



# 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.*

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**PROGRAM ARTICLE**

**BILL DRENGUIS**

## **East Cascade Forests – Protect, Connect and Restore Presented by Reese Lolley**

Who among us that dwell in the cities of the Yakima Valley have not enjoyed driving up the highways towards White or Chinook passes to rejoice in “our” magnificent conifer forests replete with rivers, wildlife and birds? These forests were there when we arrived and, surely, they will be there when we are gone. Or will they? And are they really “ours.”

A mere decade or so ago, large swaths of the Cascades in Central Washington was owned in a checkerboard pattern, a legacy from the 19th century when Congress gave alternating square miles to railroad companies. Over time the railroads sold their land to private interests with much of such land in the Cascades eventually coming under the ownership of the Plum Creek Timber Company. The resulting fragmented landscape has been a bane to private owners, state agencies managing interspersed parcels, conservationists and the general public.

The Nature Conservancy has been a major player in three acquisitions of Plum Creek property that have resulted in protecting and connecting forested landscapes in the general Yakima River watershed.

The first of these was the Tieton Project just twenty some miles west of Yakima that connected thousands of acres in the Bear Canyon area into a contiguous landscape of protected habitat. The Conservancy was able to coordinate contributions to purchase property until state agencies were able to obtain funding to officially acquire it.

Next up came 2,675 acres in the Naches River/Bald Mountain area that the Conservancy purchased and transferred to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

to be managed as a public wildlife area.

The most recent Conservancy acquisition in our area was 1,280 acres in the Manastash area west of Ellensburg. This parcel was transferred to WDFW to be managed as part of the L. T. Murray Wildlife Area. To date, the Conservancy has facilitated bringing together more than 25,000 acres of East Cascades forests into public ownership.

Together, these areas contain prime territory for mountain goats, elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep and birds, including the northern spotted owl. It includes streams that support native fish such as rainbow and bull trout.

The June/July Nature Conservancy magazine states: “We have a chance to change the future of forest in Eastern Washington. The Nature Conservancy and our partners have worked for more than a decade to weave together public and private land, ensuring these forests are healthy, producing clean water and habitat for wildlife, providing recreational opportunities for people, and supporting local economies.”

But if future generations are to be able to enjoy our forests, much remains to be done. Reese Lolley, Director of the East Cascades Forest Program for the Nature Conservancy, has authored many papers and is a frequent speaker at national conferences. With our recent forest fires, Reese has proven to be a reliable source of information on this topic for the media. He will inform us, in his personable style, of the restoration and protection challenges ahead.

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



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

ANDY STEPNIEWSKI



Habitat diversity is what it's all about and diverse habitats on the Gray's Harbor Weekend field trip netted us almost 150 species of birds!

Ellen and I joined Denny Granstrand's fieldtrip to Washington's coast. Read Eric Heisey's trip report elsewhere in this Crier. This trip is a favorite of mine, always a great opportunity to visit many of Washington's natural habitats, and some manmade ones. I am taking the liberty here to celebrate the natural habitats or "ecosystems" we encountered on our journey. The more diverse the landscape, the more biodiversity.

We headed west from Yakima's **Shrub-steppe Zone**, part of the "sagebrush sea." This is the heart of Washington's "Dryside," a result of the Cascade rainshadow. This is our home and we were bent on new birds and landscape.

Past Naches and entering the Cascade Mountains, we passed groves of the **Oregon White Oak Zone**, their northern outpost in eastern Washington, and host to the beautiful Lewis's Woodpecker. The highway passes alongside beautiful **Riparian Zone** groves of Black Cottonwood, willows, and aspens, an incredible haven for birdlife in spring and summer. Upwards we entered the **Ponderosa Pine Zone**, a classic dry forest, in season another remarkably birdy habitat. Farther west in a wetter and cooler climate we found the **Interior Douglas-fir**, then the **Mixed-conifer Zones**, both famous for their diversity of woodpeckers, perhaps unequalled in North America.

At Rimrock Lake, we noted five species of "sea gulls" and 21 Bald Eagles, attracted to the Kokanee Salmon spawn. Then we cruised by Clear Lake, transition to Washington's "Wetside."

Up to White Pass, we abruptly entered the **Subalpine Fir Zone** at Dog Lake, a marked by long, cold, and snowy winters. White Pass shows off the **Mountain Hemlock Zone**, the state's snowiest forest zone. Nearby Leech Lake rimmed by **Montane Coniferous Wetlands**.

Heading west and down from White Pass, we passed miles of towering Douglas-firs and Western Hemlocks in the **Western Hemlock Zone**. A roadside viewpoint offered stunning vistas of Mt. Rainier, monarch of the Cascade Mountains. From here to near the coast, we would traverse this zone much of the way to the coast, a clear signal diversity is greater east of the Cascade Mountains than west, on account of the complex topography, changes in elevation, and precipitation.

Western Hemlock Zone is interrupted by **Pasture and Ranchettes**, which typify much of the landscape west from Packwood to I-5. We cruised by the **Urban Zone** along I-5. Recall, western Washington is home to 70% of Washington's population, so wild nature has been under siege along the I-5 corridor for a long time.

Approaching the coast at Raymond, a subtle change takes place in the forest. Here is the **Sitka Spruce Zone**, marked by towering spruce trees that built Howard Hughes's "Spruce Goose" during World War II. Finally we reached salt water at Willapa Bay, where we scoped migrating ducks in the **Bay and Estuary Zone**, an ecosystem famous for its high biologic productivity. At the coast in Tokeland, we were at the edge of the Pacific Ocean at the **Marine Nearshore Zone**. Nearby Midway Beach is an super example of **Coastal Dunes and Beach Zone**. Here we saw 31 Snowy Plovers, a seriously imperiled west coast bird.

Saturday, we had the rare opportunity to ply Washington's offshore waters. Departing Westport and heading west, we first traversed the shallow **Marine Nearshore Zone** with many birds. Farther out, crossing the Marine Shelf Zone, which Eric calls the "dead zone," birds were fewer. We hit the edge of the **Oceanic Zone**, or pelagic waters, where the Continental Shelf, drops off down into submarine Grays Canyon. Here were many bird species never or very rarely seen from shore including Black-footed Albatross. The whole day was truly an extraordinary experience!

Our birding on Sunday took us to **Westside Riparian-Wetlands Zone** by Ocosta where we noted American Bitterns and other marsh birds. Bottle Beach and the Oyehut Game Range, both in the **Bay and Estuary Zone** featured 12 species of shorebirds. A Peregrine Falcon perched patiently waiting for an unsuspecting flyby duck or shorebird.

At the nearby Pt. Brown Jetty, an artificial, but nonetheless productive example of the **Rocky Coastline Zone**, we saw shorebirds wedded to wave-swept shores including Black Turnstones and Surfbirds.

Finally we hit the **Sewage Ponds** at Hoquiam, a man-made habitat, of course, but filled with birds. Hoquiam's sewage ponds are famous and a must see for birders! Here we ended our birding with hundreds of waterfowl of many species, scads of gulls, and a sprinkling of shorebirds. Reflecting on the many habitats we encountered, a representative transect of Washington from "Dryside" to "Wetside," we visited 20 separate ecosystems. Yep, I counted the sewage ponds! So, it's not surprising we tallied nearly 150 species of birds on our journey out to and beyond Westport!

## Proposed Bylaws Changes

Periodically we find it time to amend our Bylaws to meet our chapter's changing needs.

Currently we are submitting the following changes for your consideration. The floor will be open for discussion at our October general meeting, and the members present will vote on these proposed changes by show of hands.

Article IV: Board of Directors, Section 1, to be amended from "not more than three (3) Directors" to "**not more than five (5) Directors.**"

Article IV: Board of Directors, Section 2, to be amended from "Meetings of the Board shall be held in January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October and November" to "**Meetings of the Board shall be held in January, February, March, April, May, June, September, October, and November and once during the summer (July/August).**"

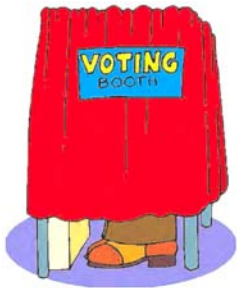
Article IV: Board of Directors, Section 3, to be amended from "Eight members of the Board shall constitute a quorum at any meeting or for phone voting" to "**Six members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting or for phone voting.**"

Article V: Officers, Section 8, to be amended from "All checks and drafts of the Society may be signed by the Treasurer, the President, or Vice-President" to "**All checks and drafts of the Society may be signed by the Treasurer, the Secretary, the President, or the Vice-President.**"

Article VI: Committees. Add a Standing Committee Called "**Environment Science Committee**" whose purpose shall be "**To coordinate science-based projects focusing on birds, their habitats, and bird conservation.**"

Please talk with any board member if you have questions on these items.

— Vera Backstrom —



## ELECTIONS

This year, an even-numbered year, it's time to elect our chapter's President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. Vera Backstrom, current secretary, is a candidate for re-election. Karen Zook, current treasurer, assumed her post midway through the last election cycle and is a candidate for election. However, we have no current candidates for President-Elect. Further nominations will be taken at the October general meeting, and elections will be held by show of hands.



**MEMBERSHIP**  
JOY MCKINNEY

Welcome New YVAS Members!

**Selah:** Bee Faith

**Yakima:** Christopher Babin and Felicia Faringer

**Thank you for renewing your YVAS Membership!**

**Naches:** John and Peggy Euteneier

**Selah:** Mary Vance Strate

**Yakima:** Bob Dolphin, William Bucknam, Joyce Dennison, William O'Neil, Toby and Dee Hastie, Steve Miller, Jane Mortimer, Mike Finney, Jeanne Crawford, and Ross and Diane Bornfleth

*Please note that the above membership renewals are for Yakima Valley Audubon membership. Renewals to National Audubon are separate and are not listed here.*



**THIS MONTH'S YVAS**  
**CALENDAR**

- Oct 23** YVAS Chapter Meeting at the Yakima Area Arboretum at 7:00 pm.
- Nov 11** Board Meeting 7:00 pm. Location to be determined.
- Oct 16, 23, 30, Nov 6, 13, 20**  
Thursday Morning Birdwalk
- Nov 8** Vantage and the Columbia River
- Dec 20** Toppenish NWR Christmas Bird Count
- Jan 3** Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count



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.





**FIELD TRIPS**  
**LUKE SAFFORD**



**PLEASE CALL THE LEADER BEFORE THE TRIP TO LET HIM/HER KNOW YOU ARE INTERESTED IN GOING.**

That way, if plans need to be changed, he/she can call you. Also, if no one calls, the leader will know to cancel the field trip and won't be sitting around at the meeting place all alone! Be sure to wear clothing appropriate for the weather and take lunch, snacks and beverages.

- Thursdays Weekly Morning Birdwalk –8:30am—Every Thursday**, weather permitting. 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. Join us every Thursday for leisurely birding and good company! Contact Luke if you have any questions at [luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com](mailto:luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com)
- Nov 8 Vantage** – The Columbia River is a magnet for late fall migration waterfowl and gulls. Scott Downes will lead this trip to Kittitas County, contact him at [downes@charter.net](mailto:downes@charter.net) for details.
- Dec. 20 Toppenish CBC** – This will be our 31<sup>st</sup> annual Toppenish Christmas Bird Count. Be sure to save this date and meet us at **7:00am** at the Branding Iron Restaurant in Toppenish. Contact the CBC compiler, Luke Safford if you intend on participating at [luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com](mailto:luke@terraceheightsbaptist.com)
- Jan. 3 Yakima CBC** – Christmas Bird Counts are, in many ways, the highlight of the year for many of us. Join our Yakima CBC by contacting our compiler, Denny Granstrand ([dgranstrand@gmail.com](mailto:dgranstrand@gmail.com) or 453-2500), and meeting at **7:00am** at the Old Town Station Restaurant in Union Gap.

## Woodpecker Tracking Project Nets Historic Data

Ken Seright and Kevin Lucas have orchestrated three aerial telemetry flights to search for our dispersing white-headed woodpecker chicks. With Kevin and Ken's help, we documented the amazing dispersal of one chick from Rimrock Lake all the way to Cle Elum – a distance of more than 45 km. It is amazing where little wings can go. This is the longest dispersal distance by a bird in the genus *Picoides* ever tracked with radio telemetry. Previous records include 35 km for the black-backed woodpecker in South Dakota, and ~20 km by red-cockaded woodpeckers in the southeastern U.S.A.

Way to go Kevin and Ken!

— Teresa Lorenz —



## Yakima County is looking for your input

The Yakima County Planning Commission is updating the Yakima County Comprehensive Plan and is asking Yakima County residents to take the Horizon 2040 Survey. There will be a new survey every week on the Yakima County Public Services website: [www.yakimacounty.us/planning](http://www.yakimacounty.us/planning). Click on the blue "Take a Survey" box.

There will be two new surveys every week on the website, one for the Upper Valley and one for the Lower Valley. People

are invited to fill out one or both of the surveys. Taking the surveys and adding your thoughts and feelings to the state of affairs in Yakima County will help the Yakima County Planning Commission as they begin the process of updating the comprehensive plan, which will guide decisions related to growth and development in unincorporated areas of Yakima County for the next 20 years. The surveys take about three minutes to complete.

## Vredenburg Bluebird Trail – Warm Weather Welcomed!

In 1982, YVAS members put up 57 nest boxes in the Wenas area. The trail was expanded over the years and now has 132 nest boxes along a 14 mile stretch of North Wenas Road between Audubon Road and Durr Road. In 1994, the trail was named in honor of Virginia and Harold Vredenburg to recognize their years of tireless devotion to help bluebirds flourish in Yakima County. YVAS members continue to monitor the boxes weekly throughout the breeding season.

One of the greatest challenges confronting nesting species, especially insectivores, is the weather. Extensive rain can hamper the nesting efforts of bluebirds so this year's unusually dry spring and summer contributed to the third highest fledge success in the trail's storied history. Between May 3 and Aug 16, only 0.35 inches of rain was recorded in Yakima. For the 38 days starting with July 6 and extending through Aug 13, daily temperatures were at 95 degrees or more on 28 days. Evidently, the bluebirds were undaunted by the hot as fledging during this period was normal.

This year, 514 Western Bluebirds, 39 Mountain Bluebirds and two Tree Swallows (Box 123, Alice Nevue) fledged from the trail's nest boxes. Six boxes with two clutches had perfect results with 11 eggs laid and 11 nestlings fledged: Box 4 (Steven and Marsha Shotwell), Box 8 (Kevin Lucas and Mary Giovanini), Box 11 (the Shotwells again!), Box 13 (Joe and Karen Zook), Box 13A (Lyle and Vicky Whiteman), Box 32 (Larry Robinson). Coming in with perfect 10 for 10 were: Box 80 (Adam Newhouse), Box 115 (Vera Backstrom), Box 122 (Lavina Doty). Western Bluebirds were the proud and diligent

parents in all of the above boxes. Box 91 (Patrick Burke) was the only box to host two species – Westerns were a perfect 5 for 5 and were followed by Mountains with a perfect 4 for 4.

If there were a heartbreak award, it might go to Box 114A that I sponsor for my oldest granddaughter, Justine Repp-Faith, where Mountain Bluebirds lost their initial clutch of five eggs; then lost four nestlings from another clutch of five eggs; finally on their third try, the pair hatched and fledged three young from a clutch of six eggs. Their efforts started on April 24 and persisted through July 14.

The earliest nests fledged in late May and it was mid-August before Box 23 (Ellen Peterson) finally fledged three Westerns from eggs that were probably laid on July 14 or 15.

A well-deserved thank you is hereby extended to all the volunteer monitor who gathered data during the nesting season: Gus and Mary Pooler, Elizabeth Bohn, Joe and Karen Zook, Hannah and Nancy Born, Linda Summer, Jean Chott, Pat Stabling, Mary Belzer, Dorothy Brink, Gilbert Smith, Ron and Debbie Brown, Martha Fleming, Liz Angland, Jan and Judy Gano. Additionally, birding enthusiasts attending the Washington Audubon Memorial Day Wenas Campout assisted with the monitoring. Campers participating this year: the Ellen Stevenson family of Vancouver, the O'Donnells of Olympia, Wendy, Kei Chi, Patrick, Todd, and Lamont of Seattle, Cookson Beecher and Dean Harrington of Sedro Woolley, Mike Pepe of Seattle, Phil Kelly of Olympia, Marissa and Jim Benavente-Flynn of Seattle, Courtenay, Doug and Brooke Schurman of Seattle.

— Richard Repp —

## Vredenburg Nest Box Sponsors

Sponsors – please check the Paid Thru column in the trail recap on pages 6 & 7. If your sponsorship expires in 2014, please consider this your first cue to remit your renewal. Reminders will be sent to sponsors that have not been renewed by Dec 31.

Mail your check (payable to YVAS) to:

YVAS  
P O BOX 2823  
Yakima, WA 98907

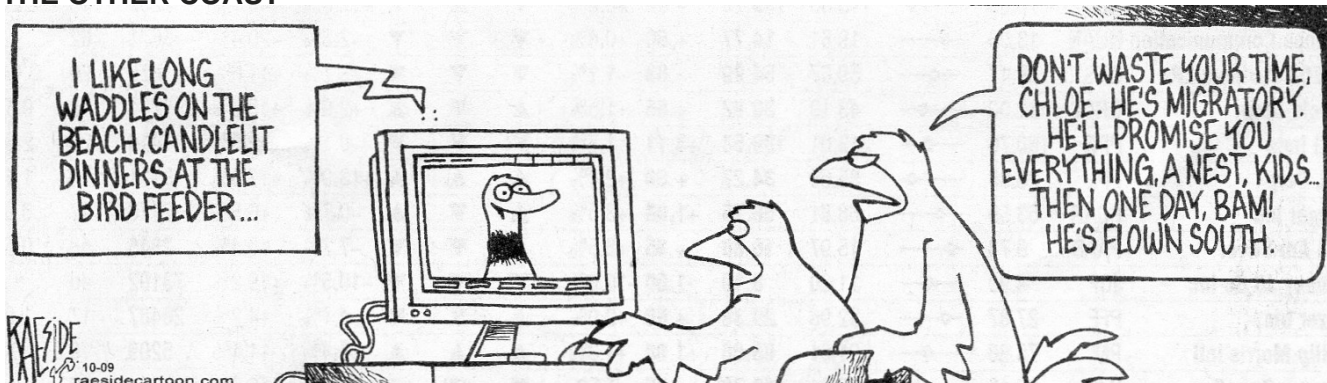
To avoid confusion, please enclose a note indicating your box number(s) and number of years you are paying for. An email address or phone number will allow us to quickly resolve any payment questions. All of the sponsors' names in **bold text**

on pages 6 & 7 (110 of the 132 boxes) have elected to pay the Mountain Bluebird rate of ten dollars per year. The option to renew at other variable rates is limited to sponsors of record in 2010. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at 509-965-1134 or email at rich712@aol.com.

Again this year, I sent three email progress reports on the happenings along the Vredenburg Trail to sponsors who we had addresses for. In these recaps, I touched upon the numbers of eggs, nestlings and fledglings as well as weather concerns, unusual species and my usual random thoughts. If you would like to be included, use my email contact info above to have your name (or the name of person you sponsor a box for) added to this list of sponsors.

— Richard Repp —

## THE OTHER COAST



## 2014 VREDENBURGH BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT

Box	Sponsor	Species	Eggs	Flg	P. T
1	Harold Vredenburg	W	6	6	2020
2	Friedenson Family	W	9	5	2015
3	Tanager Nevue	W	11	9	2016
4	Steven & Marcia Shotwell	W	11	11	2014
5	Sparrow Nevue	W	10	7	2016
6	Don Peterson Memorial	wren	x	x	2014
7	Nita Coleman	W	5	0	2014
8	K. Lucas & M. Giovanini	W	11	11	2014
9	Bob Wahl	wren	x	x	2014
10	Joe & Alberta McGuire	W	10	6	2014
11	Steven & Marcia Shotwell	W	11	11	2014
12	Russell Shelden Memorial	W	11	10	2015
13	Karen & Joseph Zook	W	11	11	2016
13A	Lyle & Vicky Whiteman	W	11	11	2015
14	Jeanne Crawford	W	6	6	2015
15	Joy McKinney	W	6	6	2014
16	Rachel Bold	wren	x	x	2014
17	Michael West	W	4	3	2015
18	Nita Coleman	W	5	2	2014
19	Janna Hayes	W	5	0	2014
20	Abigail Chipps	W	5	0	2014
21	Pete & Pam Neumann	W	6	6	2014
22	Leslie Wahl	W	6	0	2014
22A	Robert English	W	6	5	2014
23	Ellen Peterson	W	6	5	2013
24	Virginia Gill	W	10	3	2014
25	Don Peterson Memorial	W	6	5	2014
26	Arlene Wood Memorial	W	8	2	PMB
27	Sophia Peterson	W	9	8	2013
28	Sherry Morris	W	5	5	2015
29	Donna Zimmerschied	W	10	9	2014
30	Betty & Greg Neumann	W	6	5	2014
31	Donna Zimmerschied	W	8	8	2014
32	Larry Robinson	W	11	11	2014
33	Stan & Lori Isley	W	5	5	2016
34	Sarah Burke	W	4	4	2015
35	Joe & Alberta McGuire	W	8	1	2014
36	Larry Robinson	W	7	7	2014

Box	Sponsor	Species	Eggs	Flg	P. T
37	Alice Presson	W	5	4	2014
38	Charlotte Pfeiffer	W	5	4	2015
39	Maia Mittlestaedt	W	6	2	2014
39A	Joan Gilman	W	6	4	2014
40	Gertrude Repp Memorial	W	5	4	2015
41	Joan Gilman	wren	x	x	2014
42	Lavina Doty	W	5	0	2014
43	Maia Mittlestaedt	W	5	5	2014
44	Dorothy Munroe	W	9	5	2014
45	Jerry & M. A. Ruthruff	W	5	0	2016
46	Nature Artists Garden Club	W	12	5	2015
47	Irene Gilman Memorial	W	5	0	2014
48	Tomas Sawyer	W	4	3	2016
49	Ellen Stevenson Family	W	5	5	2014
50	Tom Mansfield	W	10	3	2033
51	Ron Sell	W	5	5	2015
52	Linda Knutson	W	5	5	2015
53	Megan & Steven Pooler	W	7	7	2015
54	Rene Peterson	W	8	3	2013
55	Alex Peterson	W	9	9	2013
56	Denny Granstrand	W	5	4	2014
57	William & Kelley Strange	W	5	2	2014
58	Karen & Joseph Zook	W	6	4	2016
59	Denny Granstrand	W	6	6	2014
60	Megan & Steven Pooler	W	6	4	2015
61	John Meyer Memorial	W	1	0	2015
62	Martha Anderson	W	5	0	2014
63	Tom Wilson	W	7	0	2014
64	Mike & Carolyn Wood	W	7	1	2014
65	Lucky Hall	W	6	0	2014
66	Carol Phillips	W	6	5	2014
67	William & Kelley Strange	W	0	0	2014
68	Ruth Knoke Memorial	W	6	6	2014
69	Janet White	W	9	5	2014
70	Irene Gilman Memorial	W	6	0	2014
71	Helen Stuckey	W	10	8	2015
72	Nancy Born	W	5	5	2014
73	Chris Sorenson	W	11	7	2014

## 2014 VREDENBURGH BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT CONT.

Box	Sponsor	Species	Eggs	Flg	P. T
74	Hannah Born	W	8	7	2014
75	Ryleigh Hayes	W	1	0	2015
76	Margaret Morris	W	5	0	2015
77	Shannon O'Malley	W	8	8	2014
78	Conner O'Malley	wren	x	x	2014
79	Toppenish Garden Club	W	0	0	2014
80	Adam Newhouse	W	10	10	2014
81	Hunter Headley	W	11	9	2014
82	Ariana Faith	chip	0	0	2015
83	Toppenish Garden Club	W	5	5	2014
84	Cailin O'Malley	W	10	4	2014
85	Bettie Soden Memorial	M	10	0	2018
86	June Rayner Memorial	W	5	5	2014
87	Maureen O'Brien	W	5	4	2015
88	Marie Brangwin	W	5	5	2014
88A	Sandra Bowman	wren	x	x	2014
89	Peter Sorenson	W	11	5	2014
90	Bill & Edith Ryan	W	6	6	2015
91	Patrick Burke	W	5	5	2015
		M	4	4	2015
92	Les Burke	W	6	0	2015
93	P. Kevin Gilman Memorial	W	5	5	2014
94	John & Sally English	W	6	5	2014
95	Joyce Meyer	W	6	0	2015
96	Kay Marsh	W	11	5	2013
96A	Ewell & Rosemary Jones	W	9	8	2014
97	Alwin Berger Memorial	W	5	5	2014
98	McCrone Family	W	6	2	2015
99	Ken & Laurie Knittle	W	10	2	2033
100	Susie Lattomus	M	9	8	2014
101	Amy Sinden	W	4	4	2015
102	Jean Chott	W	6	1	2014
103	Bob & April Adamson	TRES	3	0	2015
104	Richard Repp	W	11	3	2015
105	Jim Ehret	W	8	5	2014
106	Joan Miler	M	5	0	2014
107	Joan Miler	W	5	0	2014
108	Raleigh Watts	M	9	5	2015

Box	Sponsor	Species	Eggs	Flg	P. T
109	Andy & Ellen Stepniewski	W	6	0	2014
110	Martha Fleming	W	3	2	2014
111	Martha Fleming	M	7	2	2014
112	Dotty Armstrong	W	6	0	2015
113	Lavina Doty	M	8	8	2014
114	P. Kevin Gilman Memorial	W	12	5	2014
114A	Justine Repp-Faith	M	16	3	2015
115	Vera Backstrom	W	10	10	2014
116	Dorothy Munroe	W	10	7	2014
117	John & Ann Brangwin	W	5	5	2014
118	Noel Knoke	M	6	0	2014
119	Jack Whitnall	W	6	4	PMB
120	Apple Blossom Garden Club	unused			2014
121	Andy & Ellen Stepniewski	W	5	4	2014
122	Lavina Doty	W	10	10	2014
123	Alice Nevue	TRES	5	2	2016
123A	Jeff Kozma	M	10	9	2014
124	Mt. Clemen Garden Club	W	9	7	2014
125	Virginia Vredenburgh	W	11	9	2020
	<b>TOTAL FLEDGED</b>				<b>555</b>
	<b>Western Bluebird</b>				<b>514</b>
	<b>Mountain Bluebird</b>				<b>39</b>
	<b>Other Species</b>				<b>2</b>

\* Sponsor's name in **BOLD TEXT** indicates payment at Mountain Bluebird Rate (\$10 per year)

### Key

**P.T = Paid Thru**

Flg = Fledged	M = Mountain Bluebird
W = Western Bluebird	MOCH = Mountain Chickadee
TRES = Tree Swallow	HOFI = House Finch
HOSP = House Sparrow	CHIP = Chipmunk
wren = House Wren	
WBNU = White-breasted Nuthatch	
PMBD = Proclaimed Memorial by Board of Directors	



## Love Story – YVAS Members and Bluebird Nest Boxes

YVAS member Bill Thoren started it all when he moved to Yakima from Montana in 1971, bringing with him his love for bluebirds and his experience in providing nest boxes for them. He put his boxes in the Wenas and, after his death, YVAS members carried on in grand fashion.

It appears that activity on bluebird trails may have peaked in the 1990s for YVAS members. The October 1990 Crier reveals that seven nest box trails totaling 451 boxes were administered by various members. That year, YVAS volunteers monitored a trail of 127 boxes (currently this trail has 132 boxes) that in 1995 would be named the Vredenburg Bluebird Trail in honor of Harold and Virginia Vredenburg. Other members servicing trails were Bill and Edith Ryan (100 boxes near Highway 410), Ewell and Rosemary Jones (96 boxes in the Wenas), Earl and Dot Derry (39 boxes in Black Canyon), Mary Rasmusson (23 boxes in Hardy Canyon), Frank Irvine (50 boxes near Tampico), and Merle Warnstadt (15 boxes along the Ahtanum's South Fork.)

So where do we stand today? The Tampico and Ahtanum trails have fallen by the wayside. Several of the Black Canyon boxes have been adopted and refurbished by a homeowner along Elk Ridge Road.

Bill and Edith Ryan established a two segment (Rocky Prairie & Canteen Flats) trail off of Hwy 410 under agreement with the U S Forest Service in 1984 and continued to maintain it for 27 years before turning it over to Eileen and Dan Kinney in 2011. In 2012, YVAS officially designated this as the Ryan Bluebird Trail. Dan notes that selective logging has occurred along the trail which has opened up the forest making it better habitat for bluebirds. The logging and/or vandalism took a toll with eight boxes outright disappearing. The seventy-plus remaining boxes produced 113 bluebirds this year which is slightly ahead of the last ten-year average of 95.

Also in the 80s, Harold and Virginia Vredenburg placed a string of boxes along a stretch of Durr Road at the north end of the current Vredenburg Trail. Gus and Mary



Pooler assisted Virginia in caring for these 21 boxes for several years before Virginia blessed them with complete control and responsibility perhaps around 2007. This trail attracts Mountain Bluebirds almost exclusively. Mary reports that the trail fledged approximately 90 Mountain Bluebirds this year which is slightly more than the ten-year average of 80.

In 2001, Mary Rasmusson entrusted me with the 24 boxes she had in Hardy Canyon plus 37 boxes along the paved portion of North Wenas Road between Wenas Lake and the intersection with Audubon Road. She told me that these boxes were remnants of the Rosemary & Ewell Jones' trail with a few blended in from Don Peterson. In 2002, 74 Western Bluebirds fledged from each of these trails. As homes sprung up along North Wenas Road, House Sparrows followed and raised enough havoc for me to reduce that string to 21 boxes.

In 2008 for my granddaughter Justine's senior project, we extended the Hardy Canyon Trail west along Newland Road and then south up the slope of Mt Cleman on Jones Road. This year, Joe and Karen Zook took custody of the thirty+ boxes along these two roads and were pleased with the fledge results: nine Mountain Bluebirds, 89 Western Bluebirds, and a couple of successful Tree Swallow nests. As with the Ryan Trail, selective logging has taken place along Jones Road in recent years that may prove beneficial to bluebirds.

In his 1999 book, *The Birds of Yakima County*, Andy Stepniewski wrote, "Maintaining a bluebird trail requires dedication. Whether bluebird lovers will be able to sustain these efforts indefinitely is open to question." Forty years is a good effort. Is indefinitely possible?

— Richard Repp —



Western Bluebirds (above), Mountain Bluebird (right)  
Photographed along the Vredenburg Bluebird Trail  
Photos by George Vlahakis



## Grays Harbor Field Trip a great success with many wonderful bird sightings and no seasickness

On October 3, six YVAS members embarked on Denny Grandstrand's Grays Harbor field trip. Participants included Denny, Andy and Ellen Stepniewski, Sue and Warren Terrell and me. The weather was beautiful all weekend, which helped us tally almost 150 species. I certainly had fun; I even took Friday off from school for it!

We started off Friday morning at Rimrock Lake, stopping at several spots to scope the lake. Highlights were 7 SURF SCOTERS, many COMMON MERGANSERS, LESSER SCAUP, RUDDY DUCK, COMMON LOON, RED-NECKED, WESTERN and HORNED GREBES, 21 BALD EAGLES (yep, counted them one by one!), and five species of gulls: BONAPARTE'S, HERRING, RING-BILLED, GLAUCOUS-WINGED, and CALIFORNIA. From there we headed to Clear Lake, where there were a multitude of waterfowl, as well as AMERICAN DIPPERS singing below the spillway, PILEATED WOODPECKER, and BROWN CREEPER. We stopped by Dog and Leech lakes to look for remaining scoters, but saw nothing of note.

Okay, now off to the coast! We arrived at Tokeland after three long hours of driving. Here we finally saw some of the birds we had traveled all this way for. A few notable species here were our first BRANDT'S CORMORANTS, BROWN PELICANS, WILLETTS, COMMON MURRE, and several more species of gulls, including HEERMANN'S, MEW, WESTERN, and WESTERN X GLAUCOUS-WINGED hybrids (probably the most common large gull here, sometimes referred to as Olympic Gull). After this excitement, we headed off to Midway Beach and Grayland to search for the ever elusive Snowy Plover. We searched in depth along the beautiful sandy beach for two and a half hours, without any luck. Searching for the sand-colored Snowy Plover on the sand is tricky business. We noticed several good birds on this search, including a very cooperative BRANT, several SOOTY SHEARWATERS, one AMERICAN BITTERN, and a PECTORAL SANDPIPER. After the long search, we decided we would not give up, and instead of exiting the beach at Grayland State Park, we decided to head north up the beach. Almost immediately, Ellen and I spotted little white blobs sitting in the dry sand. On the dry sand were 31 SNOWY PLOVERS, many of them banded. We took lots of photos, and feeling good, headed back to Tokeland, where we had hopes of an evening flock of godwits. We ended up godwit-less, but added WHIMBREL, BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, and CASPIAN TERN to our Tokeland list. Darkness marked the end of day one, and we hurried off to the motel and then to dinner.

The alarm Saturday went off at 5:30 am and signaled the be-

ginning of day two, the day of the pelagic boat trip! We headed out quickly, and were on the boat by 6:40 am. After a quick introduction to the pelagic birding by Bruce LaBar, we were off. As the sky lightened, we started to see more birds, including several PACIFIC LOONS, the first of many SOOTY SHEARWATERS, and a PIGEON GUILLEMOT. I moved up to the bow when the captain gave the word, and took the second position up front. A few miles out, Bruce and I spotted a white-bellied shearwater in the distance. Bruce confirmed my suspicions as he yelled out "MANX SHEARWATER! MANX SHEARWATER!" This Atlantic Ocean species, only recently being noted in the northeast Pacific Ocean, zoomed by the front of the boat, and allowed me several good photos. This was my first lifer of the trip, and was probably the best bird of the day.

As we got further out into the ocean, we passed through different zones of bird life, with some species preferring the shallower water closer to shore, and some preferring the deep water almost 35 miles offshore, with all kinds of birds in between. In the somewhat less diverse zone between the shore and deep water (which I like to call the "dead zone"), we had several good birds, including two WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS, many NORTHERN FULMAR, PINK-FOOTED and BULLER'S SHEARWATERS, four POMARINE JAEGERS, and several RHINOCEROS AUKLETS. My personal highlight from this dead zone were several SOUTH POLAR SKUAS, one flying right over the bow! This was a long awaited lifer after missing it on several prior pelagic trips.

When we got towards the edge of the Continental Shelf, things started to pick up. Flocks of CASSIN'S AUKLETS were flying south, as well as an increased number of shearwaters and bird activity in general told us we were getting close. If you've never been on a pelagic trip before, when you get out to the shelf, there are typically several shrimp boats, each one with a massive cloud of California Gulls and shearwaters behind it, going after the by-catch. This is where you tend to see the oddball birds we all payed to see. This is also where we saw our first of 71 BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS (a very good count), and of 191 SABINE'S GULLS. As we cruised through the massive flocks of birds, we were able to pick out a few FLESH-FOOTED SHEARWATERS, which caused a huge stir, as everyone rushed to one side of the boat to see this jet black Shearwater with a pink bill and flesh colored feet. This was my target bird for the pelagic, so needless to say, I

was excited. I was able to spot one in flight, and another on the water, both giving everyone great views. This was another lifer,

(continued on page 10)



**Snowy Plover**  
Photo by Eric Heisey



**Manx Shearwater**  
Photo by Eric Heisey

## Grays Harbor field trip report continued from page 9

and with three on the trip, I was darn happy!

We meandered around the shrimp boats, not seeing much new, but having tons of fun as Pink-footed Shearwaters and Northern Fulmar flew right in front of us. In the masses of gulls, I was able to pick out and photograph a few THAYER'S GULLS. We stopped to chum at one point, which caused a feeding frenzy, with massive Black-footed Albatrosses flying in among the many gulls and fulmars. The chumming tends to signal the beginning of the return voyage, and we soon started heading back. The way back was fairly uneventful, with several fly-by Pomarine Jaegers and Skuas. As we pulled back in towards shore, we floated by the jetty for a while, picking out BLACK TURNSTONES and SURFBIRDS. The normal flock of about 250 MARBLED GODWITS greeted us as we pulled past the breakwater in the marina. As we departed the boat, we discussed where our next stop would be, and settled on Midway Beach again, to look for a previously reported Palm Warbler and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper.

We headed out to the marsh and beat the bushes, and couldn't pick out the Sharp-tail. Instead, we flushed up an AMERICAN BITTERN, and heard a VIRGINIA RAIL. Sue, who had stayed with the cars, called to say she had a Palm Warbler in the parking lot, so we blasted back to try and find this rare warbler. By the time we got there, it had evidently gone somewhere else. We waited around for about an hour, briefly heard it, but never caught a glimpse. Dusk approached again as we waited, marking the end of day two.

A slightly later wake up on Sunday was nice, as we headed out at dawn towards Bottle Beach. We decided to go over to Ocasta 3rd Street to listen for birds singing from the marsh at dawn. I wandered off down the road quickly after arriving and was able to pick a SWAMP SPARROW out of the marsh vegetation. I yelled, and everybody rushed down to see it, and got good looks at this rare winter sparrow. Some other, less exciting birds of note were SORA, AMERICAN BITTERNS, and a few FOX SPARROWS.

After that excitement, we headed over to Bottle Beach for some morning shorebirding. Things were good in both the passerine and waterbird categories, we tallied 65 species in a couple hours, an outstanding count for this time of year. Highlights were one EURASIAN WIGEON in flocks of thousands of ducks, RED-BREADED MERGANSER, eleven species of shorebirds, including BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, PACIFIC GOLDEN-

PLOVER, KILLDEER, GREATER YELLOWLEGS, WHIMBREL, MARBLED GODWIT, DUNLIN, SHORT-BILLED AND LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS, and LEAST and WESTERN SANDPIPERS. Notable passerines were ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, WHITE-THROATED SPARROW, PURPLE FINCH, and RED CROSSBILL.



**Black-footed Albatross**  
Photo by Eric Heisey

After Bottle Beach we headed towards Ocean Shores, stopping briefly to look at our first GREATER WHITE-FRONTED and CACKLING GEESE. When we finally got to the Oyhut Game Range at Ocean Shores, we noted very few shorebird numbers, with only five species, although this included our only SEMIPALMATED PLOVER of the trip. Our main highlights from the Game Range were a lone PEREGRINE FALCON, and a female BLACK SCOTER. Though fairly uneventful, we ended up with 59 species here. A stop at the Ocean Shores STP and Pt Brown Jetty ensued, neither being particularly eventful, although we got our first GADWALL of the trip, as well as two RED-NECKED GREBES, 17 BLACK

TURNSTONES, and a SURFBIRD.

We decided after this that we should start heading home, but we quickly stopped at old Ocean Shores Marina for Palm Warbler. I wandered off again (I tend to do that) and found myself on the old marina deck, looking at what appeared to be an EMPEROR GOOSE! I quickly called Denny over, who confirmed, and we got everybody over to look at this hugely unexpected bird. This turned out to be an extremely cooperative individual, swimming quite literally right under us, giving us amazing views and great photos. We finally tore ourselves away from this gorgeous bird, and headed to the Hoquiam Sewage Treatment Plant. This wasn't all that remarkable a stop, with a few species of shorebirds and many ducks. The best birds were probably a large flock of GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE, which turned out to be very cooperative and let us



**Emperor Goose**  
Photo by Eric Heisey

get good photos. After this, we decided it was best if we headed home, and this was the end of our field trip.

I had a fantastic time and would like to thank Denny for organizing it. We saw many fantastic birds and just had a great time. I'll be uploading photos of many of the birds soon, so keep tuned to my Flickr account for photos ([www.flickr.com/birdfishphotos](http://www.flickr.com/birdfishphotos)).

— Eric Heisey —

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# Coming Attractions:

**Oct 23 YVAS Chapter Meeting**

**Oct 16, 23, 30, Nov 6, 13 Thursday Morning Bird Walks**

**Nov 8 Vantage and Columbia River**

**Dec 20 Toppenish NWR CBC**

**Jan 3 Yakima Valley CBC**