



Calliope Crier

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society is people dedicated to the enjoyment and preservation of the natural world. Through birding, education and conservation activities in our community, we raise awareness and promote the cause of global environmental protection.

Volume 43, Number 04

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

April 2014



APRIL PROGRAM

BILL DRENGUIS

CWU's Amazing Rock Rouser!

Nick Zenter has been teaching geology at Central Washington University in Ellensburg since 1992. He received the 2011 CWU Most Inspirational Faculty Award and the 2012 CWU Presidential Faculty Award. He is an advisor to most of the geology undergraduates and mentors CWU graduate students teaching in the field and in the lab.

Nick teaches a popular "Geology of Washington" course to CWU students every quarter – and his course is open to townspeople for free!

He is the host of two ongoing video projects: KCWU-TV's "Central Rocks", broadcast in Kittitas County and at HUGEfloods.com a series of "2 Minute Geology" video clips are available for viewing. Most of the topics deal with geological features that are visible in the Yakima River Canyon as well as along the Columbia River. Check a few of these clips out; you will find them highly entertaining as well

as informative. Nick has the enthusiasm and ability to bring the inanimate to life.

Nick presented "Floods of Lava and Water" at our Feb 2012 chapter meeting that held the audience in rapt attention. Versed in "rock", he can "rap" through the "classic" geology of Central Washington "county" and might even touch upon the famous Ellensburg "blues."

Don't let this opportunity to hear a unique speaker extol on our area's unique features slip away!



Mark your calendar for Thursday, April 24, at 7:00 pm to see this presentation at the Yakima Area Arboretum



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

ANDY STEPNIIEWSKI

This is the time of year when almost every day brings new arriving species from the south. By the time you read this, the Neotropical contingent will be arriving in force. One of the first, besides the swallows, will be the Gray Flycatcher, a relative newcomer to Washington. Over the past 50 years, it has spread north from the Great Basin and now nests in open Ponderosa Pine forests, such as the Wenas Creek region. It usually arrives about the third week of April. Like a table depicting wildflower bloom, familiar to many naturalists, birds arrive on cue so to speak, when the seasonal explosion of insects, seeds, and fruits becomes

available. Birders know such a chart as a bar graph. A bar for each species varies in width through the calendar year, indicating a birder's likelihood of encountering the bird in appropriate habitat. Quite a number of Yakima Auduboners have been hard at work revising the 1998 first edition. So, a hearty thanks to YVAS members who contributed to this project: Debie Brown, Scott Downes, Denny Granstrand, Eric Heisey, Jeff Kozma, Richard Repp, and Andy Stepniowski. An amazing 20 new species of birds has been recorded in Yakima County since the first edition! Too, our knowledge of each species has refined considerably over

President's Column (continued on page 2)

Visit the Yakima Valley Audubon Society's website at: <http://www.yakimaaudubon.org>

President's Column (continued from page 1)

the past 15 years. These checklists will be printed shortly and available at the April chapter meeting, free for members.

Your chapter's Education Committees continues to be busy. The Birding Basics class completed its second class March 12 that tackled Raptors by Denny Granstrand; swallows, crows and ravens and other aerial birds by Jeff Kozma; and those pesky gulls by Karen Zook. This lecture was followed by a great fieldtrip on March 15 north through the Yakima Canyon to fields on the north side of Ellensburg. A highlight for the tour was a most impressive gathering of Bald Eagles in the Kittitas Valley, taking advantage of the cattle calving season, where 25 pounds or so of afterbirth create a delectable buffet for carrion-consumers, such as our National Symbol, the Bald Eagle. The canyon itself produced inspiring views of a soaring Golden Eagle and browsing Bighorn Sheep.

The third Birding Basics class April 16 featured a recap of the first two fieldtrips by Denny Granstrand; the Shrub-steppe Ecosystem by Andy Stepniewski; and Gardening and Birds by Jeff Kozma. This was followed by a fieldtrip to shrub-steppe habitat April 19. The Education Committee is also working on the Arborfest at the Yakima Area Arboretum April 2. Karen Zook and April Adamson are chairing this event. Nancy Lust, leader of Eisenhower High School's Environmental Club has students signed up to help with this event, now drawing 2000+ schoolchildren!

Fieldtrips: On April 26, make plans to attend the outing to "Zimmerman's Ranch", a Yakama Nation property at the south end of Lateral A. This wonderful parcel showcases a variety of habitats: marsh, lake, open fields, and riparian woods. It is one of the Yakama Nations stellar units in its 21,000-acre Toppenish Creek restoration effort. Remember, too, the weekly Poppoff Trail fieldtrip continues. Check the Calliope Crier for meeting times at the east end of Valley Mall Boulevard.

Regarding conservation, check out a piece with dialogue between WA State Parks resource staff and me on issues and concerns. YVAS is being asked to participate in guiding state parks to more effectively safeguard the resources in Sportsman and Fort Simcoe State Parks. Though

the WA State Park system is sorely challenged by budget cuts, we hope the worst is over in this arena. Governor Inslee has certainly made WA State Parks a priority. We hope the politics of budgeting this minor part of our state budget doesn't hamper operation and maintenance of these popular and import recreational and natural venues.

The Bobolink study continues. This is "Year 5" of this collaborative effort by the Yakama Nation and YVAS to restore the tiny population of Bobolinks, to the wet pasture habitat along Lateral C west of Toppenish. Eight interested YVAS members, led by Jan Gano, met with a group of five Nation employees, headed by Yakama Nation biologist David Blodgett, at the Yakama Nation Wildlife Program office in Toppenish on April 8 to finalize the 2014 field season and discuss strategies to protect habitat for this outpost colony, fully 150 miles from the nearest other Bobolink population in Okanogan County. Other YVAS members present who are involved in this project were Kelly Kindelspire, Kevin Lucas, Richard Repp, Andy Stepniewski, Kerry Turley, and Joe and Karen Zook.

Migratory Bird Day at Toppenish NWR is scheduled for May 10. See the article in this Crier for details. This is a fun event and allows easy access to great birding on refuge ponds, at their showy best in spring.

The WDFW "Shrub-steppe Songbird Study" has received the map with points to census, and field protocol, on both the Oak Creek and Wenas Wildlife Areas. Birders with good hearing and visual abilities are MUCH needed for this project, which will jump into high gear after May 1, when elk closures end. Contact me at stepie@nwinfo.net to sign-on. See article in last month's Crier.

Please make plans to attend the YVAS chapter meeting April 24 at the Yakima Area Arboretum featuring a program by Nick Zentner, a Central Washington University professor and fabulous interpreter of our geological landscape. Though Nick's presentation is not on birds, YVAS is presenting a short slide program on birds at most chapter meetings nowadays. So, the hard core birders will not feel left out, even though the main program might be on rocks!

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society meets on the fourth Thursday of January, February, March, April, May, August, September, and October at 7 pm at the Yakima Area Arboretum, located at 1401 Arboretum Drive, Yakima, WA. Guests are welcome at these meetings. The Annual Meeting of the Society is held the first Thursday of

December at 6 pm. The Board of Directors meets each month except December at 7 pm at locations announced in the Calliope Crier. Members may attend Board meetings; however, please notify the host because of possible space restrictions.



MEMBERSHIP
DEBIE BROWN

Welcome New YVAS Members!

Yakima: Kathleen Gregory

Thank you for renewing your Membership!

Anacortes: John O'Connell

Grandview: Janet White

Naches: David Churchill, Teresa Lorenz

Seattle: Birgitta Beck

Selah: Joy McKinney

Sunnyside: Marten Bron, Myra Dorsey

Toppenish: Don & Jane Gargas

Yakima: Kelly Kindlespire,
Jeff & Lucy Stevens, Vi Whitmore



THIS MONTH'S YVAS
CALENDAR

- April 24** Audubon Chapter Meeting at the Yakima Area Arboretum at **7:00 pm**.
- April 26** Zimmerman Ponds and Toppenish NWR field trip with Kerry Turley
- May 3** **Snow Mountain Ranch** with Karen and Joe Zook
- May 10** **Migratory Bird Day** at the Toppenish NWR
- May 13** **Board Meeting** at Bill Drenguis's house, 7708 Poplar View Way, Yakima at **7:00 pm**
- May 17** **Migration Bird Count**
- May 23-26** **Wenas Campout**

Don't forget the Thursday Morning Bird Walks!



FIELD TRIPS
LUKE SAFFORD

- April 26 - Zimmerman Ponds and Toppenish NWR** — Each spring, snowmelt in the Cascades rushes down Toppenish Creek filling ponds and flooding valley bottoms, creating a bonanza for water and marsh birds. The marshes, fields, and riparian patches in the lower valley rise to their birding peak in late April. Look (and listen) for Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets, Cinnamon Teal, Virginia Rails and Yellow-headed Black-birds. The Zimmerman property is being restored by the Yakima Nation and is normally closed to the public. This is a great half day field trip with birding opportunities close by for those who want to extend the day. Meet at 7:30 am at the Valley Mall parking lot north of Sears (old IHOP location). Contact Kerry Turley (837-6930 or email him at kdturley@embarqmail.com)
- May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 - Thursday Morning Birdwalk** – Meet the group at the Poppoff Trail/Jewett Pathway parking lot at the east end of Valley Mall Blvd., at the north side of the eastern most roundabout at 8:30am. Join us for leisurely birding and good company! Contact Luke if you have any questions at luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com.
- May 3 - Snow Mountain** – This tract of land just west of Yakima is preserved through the Cowiche Canyon Conservancy and offers many great hiking opportunities on fairly well-maintained trails. Migrant flycatchers, warblers, and other neotropical songbirds will be our main targets. Come prepared for 2-3 miles of hiking. Meet at the trailhead on Cowiche Mill Road and meeting time will be determined by trip leaders, Joe and Karen Zook. Contact them at gadzooks7@charter.net
- May 10 - Migratory Bird Day at Toppenish NWR** – Celebrate TNWR's 50th Anniversary! Every year the National Wildlife Refuge system celebrates Migratory Bird Day on the second Saturday of May. We are very fortunate to have a refuge just south of Toppenish on Highway 97. YVAS will team with refuge personnel to showcase this unique wildlife habitat with an open house 9 am to noon. This is a fun day with a variety of activities including field trips onto the refuge. A pleasant part day outing and very family friendly. No charge for a do not miss event. Contact Kerry Turley (837-6930 or email him at: kdturley@embarqmail.com)
- May 17 - Migration Bird Count** – YVAS's annual "Birdathon" will be a county-wide bird count, as we try to top the record of 195 species from a few years ago. Luke Safford will be putting teams together to cover all of the best areas to bird around Yakima including the White Pass, Chinook Pass, Lower Valley, and Wenas areas. Contact Luke at luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com if you are interested in participating.
- May 23-26 - Wenas Campout**– For over 40 years, Auduboners from across the state have gathered in the Wenas to watch birds, hike, and admire the flower show. What makes the Wenas so special to naturalists? It has to do with its position at the lower edge of the Ponderosa Pine Zone as it interfingers with the upper Shrub-steppe Zone. An amazing array of flora and fauna occurs here. Visit the Wenas website for more information. Lots of fieldtrips and hikes are offered on this four-day Memorial Day weekend. See next month's *Crier* for details or visit www.wenascampout.org.

Habitat Issues at Sportsman and Fort Simcoe State Parks

Andy Stepniewski

Over the years, the Yakima Valley Audubon Society has been involved in various projects at both Sportsman and Fort Simcoe State Parks. As a group, we've come to know and appreciate the natural values at both parks. Sportsman State Park contains a fine example of flood plain riparian forest, complete with a well-developed understory component. This impressive tract of habitat lies west of the dike and is along the Yakima River, and is dominated by black cottonwood. Everywhere in the American West, riparian habitat is under siege and in decline. Loss of water through diversions or lowering groundwater is one reason; outright destruction is another. Fort Simcoe showcases a fine example of "Oregon White Oak Woodland," recognized by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife as a priority habitat. If Yakima Valley Audubon observes destruction or degradation in these habitats in our region, I feel we should speak up on behalf of these beleaguered ecosystems.

This January, I observed a disturbing development at Sportsman State Park that prompted me to contact Washington State Parks and voice my concerns regarding habitat protection at both parks. Responses to my points are from Lisa Lantz, Stewardship Program Manager for the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission; these are italicized. My comments to WA State Parks comments are bolded.

Sportsman State Park

1 - On the January Christmas Bird Count at Sportsman State Park, Sr. Kathleen Ross and I observed evidence that dozens of mature trees had been cut down along with complete removal of the understory vegetation along the Yakima River dike.

After investigating the situation, we found that the clearing is part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dike maintenance. The work is ongoing and undertaken by the county. Recent work has been much more extensive than before. The section of dike through the park is 80+ years old and the Corps wanted the ability to access the dike for emergency repairs. State Parks had no involvement with this process. In addition, Pacific Power has also been in the park doing right-of-way clearing under their power lines.

Thank You. I've learned the public can comment on US Army Corps activities. This was done in the 1990s by the Seattle Audubon Society at the Lake Washington Ship Canal. Seattle Audubon's input was instrumental in reducing damage to the environment there. The key there was knowing US Army Corps plans ahead of their planned activity.

2 - The paved pathway to the marsh observation deck near the entrance is excessively wide, significantly wider than ADA requirements. Further, parks staff has trimmed back another two feet on either side of the pathway, which seems unnecessary to my eye. If one measures the area of this small natural area and further measured the area removed by the paved pathway plus trimmed margins, I suggest the riparian habitat has been unnecessarily fragmented.

This trail was developed over 12 years ago to have 2-way ADA access. The trail went through a review and permitting process prior to construction. We can talk to park staff about minimizing clearing on either side of the trail.

Thank You. Yakima Audubon will look for a reduction of manicuring by WA State Parks here.

3 - The prime natural area in Sportsman State Park, the Yakima River flood plain, has a labyrinthine pattern of trails, all in close proximity. Trail systems in natural areas should be constructed so as to minimize degradation to these sites. This riparian habitat here has undergone significant fragmentation due to the complex of trails. Many wildlife species require unbroken areas of habitat in order to thrive. Fragmented habitat results in decline and eventual disappearance of those species that depend on large expanses of habitat.

The park trail system has not increased since 2002 or before. Yakima Sportsman is in an urban area and has a higher level of development and access for the public than some other state parks. State Parks strives to balance recreational development and habitat protection, which can be a challenge. We have also received requests for additional trails at the park.

I disagree with WA State Parks classification of the flood plain forest west of the levee. I believe it should be classed a "Natural Area," thus one rank higher in protection than at present. The complex of trails on the island should be revisited by WA State Parks and several should be closed so as to prevent excessive resource damage and preserve the integrity of the flood plain forest as much as possible. From the WA State Parks Commission's Natural Resource Management Policy (73-03-1), which says in part: New park facility developments shall not be built in critical areas except where the theme, character, quality or other park planning provides overriding justification for development in such areas, and appropriate mitigation can be provided. I contend the flood plain habitat is critical and should be reclassified and appropriate steps taken to mitigate habitat fragmentation.

Fort Simcoe

1 - Fort Simcoe is managed by the same personnel as Sportsman State Park. Park staff has eliminated a small, but important wetland southeast of the main parking lot. "Cleaning" up the vegetation here seems to have been the objective. Elimination of this wetland causes Yakima Audubon observers concern because we spent several seasons at the park monitoring Lewis's Woodpeckers and documented the important natural values found in the park while conducting these surveys. At the time, we advised protection and expansion of these wetlands and also advised parks staff to reduce the area of manicured lawns. We recommended they expand area of brushy patches, deemed critical in the life cycle of the Lewis's woodpecker, a focal species. We cited peer-reviewed science which contends these brushy patches foster insect populations, which are consumed by this insectivorous wood-

Habitat Issues at Sportsman and Fort Simcoe State Parks (continued from page 3)

pecker (summer diet) and the ash-throated flycatcher. This park hosts the northernmost significant population of this very local Washington flycatcher. Since our woodpecker project, there has been no expansion of brushy patches; instead, park staff has made repeated visits eliminating "hazard" trees and branches and maintained the same area of manicured lawn along with eliminating a wetland area.

No answer given to this query.

I assume WA State Parks did not answer this question because no CAMP process has been done for Fort Simcoe (see below).

Observing degradation of these natural communities entrusted to Washington State Parks prompts us to ask the following:

Does Washington State Parks have a management plan process that identifies and protects natural areas? If so, have these natural areas been clearly identified in master plans for Sportsman and Fort Simcoe State Parks?

State Parks does have a management planning process, which has been in use since 1996, called the CAMP Project. CAMP is an acronym for Classification and Management Plan. One of the most important elements of CAMP is the classification of lands. Application of the system creates zones, or land classifications, within a park. Six distinct classifications determine what recreational uses and types of developments are appropriate in different areas of a park. In general, sensitive areas are classified restrictively and allow only low-intensity uses and development of minor facilities. Less sensitive areas are classified to allow higher-intensity uses and more extensive facilities development.

A CAMP plan was developed for Yakima Sportsman in 2007. You can view the complete plan online at: <http://www.parks.wa.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1575>. Appendix A in the plan provides a complete description of the land classification system. Yakima Sportsman is classified as a mixture of recreation and resource recreation areas. Recreation Areas are typically areas developed for outdoor recreation (e.g. campgrounds, developed day-use areas). They are to provide a variety of outdoor recreational, educational, artistic, and cultural opportunities to large numbers of participants. Primary emphasis is on the provision of quality recreational services and facilities with secondary recognition given to protection of the area's natural qualities. Resource Recreation Areas are sites where the high quality of a particular natural or cultural resource or set of such resources is the lure for human recreation. Thus, the rationale for recreation is based on the value of attractive natural or cultural resources. Management of these areas stresses the centrality of preserving the quality of the natural and cultural resources while allowing appropriate and sustainable levels of human use and enjoyment.

While land classifications have been developed for the majority of state parks, Fort Simcoe has not yet been "CAMPed." I agree that Fort Simcoe would definitely benefit

from this planning effort. In addition to priority natural resources, the park has significant historic structures, cultural landscapes, and archaeological resources that need to be managed mindfully and in concert with each other. Unfortunately, our progress in completing plans for the remainder of our parks has been slowed by recent major staffing cuts.

Yakima Valley Audubon applauds WA State Parks for their proactive efforts to identify and protect the resources found in the state park system. However, in regards to Sportsman State Park, as stated above, a clearer focus on the flood plain ecosystem is warranted. Recognition of the value and protection of riparian forests is called for to prevent excessive fragmentation of this important parcel of critical habitat.

Regarding Fort Simcoe, Yakima Valley Audubon urges WA State Parks to begin as soon as possible the CAMP process for this important park. We will be anxious to participate in this process, to aid in due recognition to the priority Oregon White Oak ecosystem.

As an aside, we wish also to broach the subject of park interpretation. We feel interpreting natural features is an important mission of Washington State Parks. However, at Sportsman State Park, several signs contain a number of images depicting species not recorded or expected in the park. The signs appear to be a collage of pretty photographs, with little in the way of a focused message. We feel there should be a planning process, including an interpretation plan, and policies to achieve uniformity in sign construction, messages, and style, so as to impart messages in an effective and professional manner.

I agree that interpreting natural park features is important. We also developed an interpretive plan for Yakima Sportsman in 2007 (see attached). Our Interpretive Program Manager is extremely dedicated to implementing appropriate, professional, up-to-date interpretation throughout the park system. Unfortunately, there is only one of him for the entire state. Therefore, his task is incredibly daunting.

Yakima Audubon has, within its membership, folks with expertise on a variety of topics: birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, and native plants. We would be anxious to assist interpretation of park features so these are accurate and professional.

Overall your e-mail brings up many valid points. Some of the issues, such as vegetation removal by the Corps of Engineers, are outside of our control. Other issues, such as a management plan for Fort Simcoe, are things that we would very much like to be able to move forward with. However, the reality of our situation at State Parks makes it difficult to tend to even some of the highest priority tasks. With the loss of the majority of our state General Fund support, State Parks is left with only three positions dedicated to natural resource management for the entire system. As a result, we have to make difficult choices about where to spend that limited staff time. We are currently working on a Natural Heritage Initiative that will help us prioritize our management efforts. Part of the initiative will involve engaging partners,

Habitat Issues at Sportsman and Fort Simcoe State Parks (continued from page 5)

such as the Audubon Society, in that work. We look forward to being able to work with you and others on tackling some of these challenges to protect and restore the natural resources of our state parks.

Thank You for your time and consideration regard-

ing my query on two WA State Parks near Yakima: Sportsman and Fort Simcoe. Yakima Valley Audubon looks forward to partnering with WA State Parks in order to better recognize and protect the natural values these parks contain.

Personality Profile

The YVAS Treasurer: Karen Zook

I love the natural world - birds, plants, mammals, reptiles and even some insects. I am told that even as a baby in a stroller, I would reach out and touch the trees and plants as we went by them. I was fortunate to grow up in areas that had many opportunities to explore nature. I lived near beaches, wooded areas and fields with ponds and streams. At the time, they were sparsely populated with humans and full of other forms of life. My dad would take me out exploring, and taught me the names of many of the trees, plants, birds and animals that we encountered.

Although I didn't start birding "seriously" until Joe and I retired, I have always kept track of the birds in my yard, and noticed the birds I encountered when I traveled. My sister and I participated in the first Cornell Feeder Watch program back in the 80's. My first house was right next to a really nice second growth forest, and I remember being awakened one morning by a Pileated Woodpecker on an old tree next to the house. I went out to see what was making the ruckus, and that is how I learned what a Pileated Woodpecker was. We also had a pair of Cooper's Hawks nest there. It was easy to learn about birds with a backyard like that.

It was my ears that drew me into serious birding. After retiring, I had a lot more time to spend outdoors. I love to garden, and I would be out working in my yard and hear birds and not know what they were. One day, I noticed that



there was a Birding by Ear class being offered locally (in Sequim). I took the class, and I was hooked.

I became active in Audubon for the camaraderie and birding, but also because of the conservation efforts of the organization. It is very important to me to protect what is left of the natural world. I believe that we can make a difference, however small, by pooling our knowledge, skills and financial resources toward the common goal of preserving and protecting habitat and educating people, especially young people, about the importance of the natural world.

It is great to be a part of YVAS. One of my favorite YVAS activities is helping with the Bluebird Trail. Before we moved here, Joe and I went birding in the Wenas area and noticed the Bluebird Boxes. I remember thinking how great it would be to be a part of something like that, and now I am!

Before retiring, I had a career in banking, most of it in various parts of the lending process. Being Treasurer is kind of a natural fit for me, since I have always worked keeping track of other people's money. My husband Joe and I lived in the Seattle-Tacoma area until we retired. After that, we moved to Sequim for a few years. We moved to Yakima in 2011 for the sunshine and a welcome change of scenery. I have family in the area as well. We are very happy here.



BIRD SIGHTINGS

DENNY GRANSTRAND

Spring has sprung, at last! Many of our winter visitors have migrated north or back up to the forests for the nesting season and are being replaced by the newly-arriving species that nest in the valley.

The most exciting reports are been of Black-necked Stilts. The first ones to arrive are usually seen at Kerry's Pond along the Yakima Valley Highway east of Outlook. It appears that Kerry Turley, appropriately enough, was the first to see one there on March 23, though Scott and Sierra Downes and Eric Heisey saw one there and got their report in to BirdYak before Kerry's.

On his lunchtime route around the Toppenish NWR, Jeff

Kozma reported seeing 65 stilts in a wetland along Pumphouse Road on April 11. Andy and Ellen Stepniewski upped the ante considerably when they are 110 in the same wetland on April 13. That is by far the most of this elegant shorebird that have ever been seen in Yakima County at one spot.

I was birding in the Ahtanum area on April 5 and heard several Northern Pygmy-Owls tooting in the tree tops. One landed on a branch in front of me, flew to another branch and was joined by a second pygmy-owl. They seemed to be doing some pair-bonding. It was the first time I have seen two of these little cuties together like that.

The Grouse Strut field trip was a huge success with 11 Greater Sage-Grouse highlighting a long list of species seen. According to Karen Zook's report to BirdYak, the grouse put on a great show and made it work getting up at 4:00 a.m.!

BIRDATHON—DOLLARS FROM DONORS, BIRDS FROM BIRDERS

Spring is the season for great birding throughout Yakima County. It is also the time for Yakima Audubon's BIRDATHON, the chapter's appeal to members for financial support. Please join in and contribute to BIRDATHON. Monies donated are used for the chapter's operating expenses, including the informative and beautifully illustrated newsletter, bringing great programs to our chapter meetings, important conservation issues and efforts, education, outreach, and more.

This year's BIRDATHON is **May 17** and will again entail a county-wide birding effort. In this endeavor, up-wards of 10 teams, each with a mapped portion of Yakima County, head out into the field to tally as many species and individuals as they can find. Each team's tally will be added into an overall spreadsheet, Christmas-count style. In 2011, teams

set a record by finding 195 species. Can we break that record?

We need birders to help assist with this fun effort. Luke Safford is organizing this year's birding efforts. If interested in participating, contact Luke to see which teams can use help. E-mail is preferred at luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com or phone him at 833-6081. You do not need to be an experienced birder to enjoy the spectacle of spring migration. Full day or part day, if you are willing to participate, please contact Luke to work out details.

Everyone making a Birdathon pledge will be mailed a recap of the day's birding detailing the species seen as well as a narrative of the highlights the birding teams encounter. But most of all, donors may revel in the knowledge that they have contributed to the overall success of YVAS.

Yes, I want to help support YVAS by making a Birdathon pledge!

I Pledge \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

You can include your check now (payable to Yakima Valley Audubon Society), or we will bill you following the Birdathon. Send form to:

Yakima Valley Audubon Society, P. O. Box 2823, Yakima WA 98907

2014 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD

President	Andy Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net)	877-6639	Fund Raising	Dan Kinney (insur3@charter.net)	452-3260
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Conservation	Greg Bohn (gsanpdro@charter.net)	901-1882	Website	www.yakimaaudubon.org	
Education	Ellen Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net)	877-6639	Toppenish NWR CBC	Luke Safford (luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com)	833-6081
Field Trips	Luke Safford (luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com)	833-6081	Yakima Valley CBC	Denny Granstrand (dgranstrand@gmail.com)	453-2500
	Jan Gano (gano12@earthlink.net)	966-4539	YVAS Email	(birds@yakimaaudubon.org)	



Coming Attractions:

1. Chapter Meeting - April 24
2. Zimmerman Ponds - April 26
3. Snow Mountain Ranch - May 3
4. Migratory Bird Day - May 10
5. Migration Bird Count - May 17