



# The Curlew

The newsletter of the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society

## Upcoming Events:

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

**January 28:** Monthly LCBAS Chapter Meeting @ 7:00 PM

**Jan 15 - Feb 15:** National Audubon Climate Watch Study (Red-breasted Nuthatch Count)

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

**February 4:** LCBAS Board Meeting

**February 15:** Applebee's Flapjack Fundraiser. See page 3



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

## Embark on a Kalahari Journey

**LCBAS Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 7:00 PM**  
**First Lutheran Church, 418 N. Yelm, Kennewick, WA**

**With Scott Woodward**

Ready to explore the untamed beauty of the Kalahari Desert and beyond? Join us for an exciting presentation that takes you through the heart of Africa's unique landscapes and rich cultural heritage.

What to Expect:

- The Kalahari Desert: Discover the vast expanse and hidden wonders of this massive geologic feature.
- Okavango Delta: Experience the serene beauty of this inland delta by Mokoro canoe.
- Etosha National Park: Witness one of Africa's largest national parks.
- Skeleton Coast: Visit the eerie, hauntingly beautiful coastline of Namibia.
- Namib Desert: Be mesmerized by the Martian-like landscape of the world's oldest desert.
- Cultural Encounters: Meet the world-renowned Bushmen of the Kalahari and experience their unique way of life.



Highlights of this presentation will include over 2,500 miles of 4-wheel drive adventure through the Kalahari, unique geography and unforgettable African wildlife, heartwarming interactions with the special smiles of African natives. And a special segment on the legendary Bushmen of the Kalahari and their fascinating culture.

Don't miss this epic adventure!

Scott has spent 75 years as a resident of the Tri-Cities. A former scholar-athlete at Washington State University (WSU), Scott has dedicated his career to education and coaching. In addition to his professional accomplishments, Scott has played significant roles in community conservation, serving as past president of Tapteal Greenway and Ridges to Rivers Open Space Network. His passion for the environment continues through his active participation as a citizen activist for conservation. Beyond his community involvement, Scott and his wife Pamela are avid adventure travelers, exploring the world together.

## First Saturday / Bateman Island Bird Walk January 4, 2025

By Lisa Hill

A new year of Bateman Island birding started off with a fantastic day of blue skies and no wind, sandwiched neatly between two heavy rainstorms. An enthusiastic group found 56 species for the day. This is an impressive number of species and matches the totals seen on the last two walks.

Small songbirds were active and many were calling and singing, including a RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH which is rarely observed on the island. For such a diminutive bird at 4", one PACIFIC WREN gave a loud, squeaky call which immediately caught our attention. It proceeded to climb high in a tree and show off its beautiful cinnamon plumage. PURPLE FINCH are becoming more common in the region in winter and we found three foraging in ash trees near the viewpoint on the west bank of the island. This was a life bird for several people. There were good numbers of BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE, BEWICK'S WREN, SONG SPARROW, SPOTTED TOWHEE, YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER and CEDAR WAXWING.

Waterfowl crowded the Yakima delta including CANVASBACK, NORTHERN PINTAIL, BUFFLEHEAD, WOOD DUCK, COMMON GOLDENEYE, HOODED and COMMON MERGANSER and hundreds of AMERICAN WIGEON.

The bird of the day was a PEREGRINE FALCON seen on the interior of the island perched in a tree. In past winters, a Peregrine was often seen on a snag out on the Yakima delta at water level, but seeing one on the island is very rare. This bird gave a series of raucous screeches before taking flight. Peregrines are the most widespread raptor on earth, living successfully in every imaginable environment, surviving easily on birds, mammals, bats, fish and invertebrates.

Breeding pairs have been documented in Kennewick nesting on or near the cable bridge. With modern high-speed videography, it is proven that peregrines are the fastest creature on earth with dive speeds over 200mph when pursuing prey. This is known as a "stoop" whereas approaching prey from beneath is called "ringing up".

Peregrine Falcon  
Photos by Elke Davis



**The next Bateman Island bird walk is Saturday, February 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.**

## Christmas Bird Count Results December 28, 2024

By Bill Laframboise, Christmas Bird Count Compiler

Thanks to the many participants including feeder watchers, the annual Christmas Bird Count was a big success. I would also like to give special thanks to the Team Leads Lisa Hill, Richard Barchet, and Dana Ward for coordinating the efforts in their respective areas and making the count run smoothly. Marcie Daines did a great job hosting and organizing the potluck dinner after the count. The potluck has been a long-standing tradition of our count. The dinner provided a nice opportunity to share in some good food, see good friends, and review the birding adventures of the day.

There were 107 species seen on count day. There were an additional nine species seen on the three days before and after the count day, which are known as count week birds. The windy conditions presented some challenges finding songbirds which stayed under cover in the wind. Numbers of most songbirds were well below averages.

Some highlights during count day and count week were an unusually high count of three Pacific Loons and a good number of Red-breasted Mergansers. There were two beautiful Iceland Gulls in the area as well as four Long-tailed Ducks at the very southern edge of the count circle in Franklin County. There was an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull and five owl species including a Long-eared Owl which has been uncommon during the count. Other species of note were Dunlin, Eurasian Wigeon, Short-billed Gull, Anna's Hummingbird, Western Bluebird, and a possible hybrid Glaucous-winged x American Herring Gull, the details of which are still being worked out. There was also a report of a Yellow-billed Loon pending documentation of that identification.

Rich Barchet has decided to retire as the Kennewick area coordinator. I would like to thank him for the years that he provided excellent help and leadership in that role. If anyone would like to help or get more information about that function next year, please contact me at [billnan321@gmail.com](mailto:billnan321@gmail.com).



Photo from the 2021 CBC  
By Charlene Burge

## LCBAS Flapjack Fundraiser

Saturday, February 15  
8:00 - 10:00 AM

Join us for breakfast on Saturday, February 15 at Applebee's in Pasco at 5305 N. Road 68.



Breakfast served from 8AM-10AM.

Tickets: \$12

Breakfast includes pancakes, eggs, sausage, and beverage.

A portion of the ticket price goes to LCBAS to support education about wildlife conservation and environmental issues.

Tickets can be purchased with cash or check at:

- January 28 meeting
- At the door at Applebee's
- By contacting Marcie Daines at 509-627-4854
- On our website using PayPal (follow the instructions at this link): [www.lowercolumbiabasinadubon.org/donate](http://www.lowercolumbiabasinadubon.org/donate)

We need to sell a minimum of 100 tickets to participate in this fundraiser. Please bring your family and friends and join us!

## The Great Backyard Bird Count

**Connect to Birds, to Nature, and to Each Other on February 14-17**

The Great Backyard Bird Count is coming up fast! It's a great opportunity to participate in community science, and help provide data to help scientists better understand and protect birds. The results help scientists understand birds and their global populations before one of the annual migrations.



**Western Meadowlark**  
Photo by Charlene Burge

It takes as little as 15 minutes, once, within that four-day window. You can submit multiple lists if you choose, and if you already use eBird or Merlin, your lists will automatically count.

Get out and about and spend some time in your favorite birding spots, check out someplace new, or count in your own back yard.

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

## Upcoming Birding Festivals

There are many birding festivals and events throughout the state, and here's some information for a few. 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:** The 22nd Annual Wings Over Water NW Birding Festival in Blaine, Birch Bay, and Semiahmoo. [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. [othellosandhillcranefestival.org/](http://othellosandhillcranefestival.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/)

## A Year in the Life: Oregon's High Desert Owls

The Oregon Natural Desert Association sent an invite to LCBAS to join them for their speaker series. Coming up on February 4th is a presentation by Paul Bannick on Oregon's High Desert Owls. For more information and to register for this free online Zoom event, use this link: [onda.org/speakerseries/](http://onda.org/speakerseries/)

## Our Favorite Fascinating Bird Behaviors from the 2024 Audubon Photo Awards

**By Ken Kaufman, Field Editor, Audubon Magazine**

Published January 14, 2025, Reprinted with permission and abridged for this printing. The full article with clickable links is available here: [www.audubon.org/news/our-favorite-fascinating-bird-behaviors-2024-audubon-photo-awards](http://www.audubon.org/news/our-favorite-fascinating-bird-behaviors-2024-audubon-photo-awards)

"To be is to do." Socrates said that once. Or maybe he didn't, since the quote has been attributed to many others as well. Birds don't care about such questions; sometimes they seem content with simply being, but more often they are doing—and doing the most interesting things.

That is part of what makes avian photography both challenging and endlessly fascinating. A photographer who attempts to capture the perfect portrait of a bird is likely to be interrupted, at any moment, when that bird launches into some surprising action. But with experience and quick reflexes, such interruptions can be turned into opportunities. This year's Audubon Photography Awards produced...gems of birds caught in the act of being and doing. Check them out (at the link at the top of the article), and if you haven't yet, be sure to also see the winners of the 2024 photo awards, along with the annual Top 100 images. [www.audubon.org/magazine/2024-audubon-photography-awards-winners-and-honorable-mentions](http://www.audubon.org/magazine/2024-audubon-photography-awards-winners-and-honorable-mentions)

Entry for the 2025 Audubon Photography Awards is now open! [www.audubon.org/photoawards-entry](http://www.audubon.org/photoawards-entry)

**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>
<b>OTHER CONTACTS:</b>		
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)