

The Curlew

The newsletter of the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society

Upcoming Events:

For more information see
www.lcbas.org

May 24: May LCBAS membership meeting

LCBAS Elections: It is now time to vote for LCBAS Officers and Standing Committee Chairs. See page 2

Bateman Island First Saturday Birdwalk

June 4: Join LCBAS as we go public again with a free birdwalk on Bateman Island. The walk will start at 8:00 AM at Bateman Island. Meet ~7:45 AM at Wye Park to sign in. This birdwalk is open to the public.

June 6: June Board Meeting

Annual Picnic Returns!

June 21 @ 5:30 PM: Join LCBAS at our end-of-the-year membership meeting and potluck at Leslie Groves Park, Shelter #2. If you're not comfortable with sharing food or sitting close to others in the picnic shelter, please come anyhow and bring your own food and chairs. We'd love to see you all again! See page 3 for more information. Note this is the third Tuesday of June, and not the fourth.

April—June: Leslie Groves North Native Plant Restoration Project Work Parties—Contact Debbie Berkowitz at secretary@lcbas.org for more information.

Other Events:

For upcoming meetings and walks with the Columbia Basin Chapter of the WA Native Plant Society:
<https://www.cbwnps.org/>

The Dark and Light Sides of Lepidoptery

Tuesday, May 24, at 7:00 PM Via Zoom (see sign-in below)

Biologist Carl D. Barrentine

I devoted seven years to finding and photographing the moths of the Red River Valley of eastern North Dakota and western Minnesota (2011-17), and I am now completing my 5th year doing the same in Spokane, Washington (2018-2022) as a volunteer naturalist for the Dishman Hills Conservancy.

I hold three degrees in biology, and have published in the areas of ornithology, herpetology and entomology (1978-95). In my past lives, I was an Assistant and then Associate Professor of Biology at CSU, Bakersfield (1986-92), and then an Associate Professor of Humanities and Biology in the Integrated Studies program at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks (1992-2014). I rekindled my youthful passion for all-things-zoological after my retirement from UND in 2014, moved to Spokane in 2017, and now spend most of my time 'mothing' in the Spokane area of eastern Washington.



Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87403972167?pwd=b0VRL1RPTkRSSm10aJWk2hiYU9jQT09>

Meeting ID: 874 0397 2167
Passcode: 778547

Dial in for sound only—by your Location:
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

You can also go to our website at www.lcbas.org for a link.

2021-2022 Elections for Officers and Standing Committee Chairs

It's that time of year again - voting for LCBAS Officers and Standing Committee Chairs is now open, and will be open until June 4, 2022. As the monthly meetings are still remote, we will be voting remotely again this year. All current, due-paying members are encouraged to vote! Please vote just once per member.

Additionally, any LCBAS member who is interested in a position is welcome and encouraged to volunteer or be nominated for positions. We strongly encourage members to do so. More information about positions is provided below. Please choose one of these two options to vote. You can vote by emailing your selection ("I vote for the slate" or "I vote against the slate") to president@lcbas.org . If you would like to volunteer for an open position, please add this to your email. Or you can cut out, copy, or handwrite your ballot and mail it to LCBAS at Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1900, Richland, WA 99352.

Please be certain you vote by email, or return your paper ballot no later than June 4, 2022.

Elected Positions

President: Sheri Whitfield

Vice-President: Michael Henao

Treasurer: Dan Hansen

Secretary: Debbie Berkowitz

Standing Committee Chairs

Birding Events: Jason Fidorra

Communications: Charlene Burge

Conservation: Rick Leaumont & Dana Ward

Education: OPEN

Fundraising: Marcie Daines

Membership: OPEN

Programs: OPEN

Director at Large: Robin Priddy

We also have special committees and other positions that are not elected:

Book Sales: Robin Priddy

Christmas Bird Count: Dana Ward

Hospitality: Marcie Daines

Publicity: OPEN

Website: Lisa Hill, Lori Nelson, Ed Rykiel

Facebook: Heidi Newsome

Taxidermy Collection: Sheri Whitfield

Curlew Mailing: Jack and Murrel Dawson

Bateman Bird Walks: Lisa Hill

Junior Audubon: OPEN

I vote for the slate of officers / standing committee chairs

I vote against the slate of officers / standing committee chairs

I would like to volunteer, or nominate for an OPEN position _____

Interested in helping make things happen? Look no further!!

We have openings for people who are interested in helping LCBAS run.

Education Chair: To generate education programs in schools, and for youth and adults in community settings such as nature centers.

Membership Chair: If you are interested in meeting people and spreading the word about the good work that LCBAS does, you might be a perfect fit for the position. This person helps recruit new members and motivate existing members to be more involved.

Program Chair: Help organize the monthly membership meetings, and schedule speakers.

If you are interested or need more information, contact Sheri Whitfield at President@LCBAS.org or (435) 817-2750.

Bateman Island Bird Walk May 7, 2022

By Lisa Hill

It's baaack! After two long years on hiatus, the Bateman Island Bird Walks resumed on May 7 with about 20 happy birders in attendance. Collectively, about 55 species were spotted despite the breezy conditions. With many pairs of eyes on alert, very few species go unnoticed!

A swoop of several hundred swallows were like a cloud of gnats over the water. All six possible species were showing off their acrobatic skills: TREE, VIOLET-GREEN, BANK, BARN, CLIFF and NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS. A "U" of terns, CASPIAN and FORSTER'S, loafed on the weathered wood submerged in the mud of the Yakima Delta. One male CINNAMON TEAL does not a seasoning make, but no matter, even one is incredibly beautiful.

A fling of DUNLIN in black-bellied breeding plumage were a nice find on a mud bar. A small pouch of AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS dwarfed the few indistinguishable peeps scampering about the mud. A waterdance of grebes, both CLARK'S and WESTERN, dived for small fish. Several people got great scope views of both grebes together to see the subtle color difference in the bills.

The highlight of the walk for many people was a glaring of GREAT HORNED OWLS. A rather small nest situated very close to the main trail was overflowing with two of the three half-grown owlets that hatched there. Another springtime migrant was a tournament of 12-15 CHIPPING SPARROWS. Their jaunty chestnut crowns were easy to spot. A sweetness of YELLOW WARBLERS, all males singing with gusto, amounted to at least 13 birds. One ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER and one WILSON'S WARBLER were also seen, but it was disappointing not to have a better showing of migrant warblers. Lastly, a gross of BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAKS, newly arrived and full of melodic song, were spotted near the treetops.



Chipping Sparrow
Photo by Larry Umthun

**The next Bateman Island Bird Walk will be Saturday, June 4 at 8:00 AM.
Meet in the parking lot of Wye Park above the causeway to the island.**



Black-headed Grosbeak
Photo by Larry Umthun



A beautiful, though very windy, day yielded many birds!
Photo by Charlene Burge

PICNIC IN THE PARK WITH LCBAS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

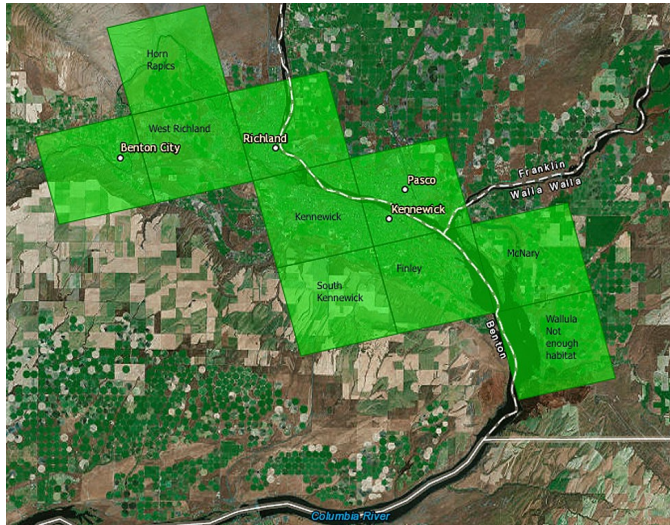
Tuesday, June 21st, at 5:30 PM. Leslie Groves Park, Shelter #2, Richland

Come and renew old acquaintances and meet new friends. We will have a potluck if you're comfortable with sharing food, or you can bring your own and skip the potluck. Please bring a main dish, dessert or side to share, if you're participating in the potluck, and your own utensils. Don't forget a lawn chair. We'd love to enjoy your company!

Directions: In Richland, take George Washington Way to Newcomer Ave., and turn right, toward the river. Then turn north onto Harris Ave., and then east on Park St. towards the river. This is the Park St. entrance. Park to the left.

Climate Watch – Nuthatch Count History and Findings

By Cherie Baudrand



Climate Watch is a National Audubon community science program studying how birds in North America are responding to climate change. A pilot project began in January 2016. Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society (LCBAS) members heard about the program at a National Audubon Conference that same year. I was asked to get involved for our area. Because it is a long-term study, we wanted children involved. I was the Junior Audubon Junior leader. I wanted to do something meaningful to help with this study, plus I had the first-ever Red-breasted Nuthatch at my feeder in Kennewick. That sighting was encouragement to take on becoming the Climate Watch Coordinator. We had chosen the Red-breasted Nuthatch from Audubon's initial list of popular and easily identifiable birds. These were originally species of bluebirds and nuthatches. In 2017, LCBAS volunteers began identifying ten squares each with 12 points containing possible nuthatch habitat. Nine squares were thought to have enough habitat. The squares and points stay consistent throughout the study. We did our first survey from January 15 to February 15, 2018.

We involved about a dozen elementary aged students, two grandchildren, and a father and son team in the first years. Unfortunately, most only participated a few times. The protocol calls for only two or three people at the five-minute point counts. This makes it difficult because only one child and one parent can join me at a point. We would like to interest more young people. Fortunately, we have wonderful adult volunteers who have committed to surveying nine, 6.2-mile squares, twice a year. There is a leader for each square and about half of the leaders have a team of volunteers to cover the points on one morning during the count period. The others survey alone or in pairs. Twelve of us have done these surveys all five years. Currently we have 18 volunteers.

We collect data on eBird and send it through a "portal" twice a year to the Senior Scientists, Brooke Bateman, Zachary Slavin, and the Climate Watch team. Birding with a friend for an important cause is fun. Sometimes we get discouraged, because some of the survey squares have no nuthatches. This makes it much less fun getting through twelve point-counts in a morning. Though, we know "zero" is a number the scientists use, over time, to see how the population changes. We count all the birds seen and heard, not just nuthatches. For the first time last year, a nuthatch was heard in the Canyon Lakes Square. Richland has consistently had the most nuthatches and the most abundant old conifers. Lisa Hill assists a group of faithful surveyors in their own yards in Richland willing to participate in this study. Pasco, Horn Rapids, and Kennewick Squares usually have a few nuthatches, but Kennewick had zero on the last count. If you have nuthatches in your yard, you can help by entering your sightings on eBird.com at any time. How will these numbers change in the future?

I looked at the reports that have been published so far. The Climate Watch Program is proving that the model of how climate change effects birds is accurate. An initial study was released in 2018. The study concluded that community science volunteers can help determine climate change effects on bird populations and can contribute to hypotheses driven science.

"Climate Watch volunteers have confirmed the accuracy of Audubon's climate projections, which show that two-thirds of North American birds are at risk of extinction by the end of this century," said Brooke Bateman, PhD, Audubon's senior climate scientist and lead author of *Survival by Degrees: 389 Bird Species on the Brink*, says the report published in October 2019. <https://www.audubon.org/content/brooke-bateman>

"Climate change is disrupting hundreds of bird species, and thanks to community scientists all across the country, we can visualize these disruptions in real time and plan conservation efforts accordingly," said Sarah Sanders, PhD, quantitative ecologist at Audubon and lead author of the study. An article about Climate Watch was published in an ecological journal in 2020 and is available at: <https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/eap.2128>

"The study concludes that climate-vulnerable birds are indeed shifting their distributions at pace with changes in climate suitability due to rising global temperatures. The most outstanding examples take place during the birds' wintering season, which is not unexpected given the more pronounced changes in temperature attributable to climate change taking place in winter months" reports Nicolas Gonzalez in a 2020 press release. Read more about the report at: <https://www.audubon.org/news/climate-change-pushing-bird-boundaries-community-scientists-confirm>

The next Nuthatch Count takes place May 15 – June 15, 2022.

I am grateful to the Climate Watch Red-breasted Nuthatch Surveyors. Thank you to all our volunteers!

LCBAS at the Salmon Summit

By Cherie Baudrand

LCBAS Education Volunteers participated at Benton Conservation District’s Salmon Summit in Columbia Park on Tuesday, April 26th. The Summit was very organized with many learning stations. The students had raised salmon from eggs in their schools and came to release them in the river.



Students practicing with binoculars
Photo by Cherie Baudrand

Marcie and Tracy Daines, Barbara and Tom Clarke, and Cherie Baudrand were there before 8:30 to set up the LCBAS display and tables with wooden birds and bird puppets. The roads were closed and only buses could enter after the morning setup time. Dana Ward and Charlene Burge arrived to help teach nearly 150 fourth and fifth grade students how to use binoculars. Tom Clarke showed the students sapsucker holes through a scope.

The students listened to instructions while we demonstrated binocular use and then they practiced focusing on our carved wooden birds. We had one classroom every 20 minutes. The teachers divided their classroom group into small groups, so the students were able to receive individual attention and success. We knew by their exclamations, smiles, and then their descriptions of the birds, that the students had learned what we taught. They described details on a Downy Woodpecker, American Goldfinch, and Yellow Warbler hidden in the trees. Wooden birds are good for learning binocular use because they don’t fly away, but the wind was so strong at times that the wooden goldfinch kept diving for cover! A Bald Eagle soared over the group had it in their sights, and other groups

park a couple times and one excited group were able to watch a fishing Osprey.

The teachers were happy to receive bird posters, a bird list, *Creating a Bird Friendly Space with Native Plants* and LCBAS brochures. All the students received a bird list. It was a wonderful educational opportunity and the students hopefully left us with a new appreciation for birds.



Brochures and wooden goldfinch
Photo by Cherie Baudrand

Dim the Lights for Birds at Night

Help migrating birds have a safe migration: turn off or dim the lights at night. For more information, see Audubon’s Light’s Out Program: <https://www.audubon.org/news/how-bring-lights-out-city-near->



Have you found an injured bird, or a baby bird?

If it is a fledgling bird, it may not need our help.

It’s natural for us to want to help, but it’s also natural for baby birds to take a leap out of a nest before they’re quite ready to fly. Often these birds have outgrown the nest, and their parents are still caring for them, even if they’re on the ground.

Sometimes, though, they’re too young, or have been found by a predator. If a baby bird is featherless, or has it’s eyes closed, look for it’s nest—maybe you can return it safely. If you took it away from your pet or a feral cat, or it has injuries, it will need assistance and veterinary care.

If you determine a bird needs help, call Blue Mountain Wildlife @ (541)278-0215

For more information on our local wildlife rescue, and when wildlife may need help: bluemountainwildlife.org/

The Science of Birds Podcast

By Robin Priddy

This Podcast is so interesting and varied— there are episodes about families of birds, evolution, migration, climate, vision of birds – and recently female birdsong! Ivan Phillipson is the host. He is a professional naturalist guide with a background in scientific research. The podcast is intended to be fun and interesting and great for lifelong learners – and it is.

My first episode was about Nest Types – Construction and Challenges. I had a question and sent it in, and Ivan answered quickly, which was a lot of fun. He loves our arid landscape, by the way. He was getting ready to leave for a birding trip to Spain; what an adventure!

Ivan has loved animals and nature his whole life. His first obsession was with amphibians and reptiles. This interest led him to graduate school, where he studied amphibians. After earning a Master's Degree in Biology and a PhD in Zoology, he did postdoctoral research on aquatic insects. Ivan likes creepy, crawly things. He lives in Portland.

Along the way, his love of nature expanded to include plants, fungi, and all animals, including birds. Birds have become Ivan's greatest passion. He's an avid birder and co-owns a birding ecotour company called Wild Latitudes. Some places where Ivan leads natural history tours are Mexico, Iceland, Alaska, Uganda, and Fiji.

Since we had a presentation about hummingbirds at our April Membership Meeting, I listened to a hummingbird podcast. Hummingbirds are amazing! Here's the link: <https://www.scienceofbirds.com/podcast/hummingbirds>



John James Audubon's
Columbian Hummingbird, now known
as Anna's Hummingbird

A few of the many interesting facts from the podcast:

- ◆ Hummingbirds are specialists that drink nectar, they have a lot of color, and there are over 300 species. This tremendous specialization means they don't compete with other birds.
- ◆ The Bee Hummingbird is the smallest at 2.2 inches from bill tip, to tail, and it lives in Cuba. It's the smallest bird in the world and weighs less than a penny!
- ◆ They have common ancestors with swifts and tree swifts from about 40 million years ago.
- ◆ Thirty-million-year-old fossils were discovered in Germany in 2004 – what a surprise, because today they are only found in the Americas, and it was thought they had originated in the “New World”.
- ◆ Unlike many birds, hummingbirds taste sweetness and have a close relationship with flowering plants.
- ◆ Hummingbird bills have developed very specific characteristics that match the shape of its preferred flowers, and the flowers adapted, or co-evolved, with them. The birds eat and spread pollen; advantaging both. These flowers are called “ornithophilous” — meaning having a fondness for birds — I guess that's like us!
- ◆ These specific adaptations mean that where there is a great density of flowers, there can be a lot of different kinds of hummingbirds in specialized niches.
- ◆ A typical hummingbird beats its wings 80 times/second – faster than the human eye can perceive. They can keep their head perfectly aligned in the same position, even when buffeted by wind.
- ◆ They can fly in any direction – even upside down!
- ◆ Their wingbeat is in a figure 8, and they get lift from the upstroke, which is very unusual.
- ◆ Their hearts can beat at about 1,200 beats per minute! Even their hearts hum.
- ◆ Hummingbirds convert sugars directly into energy instead of fat like many birds.
- ◆ Overnight they go into “torpor” - every night; their need for food is so high they need to essentially hibernate overnight. They can lose 10% of their weight overnight, even in torpor.

The recent episode on Female Birdsong was fascinating, too. I'm going to listen to Solving Mysteries with Forensic Ornithology next. Enjoy!

LCBAS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: Postal Curlew subscribers can see the year/month their subscription expires by looking on their Curlew label. **eCurlew 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 Curlew without interruption. Renewing online is easy, quick and safe: <http://lcbas.org/JoinLCBAS.html> or you can use the form included with your newsletter.

Consider receiving the eCurlew instead of a paper copy! See all the photos in color, receive your Curlew sooner, and save paper and other resources. To switch to the eCurlew, contact subscriptions@lcbas.org and include your name and email address.

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 continue to receive The Curlew newsletter without interruption, please become a paid subscriber. Doing so is fast, easy, and secure at our website <http://lcbas.org/JoinLCBAS.html>

The **LCBAS Privacy Policy** is available at our website.

Find out more at www.lcbas.org or www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org

LCBAS OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
President	Sheri Whitfield	president@lcbas.org
Vice President	OPEN	—
Treasurer	Dan Hansen	treasurer@lcbas.org
Secretary	Debbie Berkowitz	secretary@lcbas.org
Birding Events	Jason Fidorra	fieldtrips@lcbas.org
Communications Chair	Charlene Burge	communications@lcbas.org
Conservation Co-Chair	Dana Ward and Rick Leumont	conservation@lcbas.org
Education Chair	Cherie Baudrand	education@lcbas.org
Finance Chair	Dan Hansen	treasurer@lcbas.org
Fundraising Chair	Marcie Daines	fundraising@lcbas.org
Membership Chair	OPEN	—
Program Chair	Kathy Criddle	programs@lcbas.org
Director at Large	Robin Priddy	
OTHER CONTACTS:		
Curlew Editor	Charlene Burge	communications@lcbas.org
Membership Database	Rich Barchet	subscriptions@lcbas.org
LCBAS Website	Ed Rykiel	webmaster@lcbas.org
Publicity Chair	Charlotte Reep	

Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society

PO Box 1900

Richland, WA 99354

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