December 2011
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the curlew

Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Special Interest Articles:

- CBC – join the fun!
- New email alert changes
- Look for us on Facebook!

Individual Highlights:

President's message 2
Bird Sightings 4

Christmas Bird Count – End the Year with Birds! December 30 th Friday!

This year's count will be held Friday, December 30th. This count, which has occurred nationally for 112 years, and locally for nearly 40 years, is done in over 1,900 locations around the United States and nearby countries and involves over 60,000 volunteers. The data that all these counts produce becomes part of the largest wildlife database in the world and is vital for determining the status of expanding and declining bird numbers. **Anyone that enjoys looking at birds can help.**
Ray Johnson (509-521-5971) will lead the Richland team this year, while **Tom and Barb Clarke (509-539-0857)** will lead the Pasco team. And **Dennis Rockwell (509-727-8740)** will lead the team Kennewick area . Please call them to participate in their area. All Christmas Bird Counts are standardized to a 7.5 mile radius circle (about 177 square miles). The LCBAS count circle is registered as the Washington Tri-Cities Circle and centers on the Columbia River just off shore near the end of Road 68 in Pasco. This is a very large area that includes Selph landing Road in Pasco, most of Two Rivers Park east of Kennewick and Badger Mountain in Richland. The Tri-Cities count starts in three locations at 7:30am, December 30 th. Although some hardy souls may do some owling at the official start time of 12:00am midnight. The three start locations where volunteers can start are:

Richland – The "Fingernail" in Howard Amon Park

Kennewick – Audubon Nature Trail in Columbia Park

Pasco – Chiawana Park Boat Ramp

From these locations we split into smaller teams led by more experienced birders. Some birding skills are nice but not required. If you can not make the 7:30am start please coordinate with your count leader prior to Friday the 30 th to

Continued on page 2

Bateman Island Bird Walk *with Lisa Hill*

The December 3 bird walk had 55 species!

The next LCBAS Bateman Island birding walk will be January 7 join us!

Christmas bird count *Continued*

"Ruby-crowned kinglet" seen on Bateman Island bird walk"

arrange an appropriate time and location. The team leader also needs to know your tallies before the potluck.

The Tri-Cities count is also one of the best supported counts in the state, and regularly has the highest number of species seen inland. All of this is due to strong community support. Our goal is to count as many birds within the circle during the day (24 hrs).
To do this, we need as many teams as possible. If individuals can only participate for part of the day, it will still help. There can be a fair amount of walking involved, so keep this in mind when making plans. But much counting will be done from car windows for those that prefer that form of participation. Birds seen at bird feeders within the count circle are just as important to the count.

At the end of count day, the LCBAS has their annual Christmas Potluck. The dinner is now held at the Columbia Grange #938, 6300 Court Street, Pasco. Please bring a dish to share and your own tableware.

Greetings from the President! *With Robin Priddy*

Many thanks to Heidi Newsome, Marilyn Hayes, Kathy Criddle for going to the Alternative Gift Fair - providing the opportunity for contributions to LCBAS as gifts to others. They raised about $250, and gave information about us and out programs to the many who attended.
Debbie Berkowitz has let us know that the Richland Parks and Rec. department is updating their master plan, and are looking for input on park and trail improvements. They will be hosting a meeting on January 18th, 6:30 to 7:30 at the Richland Community Center. Please think about going and adding your voice!
Dana Ward has plans underway for the Christmas bird count on the 30th , look for more information on page 1. Jack and Murrel Dawson will have the Grange open during the day and please plan to come to the potluck! I understand that Rich Barchet will be providing an anlaysis of CBC data from years' past. It's a great event for having some fun, great food, interesting information and birder humor; please join us!
This morning I had the luck to have a Bald Eagle drop out of fog right in front of me. The whoosh, whoosh of it's wings as the fog rolled off the river; so beautiful.
As this year winds to a close, I want to appreciate the many gifts that so many here give to Audubon, with their time, attention, and talents. I also have appreciated the privilege of serving as President.

Be well and healthy in the New Year! Robin

SAVE THE DATE! Breakfast fundraiser! *On Saturday, February 25, the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society will have a Fund Raiser Breakfast from 8:00 to 10:00 am at Applebee's on Road 68 in Pasco, WA So, reserve the date, purchase a ticket (Board members and others should have them for the January membership meeting), come anytime between 8:00 and 10:00, and enjoy a lovely breakfast with friends. This fundraising breakfast is a painless, easy way to earn dollars LCBAS environmental projects, and you get breakfast too!*

McNary Environmental Education Center February Winter Birds

Winter Birds / Friends Annual Meeting Luncheon: February 18

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Discover the abundance of ducks, swans, geese and other migrating birds. Binoculars, spotting scopes, and bird guides will be provided. Results will be entered at www.ebird.org.

A catered lunch, complete with a costumed bird skit & door prizes, will be served to members of Friends of Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges who attend the brief noon business meeting. Friend's membership is available online or at the door. To ensure adequate food, rsvp to mcnaryedcenter@gmail.com by Feb. 14.

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.

Osprey Pointe Songbird Habitat Improvement Project *with Kathy Criddle*

The Port of Pasco rehabilitation project was a huge success. Fifteen people turned out to help. About half were Cub Scouts and friends of Randy Hayden of the Port of Pasco. The other half were LCBAS people and Shannon Hayes-Truex and her husband. We planted all the bushes and a flat of donated seedlings. It took us less than 2.5 hours. All the bushes received a wire cage and stakes around them. All the plants and supplies for the wire cages were purchased with the donated money! The day was lovely, warmish and no wind and the soil under the fabric and bark mulch was damp and easy to dig! I got lots of great pictures too! I will be monitoring the planting success, stay tuned for further projects in the area.

Richland Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan Update

The Richland Parks and Recreation Department is in the process of updating their master plan. They are looking at the next six years (2012 -2018) and beyond to plan for upcoming park, recreation and maintenance needs. They would appreciate hearing from park users regarding what park & trail improvements, recreational programs or park maintenance items will be needed. They will be hosting a public meeting on January 18, 2012, from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm at the Richland Community Center. You are welcome to attend, or you may e-mail comments to Phil Pinard (ppinard@ci.richland.wa.us) or meet with him in person. Parks and Rec staff anticipate holding 2-3 public meetings, a workshop session and 1-2 regular meetings with the Parks and Recreation Commission and receive Council approval in June of 2012.

Contact – Debbie Berkowitz 375-4740

Check out our website: http://www.lcbas.org

President Robin Priddy…… ***E-mail: grania0358@aol.com***

Secretary Debbie Berkowitz.***E-mail: cdandrb@charter.net***

Treasurer Katie Harris……***E-mail:*** treasurer@lcbas.org

Audubon Adventures 2011-12

LCBAS purchased a total of 15 Audubon Adventures classroom kits for 11 classrooms and 2 other educational facilities: Jason Lee Elementary and White Bluffs Elementary in Richland, MidColumbia Partnerships, Edison Elementary, Hawthorne Elementary, Amistad Elementary, Cottonwood Elementary, and Calvary Christian, all in Kennewick, and Kingspoint Christian, Markham Elementary, and Whittier Elementary in Pasco as well as the Education Center at McNary NWR. The total cost is $689.25 with the cost of an individual classroom kit being $45.95. Any interested LCBAS member who would like to contribute to the cost of this project can write a check to LCBAS and indicate that it is for the Audubon Adventures program. Send checks to our post office box, Lower Columbia Basin Audubon:
P. O. Box 1900, Richland, WA 99352

BIRD SIGHTINGS FOR NOVEMBER 2011

Thanks for posting your sightings on LCBirds2, emailing them to me (lanirock@charter.net) or calling them in (545-4898). Comments and suggestions are always welcome. --Lannie Smith

Week one…

The first report this month was from Bob Woodley. He reported about 60 Bonaparte's Gulls (the largest number of this species that he has seen locally in over 40 years) on the delta. He also reported about 40 Killdeer, 13 Long-billed Dowitchers, and about 10 Western Sandpipers. There were numerous ducks including his first Barrow's Goldeneye drake this fall. Tony Greager spotted 200 Snow Geese at the Burbank Slough, 2 Eurasian Wigeon drakes, over 50 Wood Ducks at McNary Park and 3 Western Scrub Jays at McNary Dam. Lisa Hill and Larry Umthun reported an Anna's Hummingbird investigating their frozen feeder on November 7. (Possibly the same Anna's that visited throughout October?) Tony Greager began hearing 2 or 3 Varied Thrush calling in his yard.

Week two…

On the 8th Jane Abel spotted her first Bald Eagle of the winter (an immature) in the Yakima Delta area. The next day in Leslie Groves near Nelson Island Jane and Keith Abel saw their first Goldeneyes of the season. There was one male Common Goldeneye, two male Barrow's Goldeneyes and approximately a dozen female Goldeneyes. On the 13th they reported a late female Yellow Warbler with a number of Yellow-rumped Warblers on the walking path in North Richland. Tony Greager heard a Great-Horned Owl calling on the 10th (Rancho Reata) and a two-owl duet on the 14th. He has had a Barn Owl roosting in a willow tree in his back yard up through November 17th when the leaves finally exposed his hideout. He has seen one or two Barn Owls daily since July 20th. An adult and immature Cooper's Hawk have bathed in his pond during November. Sharon and Neil Ofsthun (also in Rancho Reata) turned in a yard list for November that included a Fox Sparrow, Spotted Towhee, Winter Wren, Cedar Waxwings, a Varied Thrush and a Great Horned Owl.

Week 3…BATEMAN ISLAND AREA

On the 16th Margaret Ford birded part of Bateman Island. She reported Cedar Waxwings, American Robins, a juvenile White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Juncos, 2 Double-crested Cormorants, 2 Pied-billed Grebes, 1 Clark's Grebe, several Mallards and Buffleheads. That same day Kevin Black reported from the boat launch area adjacent to Bateman: male and female Red-breasted Mergansers, 3 Ruddy Ducks, a female Lesser Scaup, 1 juvenile Pied-billed Grebe and a Common Loon. The next day Kevin birded the channel between Bateman and Columbia Point. He spotted a juvenile White-winged Scoter amongst the American Coots, Redheads, Canvasbacks and American Wigeons. A Peregrine Falcon was hanging out on a piece of driftwood near the Yakima River Delta. On the 18th Kevin was back on the Island (does he sleep there?), this time on the Southeast end of the island scoping toward Chiawana Park. He got several looks at a nonbreeding plumage Red-necked Phalarope, finally going over to Chiawana for a better look. While in Franklin County he recorded 2 Greater White-fronted Geese.

Week four…

Bonnie Dunham (Southeast Kennewick) had a Common Snipe probing for worms and

grubs at the edge of her lawn. It's the second visit she's had from this species. She had one in early October of 2009. Carole and Ron Louderback reported a Pacific (Black) Merlin in Kennewick on the 23rd. Keith and Jane Abel spotted a Merlin in Leslie Groves Park and a Yellow-shafted Flicker on Nelson Island. Kris Keating in east Finley reported a number of raptors on the 27th: a Merlin, Red-tailed Hawks, an Osprey, a Northern Harrier and many American Kestrels around her yard. Also on the 27th Keith and Jane picked out a lone Snow Goose with about 50 Canada Geese on Nelson Island. They've spotted 15 Canvasback Ducks, as well as some Ring-necked Ducks and Redheads in the same area. Larry and Lisa saw 2 Purple Finches in Johnson Park that day. Margaret Ford covered a lot of ground on the 28th. She started at Big Flat HMA with American Coots, 2 Western Grebes, 20 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 2 Song Sparrows and a Northern Shrike. She moved on to Madam Dorian Park finding a mature Bald Eagle and a couple of White-crowned Sparrows. On November 30 the month ended with the return of the male Varied Thrush to Jane and Keith's yard (absent since late May).

Dues Reminder

You can pay your dues and make donations to LCBAS using a credit card and PayPal. See our website at lcbas.org or go to ths link: http://lcbas.org/JoinLCBAS.html.

INFORMATION UPDATE!

NEW E-MAIL ALERTS FOR LCBAS COMMUNICATION

The LCBAS Board is starting an e-mail alert list to communicate with members about last minute changes (e.g., cancelations of meetings/field trips), important issues that could benefit from your voice (e.g., conservation issues including those from sister Tri-Cities' conservation groups) , or activities needing volunteers (e.g., education or native plant restoration projects). We expect to send e-mails a couple of times a month, as issues arise.

Some of you are already on our Environmental Alert List. This new e-mail Alert List replaces and expands the usage of the existing Environmental Alert list.

For those who receive a paper copy of the Curlew, please contact membership@lcbas.org to opt IN. For those who get an electronic copy of the Curlew, your December eCurlew includes a note asking if you want to opt OUT. You can opt out at any time by contacting membership@lcbas.org . Of course, we will not share our e-mail alert list with any other organizations.

Join the Great Backyard Bird Count
Feb. 17-20, 2012

More information to follow in the January Curlew!

The 15th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is coming up February 17-20, 2012. The four-day event is free and is open to bird watchers of all ages and skill levels. Watch and count birds for at least 15 minutes on any day of the count, and enter your tallies at www.birdcount.org. The results provide a snapshot of the whereabouts of more than 600 bird species. The GBBC is a joint project of the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology with Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada.

The Curlew
Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society
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Audubon Membership Information

Please Note: LCBAS Chapter Benefits (includes a year's subscription [10 issues] to *The Curlew*) this is an additional cost to member ship in National Audubon Society.

_____ $20. for annual membership benefits 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 e-mail Alert list to receive timely notices about issues/work parties. (Your e-mail address will not be shared.)

_____ I do not want to be on the LCBAS e-mail alert list.

_____I am interested in helping out. Please contact me.

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 included 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

Name……..

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