



# The Curlew

The newsletter of the Lower Columbia Basin  
Audubon Society

## Items of Interest

- Christmas Bird Count Information
- First Saturday Bird Walk Update
- Climate Watch: Nuthatch Project
- State Bird Trivia

## Upcoming Events

**Dec 2** - First Saturday Bird Walk, 7:45 AM at Bateman Island, by special permission. You must arrive on time to participate; latecomers can't join the group because access to the island is still restricted.

**Dec 4** - Board Meeting, 6:15 PM at Richland Public Library

**Dec 30** - Christmas Bird Count (see page 2)

**Dec 30** - Bird Count Potluck Dinner, 5:30 PM, Benton County PUD, Kennewick

**Jan 6** - First Saturday Bird Walk, 8:00 AM. Location to be announced. For details, visit [lcbas.org](http://lcbas.org).

## Christmas Bird Count Potluck Dinner

**December 30, 2017 at 5:30 PM**

**Benton County PUD**

**2721 W. 10th Avenue, Kennewick**

Come share a meal with your fellow birders and hear the results of the Christmas Bird Count!

***Last year we saw 109 species! How will this year compare?***

Did you know that Audubon's Christmas Bird Count is the longest-running citizen science program in the world? Starting with 27 birders in 1900, the CBC has grown to more than 30,000 people counting birds in North America, South America, the Caribbean, and a few locations in the Pacific. Data from the CBC have been used to model the effects of climate change on North American birds, to identify bird populations that are declining, and to promote bird awareness among the general public.

**Be part of history - participate in the Christmas Bird Count!**

For more information, see page 2.



Birders on Bateman Island  
by Lori Wollerman Nelson

## Christmas Bird Count December 30, 2017

Join us for the 118<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas Bird Count! The Tri-Cities count starts at 7:30am, Saturday, December 30<sup>th</sup> in three locations.

**Richland Team:** Lisa Hill (509-943-2244) - Meet Lisa at the "Fingernail" in Howard Amon Park

**Kennewick Team:** Richard Barchet (509-430-0053) - Meet Rich at the Rod Coler Audubon Nature Trail parking area on Columbia Park Trail.

**Pasco Team:** Dana Ward (509-545-0627) - Meet Dana at the Chiawana Park Boat Ramp, end of Rd 88

- ★ Leaders will split volunteers into smaller teams led by more experienced birders. *Some birding skills are helpful but not required.*
- ★ If you cannot make the 7:30 am start, please coordinate with your count leader prior to count day to arrange an appropriate time and count location.
- ★ Team leaders need to have all data (species and numbers) before the potluck at 6:30 pm. You will need to keep clearly written bird lists and numbers.

Can't get out to bird on count day? **Birds seen at bird feeders within the count circle are extremely important to the count.** If you count birds at your feeder please submit those numbers to a team leader. Feeder counts should be provided the day of the count, but can be called in shortly after December 30<sup>th</sup>.

The "Auditorium" of the Benton County PUD in Kennewick (corner of 10<sup>th</sup> and Ely just off Rte. 395) will be open starting at noon for those who want to stop by for warm drinks, good conversation, and possibly some dulcimer music.

At the end of the count day, the LCBAS has their annual **Bird Count Potluck**. *All CBC participants and LCBAS members are invited!* The dinner will be held at the Benton County PUD. Please bring both a main dish and dessert or side dish to share. Drinks, such as coffee and bottled water, will be provided. You will need to provide your own tableware. Start assembling at 5:30pm and we will eat at approximately 6:00pm. The day's bird count will be presented after we eat.

Questions? Call Dana Ward, CBC Coordinator at (509-545-0627).



Allison Timmons participating in the 2015 Christmas Bird Count from LCBAS Facebook page

### *Schedule for the 2017-18 Christmas Bird Count*

**7:30 AM:** Meet team leaders at respective locations or make arrangements before count day

**12:00 PM:** Benton County PUD opens for warm drinks, rest, and (hopefully) music!

**5:30 PM (or earlier):** Report species tallies to team leaders

**5:30 PM:** Begin assembling at Benton County PUD for our Bird Count Potluck

**6:00 PM (or so):** Eat, socialize, and reflect on our day... followed by tabulating the count for the day!

### **Don't forget "Count Week"!**

Birds seen between December 27 and January 2 can be added to our CBC count week total. Report sightings to Dana.

### **Want to participate in other Christmas Bird Counts?**

For a (nearly) complete list of CBCs happening in Washington, visit the Washington Ornithological Society (WOS) website at <http://wos.org/cbc/>

## Conservation News

### *Senate Tax Bill Passes*

*Includes measure to allow drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge*

Days before the December Curlew went to press, the US Senate passed a tax bill that included a provision for drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

David Yarnold, National Audubon President and CEO, blasted the move, saying “The Arctic Refuge isn’t a bank - drilling there won’t pay for the tax cuts the Senate just passed.”

ANWR is home to Arctic foxes, caribou, wolves, and polar bears. More than 200 species of birds depend on the refuge, including Snow Geese, Greater White-fronted Geese, Long-tailed Ducks, and Snowy Owls.

The US House will take up this issue next and National Audubon is encouraging its members and supporters to contact their members of Congress and urge them to protect ANWR from energy development.



White-crowned Sparrow  
by Ivar Husa

### *Some good news in habitat conservation!*

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission reported on October 30<sup>th</sup> that they have purchased 1300 acres to protect wildlife habitat and support outdoor recreation east of the Cascade crest.

The land consists of two parcels: 142 acres in Kittitas County and 1150 acres in Klickitat County. The Kittitas County parcel is part of the “Heart of the Cascades” project, a collaboration between WDFW and the Nature Conservancy. The land in Klickitat County supports a variety of wildlife including burrowing owls. It is part of a multi-phased plan to purchase over 18,000 acres in the Simcoe Mountains.



Burrowing Owl  
by Larry Umthun

### *Chlorpyrifos harms birds and people*

*From the American Bird Conservancy*

Chlorpyrifos is an insecticide commonly applied to fruit, vegetable, and nut crops. It attacks the nervous system of humans and wildlife that come in contact with it. Farm workers and people who live near agricultural areas where it is used are at highest risk of health effects from chlorpyrifos poisoning. Recent research has shown that even low doses of chlorpyrifos can disorient migrating songbirds like White-crowned Sparrows. Birds ingest chlorpyrifos on treated seeds or spread as granules, when it is eaten as grit. See <http://www.audubon.org/news/two-widely-used-pesticides-found-disorient-and-sicken-migrating-songbirds> for more information.

The EPA was on course to ban chlorpyrifos in the spring of 2017. Farmers had already begun phasing out its use in anticipation of this ban. However, Scott Pruitt, the recently appointed Director of the EPA, reversed this decision and extended the registration of chlorpyrifos for another 5 years.

Because the EPA is unwilling to act, a number of lawmakers have introduced legislation in the US House of Representatives (H.R. 3380) and the US Senate (S. 1624) to ban chlorpyrifos. National Audubon has endorsed efforts to eliminate pesticides like chlorpyrifos.

## Report: First Saturday Bird Walk

### *Bateman Island bird walk*

*Saturday, November 4, 2017*

by Lisa Hill

Bateman Island was open briefly on November 4<sup>th</sup> to allow a bird walk on the west side of the island. The walk, which was open to the public, was a controlled event lead by Jim Castle, Army Corp of Engineers. The group followed the main western trail as far as the beach, but did not circle around the island. Much of the outer perimeter of the island was spared from the fire that began on July 16<sup>th</sup>. The extent of the damage to the interior of the island was not fully visible from the main trail. What was visible appeared to be pockets of burn surrounded by green vegetation. The grove of black locust where the Great Horned Owls often nest was mostly intact.

Even though the walk was abbreviated, the group found 38 species of birds. The number would have been higher, but no spotting scopes were available to observe waterfowl on the Yakima Delta area. In spite of that they did find HOODED and COMMON MERGANSERS, HORNED, PIED-BILLED and WESTERN GREBES, COMMON LOON, AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN and GREAT BLUE HERON.

On the island itself were DOWNY WOODPECKER, NORTHERN FLICKER, BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE, BEWICK'S WREN, YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER, HERMIT THRUSH, SPOTTED TOWHEE, SONG SPARROW, WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW and AMERICAN GOLDFINCH.

The island is still closed to the public as of this writing. For information about future walks, check the LCBAS website, LCBirds Yahoo page, LCBAS Facebook page, and Tri-Cities Birders Facebook page.



Spotted Towhee

## Donate to LCBAS when you shop

**Fred Meyer** - Link your Rewards Card to LCBAS and we'll receive a donation every time you have your card swiped at the store. Stop by the Customer Service desk at any Fred Meyer or visit their website to connect your card to LCBAS. You can use our name or our ID number (89875).

[www.fredmeyer.com/topic/community-rewards-4](http://www.fredmeyer.com/topic/community-rewards-4). Click on "Link Your Rewards Card Now" to sign up.

**Yoke's** - Register for an escrip card and link it to LCBAS. Every time you have your card scanned, we'll receive a donation. Our number with Yoke's is 500745676.

[www.escrip.com/howitworks/](http://www.escrip.com/howitworks/)

**AmazonSmile** - If you use our AmazonSmile link to purchase products on Amazon, we'll receive 0.05% of your purchase total. Bookmark this address in your browser so it's easy to use!

[smile.amazon.com/ch/94-3234539](http://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-3234539).



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you to Log in or Create New  
Account just click where it  
says "not now" below and you  
can read all of our posts.



## LCBAS touts birdwatching at Tri-Cities Tourism Showcase



Kathy Criddle (left) and Charlotte Reep (right) showcased  
birdwatching at the Visit Tri-Cities 2017 Annual Meeting & Tourism  
Showcase in November. Well done Char and Kathy!! (Photo  
courtesy of Kathy Criddle)

## How did the Steller's Jay get its name?

by Lori Wollerman Nelson

In 1741, explorers on an expedition led by the Russian Vitus Bering became the first non-natives to set foot on what is now Alaska. The naturalist on the expedition was a German named Georg Wilhelm Steller. He published his journal from the expedition (*Journal of a Voyage with Bering, 1731-1742*) and is considered the pioneer of Arctic natural history. Steller's name is now associated with a number of birds, mammals, invertebrates, and plants. Among the species named for him are Steller's Jay, Steller's Eider, Steller's Sea Eagle, Steller's Sea Lion, and the now-extinct Steller's Sea Cow.



Steller's Jay  
by Larry Umthun

## State Bird Trivia!

by Lori Wollerman Nelson

All 50 states plus the District of Columbia have official state birds. How much do you know about the birds that represent each of them?

1. What is the Washington state bird?
2. Two other states selected the same bird as Washington. Which states are they?
3. Which is the most commonly chosen state bird?
4. Which group of birds are not represented by state birds: gulls, loons, raptors, or gallinaceous birds (game birds)?
5. Which state selected birds that are not wild species and which birds are they?
6. Which state bird is endemic to its state? (Endemic = found there and nowhere else.)
7. Which three state birds are not native to North America?
8. How many state birds can be found in the Tri-Cities? (Includes any listed in our annotated checklist)
9. How many states are at risk of losing their state bird to climate change?

Answers are on page 8!

For a complete list of state birds, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_U.S.\\_state\\_birds](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_birds)

### Did you know?

Benjamin Franklin criticized the choice of the eagle as our nation's symbol. In a letter to his daughter he wrote:

*"For my own part I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen the Representative of our Country. He is a Bird of bad moral Character. He does not get his Living honestly. You may have seen him perched on some dead Tree near the River, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the Labour of the Fishing Hawk; and when that diligent Bird has at length taken a Fish, and is bearing it to his Nest for the Support of his Mate and young Ones, the Bald Eagle pursues him and takes it from him."*

Contrary to popular belief, Franklin did not propose the Wild Turkey as an alternative. He did, however, think the Bald Eagle on the original design of the US seal looked like a turkey.

Source: Smithsonian Magazine, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/american-myths-benjamin-franklins-turkey-and-the-presidential-seal-6623414/>

### Trivia Hints!



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*Found a bird that's injured? Here's what to do.*

First, call **Blue Mountain Wildlife** at 541-278-0215. They will help you figure out if the bird is in need of help or not.

If the bird does need to be rescued, they will give you further instructions and put you in touch with a local volunteer who can pick up the bird. If the bird is small enough to pick up, use a towel to handle it and put it in a towel-lined box or crate that has air holes, and secure the lid. Keep the animal in a dark, quiet, cool place. Do not feed it. Call Blue Mountain Wildlife right away for further instructions.

LCBAS is a proud donor to Blue Mountain Wildlife. For more information visit their website ([www.bluemountainwildlife.org](http://www.bluemountainwildlife.org)).

For information about baby birds out of the nest, visit:

- [www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/attracting/challenges/](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/attracting/challenges/)
- [www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/birds/baby-birds-out-of-the-nest](http://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/birds/baby-birds-out-of-the-nest)



**Immature Black-crowned Night Herons**  
by Lori Wollerman Nelson

## **Project Climate Watch, The Nuthatch Edition**

by Cherie Baudrand

Climate change is likely to alter where birds live. To detect changes in bird ranges, National Audubon has implemented a citizen science project called Climate Watch. In particular, they are focusing on two common and easy to identify groups of birds, nuthatches and bluebirds. LCBAS will be participating in this program, counting nuthatches in the Tri-Cities two times a year. This will be an ongoing study with the same squares and points each year.

***I have signed up to be the coordinator and I need volunteers!***



**Red-breasted Nuthatch**  
by Larry Umthun

Our first job is to choose ten 10x10 km squares in our area. In each square, we will identify 12 points for surveys based on nuthatch habitat and safe accessibility. To accomplish this, I need folks to send me locations of nuthatch habitat - conifer trees - near you. We are not to choose points by nuthatch sightings only, but by habitat primarily. Altogether, we need 120 points!

I need volunteers to help with surveys! I need people to accompany a parent and a Junior Audubon member and count at 2 or 3 identified points in the Kennewick Square. In addition, I need volunteers to each take one square, identify 12 points within that square, and then survey the points with a friend or two during each of the survey time periods (January 15 - February 15 and May 15 - June 15). Five-minute stationary counts of the birds heard and seen at each of the 12 points are sent to e-bird and emailed to the scientists who are overseeing the project.

Please email me ([cheriebaudrand@yahoo.com](mailto:cheriebaudrand@yahoo.com)) if you would like to participate in this important study.

For more information about the program, visit the Audubon Climate Watch webpage at <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/climate-watch-program>.

## Winter Break Fun at the REACH

Over the winter school break, the Hanford Reach Interpretive Center is offering kid-oriented hands-on crafts and activities that focus on birds of prey!

Join REACH staff from 10 - 12 to learn more about our feathered friends. Sessions and their topics are:

**Wednesday, December 27 - All About Owls**

**Thursday, December 28 - Raptors of the River**

**Friday, December 29 - Physics of Flight**

See the REACH Events page at <http://www.visitthereach.org/events/> for details.

## Sign up for Project Feeder Watch

Do you feed birds at a feeder? Are you interested in helping biologists understand the winter range of birds better? Sign up for FeederWatch!

FeederWatch is a citizen science program organized by researchers at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada. They ask bird lovers with have bird feeders, bird baths, or bird-friendly plantings to identify and count the birds that



Pine Siskin at a feeder  
by Betsy Rathjen Taylor

visit their yards between November and April. The program is flexible – you can report data as often as you like, on your own schedule.

FeederWatch began in the 1970s in Ontario, when Dr. Erica Dunn at the Long Point Bird Observatory (now Bird Studies Canada) recruited

local bird lovers to report sightings at their feeders. About ten years later, they teamed up with the Lab of Ornithology to expand the program to the US. It has grown from about 4,000 participants in 1987 to more than 20,000 today.

To sign up, all you need to do is visit the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology FeederWatch website (<https://feederwatch.org>) to register. It costs \$18 to join (\$15 for Lab members) to support the costs of the program. You'll receive a research kit that explains what to do, a digital subscription to Living Bird magazine, and a year end report for the project.



Peregrine Falcon  
(State raptor of Idaho)  
by Ron Louderback

## Answers for State Bird Trivia

1. American goldfinch
2. Iowa, New Jersey
3. Northern Cardinal - selected by 7 states (IL, IN, KY, NC, OH, VA, WV). The Western Meadowlark is second, selected by 6 states (KS, MT, NE, ND, OR, WY). The Northern Mockingbird is a close third (5 states).
4. Although the Bald Eagle is our national bird, there are no raptors chosen for state birds! (Although Idaho has a state raptor in addition to a state "bird".)
5. Delaware - Blue Hen; Rhode Island - Rhode Island Red. Both are breeds of chickens.
6. The NeNe is endemic to the island of Hawaii
7. The two chickens are not native (DE and RI), plus the Ring-necked Pheasant is not native (South Dakota)
8. Twenty state birds can be found in the Tri-Cities, though many are rarely encountered here.
9. Ten states are at risk of losing their state bird because of range shifts associated with climate change. They are Minnesota (Common Loon), Maryland (Baltimore Oriole), Louisiana (Brown Pelican), Utah (California Gull), Vermont (Hermit Thrush), Idaho and Nevada (Mountain Bluebird), Pennsylvania (Ruffed Grouse), New Hampshire (Purple Finch), and Washington DC (Wood Thrush).

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**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>

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**Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society**  
**PO Box 1900**  
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## **Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Membership Form**

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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 here to 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*

*<https://action.audubon.org/donate/chapter-membership?chapter=Y01>.*