

# The Curlew

The newsletter of the Lower Columbia  
Basin Audubon Society

## Upcoming Events

See pg. 2 for additional details on birding events.

**Sept. 20:** Mesa Lagoons and Lake half-day trip with Jason Fidorra.

**Sept. 21:** Fall Migrant / Vagrant full day trip with Nancy and Bill LaFramboise.

**Sept. 21:** Tapteal Water Trail Paddle; 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M., hosted by Tapteal Greenway.

**Sept. 24:** Membership Meeting; 7:00 P.M. at First Lutheran Church, 418 N. Yelm, Kennewick.

**Sept. 26:** Junior Audubon walk 3:45-4:45 P.M. on Bateman Island. Meet at Wye Park.

**Sept. 27-29:** Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW) meeting.

**Sept. 28:** Kickoff event / information fair for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Bird Seed Sale, from 9:00 to 2:00 at Columbia Feed and Grain.

**Oct. 5:** First Saturday Bird Walk; 8:00 A.M. at Bateman Island. Meet at Wye Park ~7:45 A.M.

**Oct. 7:** Board Meeting; 6:00 P.M. at Richland Public Library, Conference Room A.

**Oct. 19:** eBird Big Day, Tri-Cities; with Laurie Ness and Lisa Hill.

**Oct. 22:** Membership meeting at 7 P.M.

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

## Gray Flycatcher Nesting Ecology in Ponderosa Pine Forests

Jeff Kozma

Yakama Nation

September 24, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

First Lutheran Church, US 395 & Yelm, Kennewick

The Gray Flycatcher breeds in a variety of habitats in the arid and semiarid regions of the western United States. Detailed information on their breeding biology is lacking, especially in the northern portion of their range where they nest in ponderosa pine forests.

During May through July, 2014-2015, Jeff Kozma monitored Gray Flycatcher nests and measured vegetation at nest sites in the Wenas Valley, Yakima county, WA. He and his co-authors found that predation accounted for 90% of failed nests. Also they found evidence of a positive association between daily nest survival and both nest height and distance of nest substrate to the nearest tree. No support for other habitat variables was found but evidence documented that period survival rate was higher during the nest building stage than the incubation and nestling stages. In addition to nest survival, Jeff will also present summaries of nest site characteristics and demographic variables (e.g., clutch size, number of fledglings, etc.).

Jeff Kozma is a Wildlife Biologist for the Yakama Nation in the Timber, Fish and Wildlife Program, within the Department of Fisheries

Resources Management. His main research interests focus on the life history and reproductive biology of birds and how habitat characteristics influence nest survival in managed ponderosa pine forests of the eastern Cascades of Washington.



Grey Flycatcher nestlings  
By Jeff Kozma

## Upcoming LCBAS Field Trips

Join **Jason Fidorra on Friday, September 20** for a half day birding trip to Mesa Lagoons. We'll meet at the main CBC parking lot (20<sup>th</sup> Ave and Sun Willows) to arrange for carpools; we will depart at 8 A.M. The group will visit Mesa Sewer Lagoons, for shorebird viewing. Mesa Sewer Lagoons is a restricted access area that we've pre-arranged for the tour. We will continue on to Mesa Lake Wildlife Area for migrants and maybe waterfowl. Expect a casual one - mile walk on uneven surface and with seedy/spiky plants. Scopes suggested but not needed. Back to Pasco by noon. No RSVP required. Contact Jason for more information.

Join **Nancy and Bill LaFramboise on Saturday, September 21** for a full day birding trip in the Washtucna area for fall migrants and vagrants. We will meet at Bassett Park at 8 A.M., and bird Washtucna, the nearby waste ponds, and possibly Windust Park. Contact Nancy and Bill for more information.

The **October Bateman Island Bird Walk** will be on **Saturday, October 5th**. We'll meet in the usual place (Wye Park, 1600 Columbia Park Trail, Richland, across from Sage Port Grill and Anything Grows). Meet at 8 A.M., and expect the walk to take between two and three hours. This is a great option for families and beginners; birders of all experience levels are welcome. We'll have binoculars for newcomers to borrow, and bird lists for you to take home. Open to the public.

## LCBAS 18th Annual Seed Sale and Bird Information Fair at Columbia Grain and Feed

For the last 18 years, Columbia Grain and Feed has been a huge supporter of LCBAS. They work to purchase seed in large quantities at this time of year and pass the savings on to you and then they make a large donation to LCBAS. Unless the bird seed market changes, this sale will be the lowest prices for the year. **Columbia Grain and Feed, 2001 W 20<sup>th</sup>, Pasco**

There will be a **kick-off event / bird information fair at Columbia Grain and Feed on September 28 from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M.** Come in and have your feeding and bird questions answered. We will bring taxidermy so you can see some local birds. Tell your friends and neighbors. Bring the kids!

We no longer do order forms. If you plan to buy huge amounts or have questions, don't hesitate to call Columbia Grain and Feed at 547-8818 to make sure they reserve your purchase.

Prices will be posted on the LCBAS web page as soon as they are available. [www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org](http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org) Call the store if you have questions. The staff is very accommodating and will try to do what you need. You can pre-pay and pick up after the sale dates but please arrange this with the store. Large bags too heavy? – you buy the whole bag (for the best per pound price) and they will break it down into smaller bags.

**Be sure to mention that you want a donation made to LCBAS when you purchase feed from Columbia Grain and Feed at any time of year. It costs you nothing and helps so much!**

## Junior Audubon

Junior Audubon is gearing up for the 2019-2020 school year, with the first walk on Thursday, Sept. 26 at 3:45 at Bateman Island. Meet at Wye Park.

The first meeting will be Thursday, October 24, at Fuerza Elementary, one block south of 10th at Olsen, from 3:20-4:20.

Membership is free for K-5 children. Help get the next generation out birding! If you know of anyone with children who might be interested, please spread the word.

Contact and register with  
Cheriebaudrand@yahoo.com

## Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW) Weekend

A weekend of inspiring speakers, informed discussion, shared best practices, and celebrating birds and people. Conservation and Education meetings are Friday afternoon, along with a dinner. The Agenda and more information are at the link below.

Friday, Sept. 27- Sunday, Sept. 29.  
Vancouver Water Resources Education Center, Vancouver, WA.

For more information:  
[wa.audubon.org/events/](http://wa.audubon.org/events/)



American Goldfinch on feeder

## Field Trip Reports

### **First Saturday Bird Walk: Bateman Island**

Saturday, June 1, 2019

By Lisa Hill

On a fine sunny day, an energetic crowd of 20 birders found 52 species at Bateman Island. Among the many colorful breeding species in our area were an abundance of singing males. Though very few females were seen, the numbers were still significant and the actual numbers were likely far higher; 6 GRAY CATBIRDS, 5 BULLOCK'S ORIOLES, 12 YELLOW WARBLERS and 20(!) BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAKS. LAZULI BUNTINGS are not hard to find in our area, but are mostly absent from the island so it was a treat to see one singing out in the open. New birders on the walk were thrilled to see the sky-blue bird with its rusty breast and white belly. Several representatives of the flycatcher group were observed: EASTERN KINGBIRD, WESTERN KINGBIRD, WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE and CEDAR WAXWING. The marshy cattail habitat around the island is perfect for COMMON YELLOWTHROAT, but they are very rare throughout most of Benton and Franklin Counties. We found one by voice which was later confirmed by sight. Non-breeding migrants included SAVANNAH SPARROWS and WILSON'S WARBLERS.

Only in the last 3-4 years have YELLOW-BREASTED CHATS been noted as an established breeding population on the island. Rivalled only by the Gray Catbird, a chat's 24/7 vocalizations are a jumbled collection of squawks, squeaks, rat-a-tat chatter, whistles, pops and cackles. Many an experienced birder has been stumped by strange noises emanating from dense shrubbery. The chat's appearance is distinctive: a bright egg yolk-yellow throat and breast, white spectacles and black lores, and a grayish olive back. Occasionally, a singing male can be seen in an awkward bouncy flight from perch to perch. Mostly they skulk low to the ground in impenetrable thickets; females and young are rarely seen.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS often parasitize Yellow-breasted Chat nests, laying eggs in the nest expecting the chat to raise a young cowbird. Ornithologists and taxonomists historically categorized chats as wood-warblers in the Parulidae family, noting that chats have unique characteristics unlike other songbirds in that family. In 2017, the American Ornithological Society moved the chat into its own family, the Icteriidae, and it is no longer considered to be a warbler.

### **We are looking for help!**

#### **Volunteers are needed for the Vice President and Membership Chair!**

Get involved in the good work we do and help us continue to be a vibrant and viable Audubon chapter. We will provide training, guidance, and moral support.

### **First Saturday Bird Walk: Bateman Island**

Saturday, September 7, 2019

By Nancy LaFramboise

Quite a few folks showed up for the first Bateman Walk of the season with much enthusiasm. In total we saw 46 species. Land birds were pretty quiet but having returned WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS was great. Off the causeway were six HOODED MERGANSERS. As with most of the ducks they were coming out of eclipse plumage and not in full color yet. Offshore was productive with KILLDEER, WESTERN SANDPIPER, 1 BLACK-NECKED STILT, and some returned waterfowl. There were also two HORNED GREBES, a hint of more grebes to come. A good start to the Bateman Island First Saturday walks this fall.

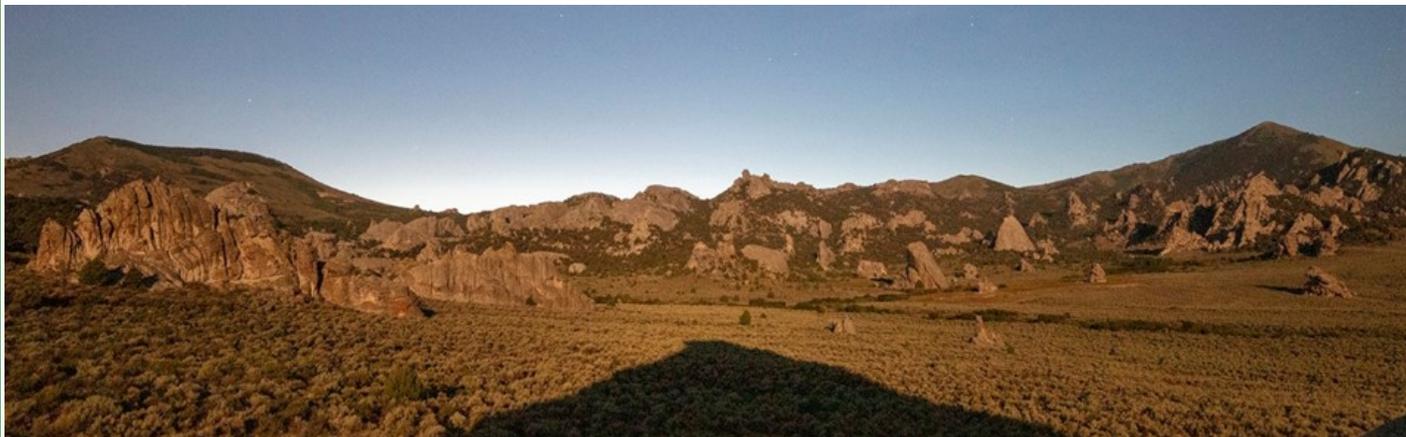
### **It's the season for migrants, vagrants, and rarities.**



An unusual visitor at Bateman Island reported in ebird on 8-20, 9-8, and 9-11  
**Red-shouldered Hawk**  
Photo by Jason Fidorra

## Trip Report — City of Rocks, Cassia County, ID

Report and photos by Ivar Husa



This was photographed with the rising moon. The pillar that is *Treasure Rock* casts a long shadow toward the setting sun.

You might enjoy a visit to City of Rocks National Reserve near the Idaho/Utah borders (<https://www.nps.gov/ciro/index.htm>) There is spectacular scenery and interesting wildlife. It is also a notable waypoint along the California Trail, and there is interpretive material available in the area.

The drive is 7 ½ hours from Tri-Cities, so it takes some effort to get there. Dana Ward and I visited there as we traveled to the Audubon Society's national meeting in Utah. The extra time spent driving seemed well worth it. The elevation is around 7,000 feet so you can see some alpine species such as Clark's Nutcracker and Mountain Chickadee. I also observed Ferruginous Hawk, lots of pretty insects, and I saw my first mountain lion!



Mountain Chickadee



Great Spangled Fritillary

Rock climbing is the most common reason people visit the City of Rocks National Reserve. The area has some of the best and most accessible granite wall climbing in the country. Audubon member Laurie Ness tells me she's climbed there. There are climbing routes suitable for a wide range of skills, including grade 5.11, which is very, very difficult.

The Reserve has over 60 camp sites pleasantly spread out along City of Rocks RD. Many of the sites have spectacular views. Camping at City of Rocks is basic. Each site includes parking, a picnic table, and a tent site. There are several pit toilets and water sources among the campsites, but they are not close to all sites. There is also no garbage service, so *pack it out*. The roads in the area are unpaved but well maintained.

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**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Please send address changes (postal address or email address) to Rich Barchet at (PENDING) 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](http://www.lcbas.org) or [www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org](http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org)

### LCBAS OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Position	Name	Email
President	Jim Castle	<b>Email addresses currently</b>
Vice President	OPEN	<b>PENDING</b>
Treasurer	Lori Nelson	
Secretary	Debbie Berkowitz	
Birding Events	Jason Fidorra	
Communications Chair	Charlene Burge	
Conservation Co-Chair	Dana Ward and Rick Leaumont	
Education Chair	Cherie Baudrand	
Finance Chair	Lori Nelson	
Fundraising Chair	Marcie Daines	
Membership Chair	OPEN	
Program Chair	Ivar Husa	
Director at Large	Robin Priddy	
<b>OTHER CONTACTS:</b>		
Curlew Editor	Charlene Burge	
Membership Database	Rich Barchet	
LCBAS Website	Ed Rykiel	

**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](http://www.audubon.org)