



# The Curlew

The newsletter of the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society

## Upcoming Events:

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

**May 22:** Birds 'N Brews, see pg 2

**May 28:** LCBAS Monthly Chapter Meeting at 7:00 PM -- all are welcome! LCBAS Elections will take place during the May 28 meeting. See page 3 for more information

**June 12:** Birds 'N Brews, see pg 2

**June 25:** June picnic, see pg 2

**July & August are LCBAS summer hiatus months. We will start up again in September!**

### Make a Difference - Volunteer with LCBAS!

Think of LCBAS like your favorite flock of birds - the larger it is and the more diverse the individuals within it, the stronger and more sustainable both LCBAS and it's members will be.

We know everyone in our community is different in their own specific way. And that's precisely why we know you can help us help birds. You have unique talents and experiences, and we would love to have your help! We offer many ways to volunteer that ultimately help us protect and advocate for birds. It doesn't matter whether you're an expert birder or can only identify a pigeon, we have plenty of opportunities for you to choose from!

Please see page three of this issue to see our volunteer opportunities, and consider stepping up to help out during our elections in May.

## The Mystery of Owls

**LCBAS Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at 7:00 PM  
First Lutheran Church, 418 N. Yelm, Kennewick, WA**

Have you ever been curious about owls? If you would like to learn more about these mysterious, often nocturnal or crepuscular birds, join us for a deep dive into owl life history with Izzy Edwards. Izzy will talk about the eight expected owl species commonly found in the Lower Columbia Basin. She will also cover more elusive species found in the Blue Mountains.



Isabelle (Izzy) Edwards is a 21-year-old nature photographer. Izzy has been passionate about wildlife her whole life and is especially drawn to owls. She has devoted the past six years to locating, observing, and photo-documenting owls.

She has participated in various field conservation opportunities including the Global Owl Project on Burrowing Owls in northern Oregon. She teaches about the life history of owls at schools and organizations throughout the country.

## First Saturday / Bateman Island Bird Walk May 4, 2024

By Lisa Hill

The day was overcast, but pleasant as about 20 eager birders scoured Bateman Island and came up with 57 species. A few breeding species have returned and we caught a glimpse of a male BULLOCK'S ORIOLE and had great looks at many YELLOW WARBLERS. One bird we always see on the May walk that was missing was Black-headed Grosbeak. Even a day or two during peak migration can make a difference in the arrival of a species. We heard an ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER belting out its trilling song, and one lucky birder got a quick look at a NASHVILLE WARBLER. Several flocks of CEDAR WAXWINGS flitted about the mulberry trees searching in vain to find a ripe fruit among the many green ones. Cedar Waxwings are very abundant here in winter and many people do not realize that they nest here, too.

Two excellent finds were a WILLET on the north tip of the island and two VAUX'S SWIFTS swooping around overhead with many swallows. The Willet is a rarity in Benton County with only a handful of them ever observed. A Vaux's Swift can be challenging to pick out from a flock of swallows because it is so similar in appearance and flight behavior.

They fly high and are almost always seen from beneath. The overall sickle shape of the wings, more pointed and back-curved than swallow wings, is the first field mark to look for. Upon closer inspection, their wings flutter much faster than a swallow's and they glide between bursts of flapping. A very short tail gives the impression of a short body and very long wings.

Many BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS were present along with two pair of beautiful WESTERN KINGBIRDS. A flock of nearly fifteen LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS poked around on a mud flat while one RED-NECKED PHALAROPE foraged by spinning around in circles in shallow water to stir up food.



Willet  
Photo by Jef Blake

**The next Bateman Island bird walk will be Saturday, June 1 beginning promptly at 8:00 AM. Meet in the parking lot of Wye Park above the causeway to the island. This will be the last walk of the 2023-24 season before we take a break in July and August.**

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

## Birds 'N Brews

Join Jason Fidorra for some easy, family-friendly spring birding! Spring migrants and summer breeding birds will be on hand!

### Wed., May 22 @ 6:00 PM

Meet at the Lighthouse on Clover Island, Kennewick. We will bird the waterfront and walk to Duffy's Pond for an hour, then meet up at Ice Harbor Brewery at the Marina, 350 N. Clover Island Drive.

### Wed., June 12 @ 7:00 PM

Meet at the north parking lot for WE Johnson, off Hall Rd. We will bird out and back for about an hour then move to Lazy River Taphouse in West Richland at 4033 W Van Giesen St.

## PICNIC IN THE PARK WITH LCBAS

### Tues. June 25th, at 6:00 PM

**Leslie Groves Park, Shelter #2, Richland**

All are welcome! You don't need to be a member to join LCBAS's picnic in the park.

Come and renew old acquaintances and meet new friends. We will have a potluck and/or you can bring your own food and skip the potluck. Please bring a main dish, dessert or side to share, if you're participating in the potluck, and your own dinnerware and utensils.

If you can, please come a little early to socialize and help set up.

## 2024 - 2025 LCBAS Upcoming Elections

It's that time of year again - It's time to vote for LCBAS Officers and Standing Committee Chairs! All current, dues-paying members are encouraged to vote.

Additionally, any LCBAS member who is interested in a position is welcome and strongly encouraged to volunteer or be nominated for a position. More information about elections and open positions is provided below.

LCBAS elections will be held during our May 28 meeting.

We have a number of open positions among the elected positions, including officers and standing committee chairs. Please consider volunteering to keep our chapter running!

We would also welcome assistance in other areas, including Events, Communications / Curlew newsletter, Junior Audubon, and Publicity. If you have skills or a desire to volunteer, we'd love to have your help!

### We are looking for help!

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

- ◆ **Education Chair**
- ◆ **Membership Chair**
- ◆ **Programs Chair**

Get involved in the good work we do and help us to be a vibrant and viable Audubon chapter! We'll provide training, guidance, and moral support to new board members. The time commitment for the positions varies, but is flexible.

#### Elected Positions:

President: Dana Ward  
 Vice President: Chuck Hedel  
 Secretary: Debbie Berkowitz  
 Treasurer: Dan Hansen

#### Standing Committee Chairs:

Birding Events: Jason Fidorra  
 Conservation: Dana Ward & Rick Leumont  
 Communications: Charlene Burge  
 Education: **OPEN**  
 Finance: Dan Hansen  
 Fundraising: Marcie Daines  
 Membership: **OPEN**  
 Programs: **OPEN**  
 Director at Large: Robin Priddy

#### Appointed Positions:

A number of positions are filled by appointment, rather than via election. These people have agreed to serve LCBAS in appointed positions for 2024-2025:

Bateman Bird Walks: Lisa Hill  
 Book Sales: Robin Priddy  
 Christmas Bird Count: Bill LaFramboise  
 Curlew Mailing: Jack and Murrel Dawson  
 Facebook: Heidi Newsome  
 Hospitality: Marcie Daines  
 Junior Audubon: **OPEN**  
 Publicity: **OPEN**  
 Taxidermy Collection: Sheri Whitfield  
 Website: Lisa Hill, Lori Nelson

## Migratory Bird Conservation Bill Signed Into Law

### From National Audubon

President Biden recently signed the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act (nicknamed Neotrops) into law, reauthorizing and enhancing a program that provides funding throughout the Americas for partnerships to benefit migratory birds and their habitats.



**Long-billed Curlews**  
Photo courtesy of BLM Idaho

Thank you to each and every chapter who helped us reach this milestone! A special thank you to the chapter leaders who called their elected officials, wrote and published editorials in local newspapers, went to an office to meet with their Congressperson's or Senator's staff, as well as sent emails and asked your chapter members to send emails! You all helped push this over the finish line and into a law that will help birds for generations to come.

When you have a moment, please thank your U.S. Representative and Senators for supporting full funding for conservation projects across the Western Hemisphere to help America's migratory birds:

<https://act.audubon.org/a/nmbca-ty?ms=chapter-Y01>

A reprint of (WA) Representative Rick Larsen's press release comments on the bipartisan passage of the Migratory Bird Protection Bill, which ensures grant funding to conserve bird habitat and boost the outdoor economy. The link to Larsen's remarks on the House floor is of special importance for its mention of five Audubon chapters:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=eN-OZ6UAK9s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eN-OZ6UAK9s)

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, Rep. Rick Larsen (WA-02) applauded House passage of the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act, a bipartisan bill introduced by Reps. Larsen, Maria Elvira Salazar (FL-27), David Joyce (OH-14) and Mary Peltola (AK-At Large) to reauthorize and improve the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA), the only federal grant initiative to promote the conservation of migratory birds.

The bill passed the House of Representatives by voice vote. Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and John Boozman (R-AR) have introduced similar legislation, which the Senate is expected to consider soon.

**Continued on page 5**

## Leslie Groves North Native Plant / Habitat Restoration Project

LCBAS had a conservation win in the 1980's after fighting to save Leslie Groves Park from development. In 2006, LCBAS collaborated with the Columbia Basin Chapter of the Native Plant Society to begin restoring native shrub-steppe habitat along Harris Ave. in Leslie Groves North.

Today, this restoration project is ongoing and requires maintenance every year to help protect and enhance the shrub-steppe habitat.

Debbie Berkowitz is always elbow-deep in this ongoing project. Please contact her to help!  
[secretary@lcbas.org](mailto:secretary@lcbas.org)

We've been making good progress on weeding around the perimeter at Leslie Groves North in Richland (thank you to those who have come out to help!), but we still have more weeding to do. If you're interested in helping, we have a work party schedule set up for the rest of May. We'll be meeting either along Harris just north of Snyder St. or at the east end of Snyder near the garbage cans. In either case, look for my blue Subaru Outback.

**Thursday, May 23**  
**Saturday, May 25**  
**Sunday, May 26**

All work parties are currently scheduled between 8:30 and 11 AM – subject to change based on weather.

Please bring a weeding tool (a dandelion digger works well) and pail if you have one. Sturdy garden gloves, long pants, and long-sleeved shirt are recommended, knee pads can be useful, and don't forget water and a hat. Boots and gaiters are also recommended as the cheatgrass matures.

If you can come any of these days, please let me know so I can let you know if there's a change in plans.

**Continued from page 4 -- Migration Bird Conservation Act Signed Into Law**

**Yellow-breasted Chat**  
**Photo by Wendy Thompson**

What Larsen and Stakeholders Are Saying "I am glad to see our migratory bird bill soar through the House! Pesticide pollution, deforestation and invasive species threaten the more than 350 migratory bird species that rely on the Pacific Northwest as their flyaway," said Larsen, the lead Democrat on the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee. "This bipartisan bill will help protect these diverse bird populations and their habitats in the Pacific Northwest and across the Western Hemisphere and provide a significant boost to the outdoor economy."

"We have lost three billion birds since 1970—a staggering number—and this legislation is critically important to help communities and partners meet the challenges of the moment so we can conserve migratory birds for years to come," said Marshall Johnson, chief conservation officer at the National Audubon Society. "96 million Americans engage in birdwatching, contributing \$100 billion to the U.S. economy each year. Investing in migratory bird conservation across the hemisphere is essential to reversing these troubling bird declines. We thank the House and the co-sponsors of this bill for their leadership, and urge swift passage of the companion bill in the Senate."

"North Cascades Audubon Society wholeheartedly thanks Rep. Rick Larsen for his leadership and efforts to reauthorize and enhance the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act," said Robert Kaye, conservation chair at the North Cascades Audubon Society. "This crucial legislation will help protect the neotropical migratory birds that perform such an essential role in the health and well-being of the ecological systems as they journey throughout our hemisphere.

Additionally, so much of our forests, lakes, streams, wetlands and marine habitats that are essential to the health of our local ecosystems, and to the survival of these transient birds, will greatly benefit from the protections incorporated into this essential reauthorization legislation."

"As members of the Skagit Valley community, we understand the vital role that migratory birds play in our ecosystem and our economy," said John Day, president of the Skagit Audubon Society. "Our valley is home to myriad migratory bird species that rely on the region's wetlands, forests, and farmland as critical stopover and nesting sites during their long journeys. Skagit Audubon Society greatly appreciates the leadership of Rep. Rick Larsen for passing this legislation to increase investments in protecting birds across the hemisphere, helping to ensure that birds have the habitat they need to thrive, no matter where they are on their migratory journey."

**What the Migratory Bird Bill Does** Since 2002, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act has awarded more than \$89 million in grants to over 700 migratory bird conservation projects in the United States, Canada, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Partner organizations have contributed an additional \$346 million to these projects, which have protected more than 5 million acres of habitat in the Western Hemisphere.

Specifically, the bipartisan Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act:

- Reauthorizes the NMBCA grant program through Fiscal Year 2028 at \$6.5 million annually;
- Lowers the cost-sharing requirement for grant recipients from 3:1 to 2:1 to make the grants more accessible to smaller organizations; and
- Requires a report to Congress on the composition of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Advisory Group. For more information on the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act, click here: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/4389?s=3&r=1&q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22birds+bird%22%7D>

## Bird Migration – the 1A on NPR

Podcast Review by Robin Priddy

[the1a.org/segments/birds-are-having-a-hard-time-migrating-this-spring-what-can-we-do-to-make-it-easier/](https://the1a.org/segments/birds-are-having-a-hard-time-migrating-this-spring-what-can-we-do-to-make-it-easier/)

Billions of birds are making their way around the world right now as part of their annual spring migration. But climate change, habitat loss, and human infrastructure are making that journey harder for a lot of species. Here's a link to an Audubon article on interactions between migration and climate change:

<https://www.audubon.org/news/spring-shifts-earlier-many-migrating-birds-are-struggling-keep>

Conservation and government groups come together twice a year to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day – and this podcast followed with a segment. Featured on the broadcast were Noah Matson, deputy assistant director for migratory birds, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Amanda Rodewald, senior director, Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

As we know, birds travel twice a year. In the spring right now, they're flying north: traveling for food resources. Spring appears in a burst of energy. We all see the flowers bursting and that means the insects are coming out, and the birds are following that progression of spring - the abundance of nature and food.

There is some consistency in the routes that migratory birds will take, and with some species you see reliable use of very particular stopover locations. For example, the Red Knot, coming through predictably in large numbers in the Delaware Bay Area. We also have the Sandhill Cranes, stopping over in local refuges and wetlands (including some very near us).

Timing of food supply – insects and plants and synchronizing with the birds' migration is such a delicate relationship. Climate change affects the timing of the food supply and thereby the birds that depend on it. Development can certainly affect stopovers and endpoints as well.

Climate change can have different effects on birds. Direct mortality is because of more severe, intense weather events where birds get caught, but usually it's affecting them indirectly by changing their environment and the habitat resources upon which they depend.

Climate change can impact the resources birds are able to get as they're moving along, but there are other kinds of impacts such as coastal sea level rise and the loss of some of those coastal ecosystems.

Half of the migratory species are declining; that's a real reminder that this isn't something just limited to the birds we care about. It highlights for us is how complicated it can be to try to conserve migratory species. This conservation requires a life history strategy, and collaboration across geopolitical boundaries, and our information historically has been so limited. Sometimes even, in we don't know important stopover sites or even one end of migration.

Fish and Wildlife recently did a survey of the public about recreation and wildlife and found that 96,000,000 Americans appreciate and observe birds. There is also much more information on migration than ever before because of research, technologies, and citizen science. That information along with growing interest and participation in birding is reason for hope.

Another interesting resource to check out is BirdCast, which takes weather radar data, and extracts information that separates out birds from weather. This technology can predict, not only measure, where birds are going to be moving. For example, just over 4.5 million birds crossed Virginia last night, and so people can go to the BirdCast website. <https://birdcast.info/>



Flyway graphic courtesy Audubon  
<https://www.audubonadventures.org/>

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**NEW NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERS:** We hope you will support Lower Columbia Basin Audubon by joining the local chapter, which is locally funded. 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

### 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	Chuck Hedel	—
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)