallow (2 late birds), 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 3 Black-capped Chickadee, an Orange-crowned warbler, Nashville warbler, Townsend's Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, a ton of Yellow-rump Warblers, 4 Song Sparrow, a Lincoln's Sparrow, and many White-crowned Sparrows.

19. September 25th & 26th, 2010. Bateman Island. Guy & Nancy L. First day,

Killdeer, 2 Semipalmated Plover, Long-billed Dowitchers, 1 Wilson's Snipe, several Red-necked Phalaropes, Least, Western, and at least 1 Semipalmated Sandpiper, 1 Pectoral Sandpiper, both Yellowlegs. Also at least 10 Great Egret. Second day, many more Long-billed Dowitchers (50 plus), 2 Red-necked Phalaropes, more Western Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers, 4 Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, 1 BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER. Heard Greater Yellowlegs.

20. September 27 & 28th, 2010. Bob W's yard, 40 years in waiting. A female or immature Anna's Hummingbird.

21. September 28th & 29th, 2010. W.E. Johnson Park and their yard next to the Johnson Park. Larry U. & Lisa H. Park: Cassin's Vireo, 3 Warbling Vireos. Red-naped Sapsucker, first for the park list. Yard: Anna's & Rufous Hummingbird, 30+ Hermit Thrushes, Wilson's Warbler and a Warbling Vireo.

22. September 29th, 2010. Yakima Delta. Keith & Jane A. 50+ Long Billed Dowitchers, 30+ Greater Yellowlegs, one Phalarope in a sleeping pose (likely Red-necked), 20+ Western Sandpipers, 1 Pectoral Sandpiper, 12 ruddy ducks, 4 great egrets, 6-12 American Pelicans, a Western Grebe. 2 Semipalmated Plovers and about 75 killdeer. More ducks and coots, maybe 1000, at the confluence of the Yakima and Columbia.

Check out our website:

<http://www.lcbas.org>

President: Robin Priddy... Email: grania0358@aol.com

Secretary: Debbie Berkowitz. Email: cdandrb@charter.net

Treasurer: Katie Harris. E-mail: kharris3b@charter.net

Conservation Notes:

with Rick Leumont

HANFORD LAND USES:

TRIDEC, Tri-Cities Development Council, is pushing the Department of Energy to review land use policy at Hanford.

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan adopted by DOE in 1999 is one of the primary documents governing land use at Hanford. LCBAS participated in the development of this plan and largely supports its findings. Large portions of the site are designated for preservation and conservation under this plan. Our vision is for transfer of these preservation and conservation areas to the Hanford Reach National Monument once DOE determines they are no longer required for its clean up mission.

Part of the site has been designated for industrial development – we have no objections to environmentally safe and friendly development in most of the area set aside for industrial development. Pockets of high quality wildlife habitat exist in the industrial area and should be protected.

TRIDEC held a series of public meetings in late September to secure public input on future uses of Hanford lands. TRIDEC requested participants to complete a survey form at these meetings. The survey form is biased toward economic developed and public access. The survey makes no mention of wildlife or preservation of habitat. The Columbia River and impacts on fish are totally ignored. We feel the survey is fatally flawed and should be given no consideration by DOE.

The Department of Energy will be holding a public meeting or possibly meetings for further input. The dates and locations have not been announced. The meeting(s) will be held in the Tri-Cities, probably during the first week of December. We will have more on this in the November Curlew.

TRIDEC is sending DOE a loud and clear message calling for economic and industrial development. At this point DOE is only considering development in the areas designated for industrial use. TRIDEC's disregard for Hanford's incredible fish and wildlife

resources gives us concern that their developmental plans will go beyond the industrial areas. Please plan on attending the DOE meeting and express your support for limiting development to the existing industrial area and providing permanent protection for preservation and conservation areas through transfer to the Hanford Reach National Monument at the earliest possible date.

Olmsted in the Pacific Northwest: Parks, Gardens and Campus Designs

Join LCBAS for cookies and refreshments at the Kennewick Library during this wonderful Humanities Washington and Community Lecture Series Program.

**Thursday, October 21
7PM**

**Kennewick Library
1620 S Union St**

Among the most influential landscape designers in history, the Olmsted Brothers travelled west around the turn of the 20th century to assist with the creation of parks and campuses throughout the Pacific Northwest. Each park, they advised, should reflect its natural surroundings, and be different than parks across town. Olmsted greatly admired the Pacific Northwest's native vegetation and urged public and private clients to retain as much of the underlying shrubbery — and the treescape — as possible. Today, we see the value of preserving native plants in our landscape, but are we a century too late? Or was Olmsted a century too soon? For more information contact: Kathy Criddle,
kcriddle@midcolumbialibraries.org

Kennewick REI — Let's Keep Our Water Ways Clean Fall Cleanup

Washington Inland Sea Kayaking Club (www.wiskclub.org) in conjunction with REI, Columbia Kayak Adventures and Greenies are proud to announce the First Annual "let's Keep Our Water Ways Clean Fall Cleanup" of the Yakima Wye Delta. Bring your Kayaks, Canoes, and Row Boats, Fishing Boat or walking shoes to pick up along the shore, and let's get out and clean this pretty water playground up of the unsightly trash. We need volunteers both on the water and on land, let's get out and have a great morning cleaning up the Wye Delta. October 23, 2010 @ 9:00 AM. @ Wye Park.

More information at <http://www.rei.com/event/10609/session/13139>

Open invitation to tour GreenWood Resources Tree Farm

If you've ever driven on I-84 through Boardman, Oregon, you would have noticed about five miles of trees that stretch back away from the highway. This is the Boardman Tree Farm – 26,000 acres of hybrid poplar trees managed by GreenWood Resources. The trees are managed for timber, pulp, and increasingly for biomass to be converted into biofuels and bioenergy. In addition to environmental stewardship policies within the company, GWR tree farms are Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified, which holds the company to be socially and environmentally responsible.

Being connected to the local community is important to us, and in particular to local groups like the Audubon Society who may have personal interests in the unique environment of the farm. This is an open invitation to folks who would like to come tour the farm and ask farm managers any questions they may have about farm operations, wildlife, FSC certification, etc. We also invite anyone who may have an interest in joining GWR's Community Advisory Committee, which is comprised of individuals representing local, regional, and national business, environmental, and governmental interests.

****Recent news of interest is the sighting of a pair of western burrowing owls on our restoration site, which is now being managed to support and encourage the birds.****

We will hold a farm tour 2-4pm on Thursday, November 4th. Please email meagan.nuss@gwrglobal.com for more information and to confirm your spot (limit 8-12 people). We look forward to meeting you!

Seattle Audubon/Puget Sound Bird Observatory, Teen Bird Banding Camp Report

August 9-13

by Blythe Clarke

Day 1: On the first day we spent it mostly in the van, it was cramped but a good chance for getting to know one another. We stopped for lunch at a rest stop and ended up feeding Nutcrackers pieces of bread.... That is until the park ranger came and told us not to. When we got to camp we played some icebreakers and the camp leaders went over what we were going to be doing that week. After dinner we set up at net next to the camp. We caught a chipping sparrow and Andrea did the banding since we didn't know what to do yet. We played in the lake and just basically hung out and set up our tents till bedtime.

Day 2: the next day was the first day of banding for us. We set up the nets after breakfast but didn't catch much, we still didn't know much about what we were doing so the few and I do mean the few birds we did catch that morning were processed by either the leaders or a camper who had been to camp before. After lunch we all sat down under the big tent/ overhang thing in the middle of the camp and Dan, the master bander, gave us a lecture. In the lecture we learned about how to properly fill out our data sheets and we were given our "*Identification guide to North American birds by: Peter Pyle*" otherwise known as our Pyle guides. We went over the codes (ex ORJU or Oregon Junco was one we all had memorized by the end of the week.) And went over where to put them and we also got our banding initials.

Day 3: We were in the banding groove once day 3 came around. Today however was different. We ate breakfast then loaded the nets, poles, rebar, snacks, banding kits and tables and went to a place called *Cash Prairie* that was 40 minutes above the camp. We didn't catch much that day but we did get a lot of experience setting up the nets and taking them down. When we got back to the camp we ate lunch then we had a little down time before we had another lecture this time on molt. We learned about flight feather molt and body molt, something we have to mark on the data sheets. We

knew the basics but on that day we really got into it. We learned about hatch years and juvenile birds. That night we slept under the stars to watch the meteor shower, it was awesome and a lot of fun.

Day 4: We went to Cash Prairie again and the day started out pretty slow, but by mid-morning things got really busy. We got to band a lot. Mostly Oregon Juncos but we got a couple of cool things. My favorite was the Pine Siskin that I got to band but the hummingbirds that Dan banded and the woodpecker were cool too. We caught 58 birds that day the best of the whole week. That night we all relaxed with some headlight soccer.... Well everyone else did I settled down with a good book and watched the guys get creamed by the girls. After that, the boys went off to do whatever it is they do and to our surprise they came back with a Sora! It was awesome to get to hold it. That night we went owling and slept under the stars watching the meteor shower again.

Day 5: The last day of camp was a nice warm day. We didn't catch any birds that morning however two of the other girls and I did go down to the lake and caught some garter snakes and lizards and chased some dragonflies. We ended up catching one Oregon Junco but nobody wanted to band it because we were so tired of it. So I volunteered and ended up banding the last bird of the day.

I'd like to thank LCBAS for helping me attend camp. I had soo much fun and really learned a lot. With the tools I learned at camp, I hope to help here locally with banding . Thank you .



Join a Powerful Force for Nature: Project FeederWatch

Ithaca, NY—One backyard at a time, participants in [Project FeederWatch](http://www.FeederWatch.org) are doing their part to unravel nature’s mysteries—simply by sharing information about the birds that visit their feeders from November to April. The 24th season of Project FeederWatch begins November 13, although new participants can join at any time.

People of all ages and skill levels can be FeederWatchers and do their part to help researchers better understand trends in bird populations. Participants count the numbers and different species of birds at their feeders and enter their information on the FeederWatch website at www.FeederWatch.org.

By collecting information from all these feeders in all these backyards, scientists at the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](http://www.CornellLabofOrnithology.org) are able to track patterns in bird populations and movement from year to year, all across North America.

Here are just a few key findings based on nearly a quarter-century of FeederWatch data:

- Populations of Evening Grosbeaks, once one of our most common backyard birds, continue to decline.
- Many species are expanding their ranges to the north, including Northern Cardinals and Anna’s Hummingbirds.

- The nonnative Eurasian Collared-Dove is invading North America at an unprecedented rate – it is now found in backyards from Florida to Alaska.

“By engaging the public we are able to pick up fluctuations that could be the result of climate change, habitat destruction, disease, or other environmental factors,” said project leader David Bonter. “These are large-scale changes that we would not be able to see without the massive amount of data we receive from our participants. Keeping an eye out in your own backyard can make a difference.”

To learn more about joining Project FeederWatch and to sign up, visit www.FeederWatch.org or call the Cornell Lab toll-free at (866) 982-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Cornell Lab members) participants receive the *FeederWatcher’s Handbook*, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds, a calendar, complete instructions, and *Winter Bird Highlights*, an annual summary of FeederWatch findings.

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) Nest Monitoring and Artificial Burrow Installation at the Mid-Columbia River Refuges Complex, 2010.

John McLaughlin and Heidi Newsome

Burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) are found in arid landscapes throughout the west. They prefer short grasslands and are often found in association with badgers and other ground dwelling mammals. Because burrowing owls do not dig their own burrows, they depend on these mammals to provide nest sites, whom are the primary burrow excavators. The burrowing owl is a federal species of concern and a state candidate species in Washington.

Burrowing owls have been monitored at the Mid-Columbia River Refuge Complex (the Complex) since 2005. Prior to 2009, the majority of burrowing owl monitoring was done at the Hanford Reach National Monument (HRNM). In 2009 and 2010, the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge (UNWR) was included in our monitoring efforts.

In 2010 staff and volunteers monitored burrows for a total of 13 weeks, from March through September. Initially, 45 burrows were checked to determine whether or not they were intact. Of these 45, fourteen were found to be "Actively Occupied" during the season. In addition to monitoring known burrows, an effort was made to survey areas to find new burrow locations. Volunteers helped with line transect surveys at the HRNM and the UNWR and as a result of these surveys, three new active burrows were found in 2010.

During the 2010 nesting season, fourteen burrow sites on our Complex were occupied by nesting pairs of burrowing owls: one at Umatilla and thirteen on the HRNM. Ten of these pairs were observed with young and considered to have "Successful" nest attempts. From these "Successful" burrows we observed approximately 30-35 young. Owl remains were found at two sites. One nest was a lone male and that nest attempt was not considered to have been initiated. The other nest had already produced young, and although several owls appeared to have been taken by a raptor, the nest was still considered "Successful".

To offset the loss of suitable habitat, burrowing mammals, and nest sites, refuge staff, along with volunteers, installed nearly 50 artificial burrows on the Monument this year. These burrows were separated into two clusters, one in the Wahluke area and one on the Arid Lands Ecology Reserve (ALE). These burrows were placed by known active sites in hopes of attracting juveniles looking for nesting sites in 2011. At the end of our season the burrows on ALE were being actively explored and hopefully those owls will return next year to nest. Additional artificial burrow installations may be attempted in 2011 if these sites are successful.

It is likely that more burrowing owl pairs nest on the Complex than we have been able to locate. Time constraints prevent staff from effectively surveying the 195,000 acres of the Monument and the 25,000 acres of the Umatilla NWR for burrowing owl nest sites. Our ultimate goal is to locate more burrowing owl nests so that population trends can be more accurately determined.

In 2011, with the help of volunteers, we will monitor the 45 known intact burrows in February to determine their status ("Intact" or "Destroyed"). All intact burrows and our artificial burrows will be monitored throughout the rest of the nesting season until active burrows can be narrowed down. Survey areas will be prioritized based on information from last summer's spotlight surveys, and soil maps. The goal of this project is to locate additional natural sites used by burrowing owls. We thank you for your help in 2010 and hope you will help us again in 2011!

If you are interested in reading our full 2010 report, please contact John McLaughlin (john_mclaughlin@fws.gov).



The Curlew
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Audubon Membership Information

Please Note: Membership in National Audubon Society (NAS) and the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society (LCBAS) are **separate memberships**.

LCBAS Chapter Membership (includes a year's subscription [10 issues] to *The Curlew*)

- \$20. for annual membership dues or
- \$10. for full time students.

Please make check payable to **LCBAS**. I can help with an additional donation of \$_____

Send *The Curlew* to my email address listed below. All my dues will go towards supporting LCBAS in local education and conservation efforts. _____

I want to be on your Environmental Alert e-mail list to receive timely notices about issues/work parties. (Your e-mail address will not be shared.)

National Audubon Society Membership (includes annual subscription to *Audubon Magazine*)

\$20. for one year new membership in the NAS. This payment includes membership in the local chapter (LCBAS) but does not include a subscription to *The Curlew*

Please make check payable to **National Audubon Society**. Please do not send renewals for NAS to LCBAS.

For any of the options above check the appropriate boxes, clip the form and mail it with your check(s) to:

Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society, P. O. Box 1900, Richland, WA 99352

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