



September 2011
 Volume XLVII
 Number 01

the curlew

Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Special Interest Articles:

- Come to our First Membership meeting of the year!
- SEED SALE ORDER FORM ENCLOSED !
- Humanities presentation in October – Wenas Mammoth

Individual Highlights:

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5 Star Caribbean Birding Cruise and San Juan Mother's Day Weekend Review in Pictures

**Membership Meeting
 September 27, 2011
 7:00 p.m.
 Kennewick First
 Lutheran Church,
 corner of Yelm and
 Highway 395**

Join the **Far Away Field Trippers** for a report on two Spring field trips. The first was March 7-18, 2011, an eleven-day Caribbean Cruise on the Royal Caribbean Jewel of Sea. The cruise departed from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, so we made our way to Florida. Some of us went on a Florida pre trip. We spent an afternoon at the beautiful Butterfly Gardens. The next day we birded the

Wakodahatchee Wetlands and Green Cay. We saw many of the beautiful birds Florida is famous for. It was active nesting time at Wakodahatchee and we saw large rookeries of herons and many other birds nesting with them. The cruise started the on Monday. We will tell you about our unexpected side trip to Haiti and the amazing flock of birds some observed from the ship's balconies. We then made 5 stops at exotic tropical countries: Aruba, Columbia, Panama, Costa Rica and Grand Cayman. At each stop, Carefree Birding arranged for a local guide to take us on a birding trip. We have

pictures of birds from each of the 5 countries and of course the adventures to go with them. Then while on the ship we lived the life of luxury. Many of our pictures seem to center around dining. Yes, there was plenty of food. We had quite an adventure. This trip truly was the best of all worlds – 5 star dining and entertainment and 5 star birding. We will conclude the program with a second trip report on the Mother's Day San Juan Weekend at Friday Harbor. We stayed in the historic quaint Harrison House Bed and Breakfast.
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Bateman Island Bird Walk *with Lisa Hill*

We enjoyed the first of our season of first Saturday of the month bird walks on Sept 3, 2011!

Fall migration has begun! Many warblers are on the move, stopping on the island for a snack break including YELLOW WARBLER, YELLOW-

RUMPED WARBLER, WILSON'S WARBLER, NASHVILLE WARBLER, and ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER. The weather was perfect and the birds were out soaking up the sunshine.

Our winter-resident WHITE-CROWNED

SPARROWS have arrived, along with a few early waterfowl and shorebirds; NORTHERN PINTAIL, AMERICAN WIGEON, PIED-BILLED GREBE, WESTERN SANDPIPER and LESSER

Bateman Island Walk *Continued*



"Warbling vireo"
Photo courtesy L. Umthun

YELLOWLEGS. Wading birds that breed locally were in high numbers; nearly a dozen GREAT EGRETS, six GREAT BLUE HERONS, and two juvenile BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS. Other sparrows passing through were a juvenile CHIPPING SPARROW and three VESPER SPARROWS on the north end of the island.

The notoriously difficult-to-identify Empidonax flycatcher group gave us a challenge. We determined that the bird was a GRAY FLYCATCHER with a sharply delineated

black tip on the under bill, short primary extension, and the downward dipping tail movement.

Many GRAY CATBIRDS were meowing in the rose bushes, and one late BULLOCK'S ORIOLE showed itself. Other migrants included WARBLING VIREO and WESTERN TANAGER.

The next Bateman Island bird walk is scheduled for **Saturday, October 1 at 8am.** We meet in the parking lot of Wye Park above the causeway. Birders of all skill levels are welcome.

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Half the fun of going to the San Juan Islands is riding the ferry. We were able to observe Pelagic Cormorants up close at the Ferry dock. On Saturday morning we cruised with San Juan Whale Watching Safaris around the sound. They usually are a whale watching boat but they took us birding. After the morning cruise where we saw many Bald Eagles and more, we ate our gourmet boxed lunch at American Camp National Historic Park. We then hopped around the Island to Whale Watch Park and San Juan County Park. At San Juan Park, we visited Smallpox Bay and Haro Strait looking toward Vancouver Island. Beautiful places to visit. That evening we dined at the Coho Restaurant. What a lovely dinner and conversation with all our friends old and new.

Greetings from the President! With Robin Priddy

Welcome to the 2011-2012 year of Lower Columbia Basin Audubon!

We got our year underway at the planning meeting in August; Katie did a great job stepping in and taking notes. Barb Clarke has a Spring Chicken trek to Nebraska underway, and is considering getting us back to Malheur. We'll keep everyone up on details. Tom Clarke is keeping the Nature Trail in order, mowing and cleaning; 6 busloads of school children recently visited! We're working on getting trail brochure made by Jeannie Bates out there very soon. We now have a Facebook presence thanks to Jordene Lucas, go take a look

and be a friend.

There is a lot going on in the area of conservation; Ed Rykiel has taken on the committee, along with Scott Woodward and Rick Leumont. McWhorter Ranch is a top issue and opportunity; we all need to be paying attention to what's going on with Hanford Lands disposition, Amon Basin, water storage; there are volunteer opportunities with restoration at Horn Rapids Business Park. Kathy Criddle has continued work with the Port of Pasco's native plant restoration. Greg Greger continues work with McNary to get a webcam installed to enhance wildlife viewing.

Cherie Beaudrand, and everyone who shows up at Jr.

Audubon events, created wonderful opportunities for young people to learn about birds and integrate a love for nature into their lives last year, and will do so again this year. Marilyn Hayes is continuing to get Audubon Adventures into local classrooms. I don't think we can ever overstate the value of reaching children. Charlotte Reep is going to get us out to work another Applebee's Breakfast, and is thinking about a parking lot yard sale. More later, so you'll know if you should save your treasures for us! Cathy Smith is working on programs, she's got some scheduled but new ideas and speakers are always welcome.

Lannie Smith has stepped in to do bird sightings, thank you so much, and Chad Merkely is now our new Vice President! Debbie Berkowitz does

such a wonderful job as Secretary keeping records, as well as keeping us connected and aware of the many other local groups and efforts with whom we share goals.

As usual, there's a lot going on. Your participation is always welcome; there are far more things we could be doing than there are people to get them done. (I have a list!) That said, I continue to be touched by our chapter's accomplishments, and the local talent and dedication that does so much to help us all to see, share, and save the lovely landscape we all share.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as President.

Robin

Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week!

Open House at Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge

October 8

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Travel to Glenwood, WA, and explore Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge at the base of Mt. Adams. Visit the Refuge, the new buildings, and the wildlife through a variety of activities, from bird walks to refuge tours. This refuge is a must see! There will not be any event at McNary Refuge Headquarters on this day. The Refuge Week Celebration will annually be rotated among at the various Refuges of the Complex.



Osprey Point trail!

Conservation Notes: Osprey Pointe Songbird Habitat Improvement Project *with Kathy Criddle*

A plea for donations to help improve the birding habitat along this unique stretch of shoreline!

DOLLARS FOR PLANTS! OR GREEN FOR GREEN!

kcriddlebirds@yahoo.com

Last Spring I reported on the Osprey Pointe Shoreline Improvements Project that the Port of Pasco did along their riverfront property. The Port agreed to partner with birdwatchers, and those who enjoy the serenity of the river shore, by creating a lovely pathway winding through the large Black Cottonwoods and Locust trees (pictured at left). In order to

control the invasive knapweed, Russian olives, and to make the area safer for the public, much of the understory had to be removed. The Port recognized the value of this Natural Area as home to many local songbird species, flycatchers and tree swallows, besides a serious roosting area for Bald Eagles in the winter and Osprey in the spring, so they spent additional funds to leave downed wood and many of the dead snags but they did not have enough funds left to purchase plants to restore and improve the habitat for songbirds. That is where we come in! I have agreed to lead some work parties

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Check out our website:
<http://www.lcbas.org>

President Robin Priddy..... E-mail:
grania0358@aol.com

Secretary Debbie Berkowitz.E-mail:
cdandrb@charter.net

Treasurer Katie Harris.....E-mail:
treasurer@lcbas.org

ATTENTION ALL BIRD FEEDING ENTHUSIASTS – VERY IMPORTANT DATE – OCTOBER 15!

TENTH ANNUAL BIRD SEED SALE AND INFORMATION DAY

Want good prices on the things you use to feed birds? Have questions about what or how to feed our feathered friends? Once again, in connection with Columbia Grain & Feed, we will be hosting our **Tenth Annual Bird Seed Sale and Information Day**. Please tell your friends and mark your calendars for October 15. Place an order on the enclosed order form before October 6 and then pick it up on October 15. If you can't make it on the 15th, that's fine, just don't wait too long. Preordering insures you get the items you want at the best possible prices. Based on your purchase amount, Columbia Grain & Feed will make a donation to the LCBAS

Education Fund for taxidermy. Help us beat last year's record.

- LCBAS members will be present to answer questions
- Best prices possible for bird feeding supplies and answers to your bird questions
- Saturday, October 15, 9 am until 2 pm
- Columbia Grain & Feed, 2001 West Lewis, (corner of 20th and Lewis), Pasco
- It's fun, informative, and a win-win for all. Taxidermy will be on display.
- Questions? **Call Charlotte at 547-9087**

If you have any special requests for bird feeding supplies, note this on the order form. We will also have a handout on how to clean your bird feeder and keep it sanitary so the seed does not get contaminated with rain, mold, etc. and harm those we feed.

Columbia Grain and Feed has been so generous for the past 9 years. Please support their generosity. Our taxidermy collection has grown due to their commitment to our education program. The most recent pieces include an American goldfinch, Pine siskin, Eastern kingbird and Rock wren.

See **order form** in this issue for current pricing information.

LCBAS LOCAL BIRDING TRIPS

Local Field Trip: Amon Creek

The September 24th local field trip will be very local: the Amon Creek natural area that lies south of Claybell Park in the Meadow Springs area of south Richland. The trip leader will decide on where to meet and post details on the LCBAS website and via the LCBIRDS2 group list. Plan on meeting at 8 AM and be prepared for walking the area. Please sign up for this trip with an email to Rich Barchet at wr.barchet43@frontier.com or call 375-6074.

Rich Barchet, LCBAS Local Trips Coordinator

Check <http://www.lcbas.org/fieldtrips.html> for information about future planned field trips. Trips are limited to 8-10 people (2 cars), so sign up early to reserve your spot!

Do you know that **anytime** of the year when you make a purchase of bird feeding supplies Columbia Grain & Feed will make a donation? Just tell the clerk you want your purchase to support LCBAS.

BIRD SIGHTINGS FOR JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST 2011

Thanks for posting your sightings on LCBirds2, emailing them to me (lanirock@charter.net) or calling them in (545-4898). Comments and suggestions are always welcome. --Lannie Smith

I'd like to thank Bob Woodley for bringing to my attention a sandpiper that he and Pat saw in May, which I reported in the June Curlew. They saw a Solitary Sandpiper which I took to mean a *single* Sandpiper. I'm smarter now and looking forward to my next learning opportunity! Now here are the summer sightings. Because it's such a long period, I removed most dates and listed by months.

June Sightings

Tony Greager and a group of 50 middle school students spent 30 minutes walking the Two Rivers County Park trail at 2 PM. Even at that hour he reported Bullock's Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks, and over 50 Cedar Waxwings. There were abundant Yellow Warblers, a few Wilson's Warblers, Warbling Vireo, Black-chinned Hummingbird, House Wren and Lazuli Bunting. They heard at least 5 different Downy Woodpeckers. Heidi Newsome reported 3 Evening Grosbeaks at the feeder of Jeff Howland. Mike Keller took pictures of Evening Grosbeaks at his feeder in South Kennewick. Kris Keating's Weeping Cherry tree in Finley was luring in a number of birds: Say's Phoebes, Bullock's Orioles, American Robins, European Starlings, a couple of Black-billed Magpies and 2 Cedar Waxwings. Also stopping by for a taste were House Finches, American Goldfinches and an American Crow. Kris also has a Lark Sparrow on the hill behind her house, lots of American White Pelican activity and at least one brood of California Quail in the neighborhood.

Ron and Carole Louderback got some photos of a Peregrine Falcon on Overturf Road and located a third Burrowing Owl hole that is occupied. Nancy LaFramboise birded Snively Road and spotted an American Bittern and a Common Yellowthroat. At Horn Rapids County Park (HRCP) she enjoyed the vocalizations and booming of the Common Nighthawks.

She was surprised to locate an Orange-crowned Warbler and at least 2 Chipping Sparrows, expecting that they would have moved on by then. Also heard were Yellow-breasted Chats. Summer breeders present were Barn Swallows, Lazuli Bunting, Bullock's Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks and a Eurasian Collared Dove. She ended her day at Johnson Park where she spotted a Gray Catbird.

Jordene Lucas reported two Common Nighthawks at the Vernita Bridge rest stop. Tony Greager reported Cooper's Hawks intensively feeding young in Rancho Reata. Margaret Ford, walking north of the Snyder boat launch around 5 PM, identified a female Downy Woodpecker, several flocks of Cedar Waxwings, a Great Egret, a Great Blue Heron, 2 young hawks being harassed by a Western Kingbird, an American Crow, and a Double-crested Cormorant as well as the more common American Goldfinches, House Finches, House Sparrows, Cliff Swallows, American Robins and gulls. A Ring-necked Pheasant was heard. In Bassett Park Tony Greager reported 2 Red-eyed Vireos, 4 Cassin's Vireos, 5 Warbling Vireos, 5 Townsend's Warblers, 1 MacGillivray's Warbler, 2 Swainson's Thrushes and 15 Eurasian-collared Doves. Margaret Ford spotted a Lazuli Bunting in Chamna Natural Preserve. A Northern Mockingbird was reported at HRCP on two evenings. Both sightings were late afternoon or early evening. The bird was vocalizing as well. Tony Greager had a Pine Siskin at the feeder. Bob Woodley reported a Western Screech-Owl calling near their yard at 11 PM.

Lisa Hill reported a Lazuli Bunting enjoying her birdbath and seeds from her Needle and Thread Grass. She and Larry watched a White-crowed Sparrow working over the bags of bird seed in the Pasco Lowe's warehouse! Two Chukar were seen on the NE side of Badger Mountain. A Great Egret flew over Bob and Pat Woodley's yard headed for the Yakima River.

July Sightings

Tony Greager went owling on a July evening. At HRCP there was a pair of Great Horned Owls. Near Benton City many Barn Owls were seen and heard and a single Long-Eared Owl made a fly-by. A possible Short-eared Owl appeared as it got dark near

Locust Grove Road near the 395 overpass. HRCP had many Common Nighthawks and a single Long-billed Curlew. In, or near, their yard in Rancho Reata: Lazuli Buntings nesting in woodlot; 2 Rufous Hummingbirds, 5 Black-chinned Hummingbirds, 3 Barn Owls and 1 Long-eared Owl.

Jane Abel took several trips to island 19 in her kayak. Species seen: American White Pelican, Common Loon, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Killdeer, Black-necked Stilt parents with chick, Spotted Sandpiper (including a chick), Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, juvenile Wilson's Phalarope, Caspian Tern and Belted Kingfisher. Kathy Criddle joined her on a kayak outing. They added to their species list: a mature Franklin's Gull, Killdeer, California and Ring-billed Gulls, American Crows, Great Egret, and Eastern Kingbirds.

Bob Woodley had a visit from a male Rufous Hummingbird and Heidi Newsome reported a female Rufous on her mallow plants. On the river near Hover Park, Kris Keating reported many Ring-billed Gulls, 15 American White Pelicans, an Osprey, 2 Great Blue Herons, American Coots, an American Avocet, Bullock's Orioles, California Quail, Ring-necked Pheasant, a possible immature Black-necked Stilt, House Sparrows and a female American Goldfinch. She reported on bird activity in her yard: many American Crow families, a Red-tailed Hawk, and a female American Kestrel. Rich Barchet reported on a family of Cooper's Hawks (including 4 young) in a backyard in Richland.

August Sightings

Larry and Lisa had an Orange-crowned Warbler, as well as Yellow-breasted Chats and Gray Catbirds in the wild roses and migrating female or juvenile Rufous Hummingbirds joining her Black-chinned summer-resident hummingbirds.

Chad Merkley, circling Nelson Island in his kayak, reported 8-10 Spotted Sandpipers and one Solitary Sandpiper, as well as a number of juvenile songbirds: Song Sparrows, American Robins and

Eastern Kingbirds. Tony and Kaye Greager returned to Bassett Park. They noted these migrants: Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, Wilson's Warbler and Warbling Vireo. Park residents included Wild Turkeys and Eurasian Collared Doves. Tom and Barb Clarke found 2 Solitary Sandpipers on the Snively Road pond. Eurasian Collared Doves are now common in their yard.

Bob Woodley and his son birded the Tyson ponds for shorebirds: 2 Long-billed Dowitchers, 1 Spotted Sandpiper, 1 Lesser Yellowlegs, many Western Sandpipers, 5 Wilson's Phalaropes and about 100 Red-necked Phalaropes.

Tony Greager reported on Rancho Reata birds: many Warbling Vireos took advantage of berries and the pond, multiple Lazuli Buntings were present, as were Orange-crowned and Yellow Warblers, a Western Tanager and 2 Olive-sided Flycatchers. He also noted a family group of Downy Woodpeckers, 1 Eurasian-collared Dove, and calling Western Wood-Pewees. A Barn Owl has been on the same roost nearly every day since *July 10*. They had a Red-breasted Nuthatch calling and successful Red-tail and Cooper's Hawk nests.

Bob Woodley has had male and female Black-chinned Hummingbirds at his feeder beginning in mid-May, with one female still present on *August 28*. On *August 29* Lisa and Larry birded in Johnson Park: 5 Yellow-breasted Chats (a good number so late in the season—latest reported date is September 6), 3 Warbling Vireos, 3 MacGillivray's Warblers and 2 Olive-sided Flycatchers. On *August 30* Tony Greager reported White-crowned Sparrows had returned to his yard.

to improve the birding potential in the Natural Area but we need some money to buy plants. In November, I would like to be able to plant one or two dozen half-gallon or one gallon native shrubs and grasses to take advantage of the winter rains and snow. At local nurseries these cost around \$10 per plant. In March I plan to have a larger number of bare-root plants that will need to be planted using an auger which we will have to rent (unless someone out there has one to lend!) One source lists the cost for one to two-year bare-root seedlings at around \$1 per plant. Here's my plea! Please donate anything you can to help buy the plants needed to create a beautiful and thriving habitat for the songbirds. I'll need a few volunteers to help plant, and for you guys out there, please consider volunteering to shovel a few holes in November and/or to run a power auger in the spring. **The first work party will be scheduled for Saturday, November 26th or Saturday, December 3rd from 9:00AM to 12:00PM.** If interested in donating dollars for plants send checks to LCBAS and mail to PO Box 1900, Richland WA 99352. Please indicate on your check that you want the money to go towards restoring Osprey Pointe or "Dollars for Plants!" If you want to help at the work party call me at 509-628-9869 or email me at kcriddlebirds@yahoo.com. I'll have more information in the October Newsletter.

National Public Lands Day

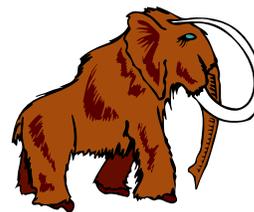
Where - Hood Park, Hwy 12, immediate left after crossing the Snake River Bridge

When - Saturday Sept 24th – 9am to 2pm

National Public Lands Day is celebrated across the country and is the nation's largest celebration of public lands and volunteerism. Locally it will be celebrated at Hood Park with a combination of building, maintaining trails and all sorts of improvements to the nature trail area (sun shelters, kiosks, box plantings).

The US Army Corps of Engineers is the lead. It is this year's service project for US Fish and Wildlife Service. Every public agency will have a booth – such as USFWS, Bureau of Reclamation and US Forest Service. Come out and lend a hand! Call the Friends of Mid-Columbia Refuges for more information at 509-546-8352.

Washington Under Ice: Investigating the Wenas Creek Mammoth



This **Humanities Washington Program** will be hosted by Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society!

When: Thursday, **October 20th**, 7 pm

Where: Kennewick Public Library, 1620 South Union Street

Have you ever wondered what Washington State looked like during the Ice Age? The 2005 accidental discovery of a mammoth bone near Selah, Washington led to a six-year investigation of the site by Central Washington University, providing a glimpse into life during that time. In addition to the 16,000-year-old mammoth and bison bones, students and faculty have found human-made artifacts of unknown age that could shed new light on the early presence of people in Washington.

Patrick Lubinski is Professor of Anthropology at Central Washington University in Ellensburg. He has served as the director of the Wenas Creek Mammoth Project since its inception in 2005. Lubinski is a zooarchaeologist, specializing in the study of animal bones found at archaeological sites to address issues like hunting practices, diet, movement, and life ways of past peoples. Lubinski has served as a spokesman for the Wenas Creek Mammoth Project, appearing on History Channel's Journey to 10,000 BC as well as over 40 regional television newcasts. He holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Lubinski will summarize the project, its findings, and discuss the possibility that the site is one of few locations showing mammoth hunting in North America. More information is available at <http://www.cwu.edu/~mammoth>.

The Curlew

Lower Columbia Basin Audubon
Society
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Audubon Membership Information

Please Note: LCBAS Chapter Benefits (includes a year's subscription [10 issues] to *The Curlew*) this is an additional cost to membership in National Audubon Society.

\$20. for annual membership benefits dues or
 \$10. for full time students.

Please make check payable to **LCBAS**. I can help with an additional donation of \$_____

Send *The Curlew* to my email address listed below. All my dues will go towards supporting LCBAS in local education and conservation efforts. _____

I want to be on your Environmental Alert e-mail list to receive timely notices about issues/work parties. (Your e-mail address will not be shared.)

National Audubon Society Membership (includes annual subscription to *Audubon Magazine*)

\$20. for one year new membership in the NAS. This payment includes membership in the local chapter (LCBAS) but does not include a subscription to *The Curlew*

Please make check payable to **National Audubon Society**. Please do not send renewals for NAS to LCBAS.

For any of the options above check the appropriate boxes, clip the form and mail it with your check(s) to:

Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society, P. O. Box 1900, Richland, WA 99352

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