



# 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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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

ANDY STEPNIIEWSKI

July is smack in the middle of the “Dog Days of Summer,” a time of year of heat in the Yakima Valley and vacation plans. Despite the continued intense heat (this appears to be another very hot summer), many in YVAS have been very active on a number of projects and activities. First, some fun news. Karen and Joe Zook took some visitors on a field trip, after which the visitors made an unsolicited and very generous donation to YVAS which has been applied to your chapters White-headed Woodpecker research, which Teresa Lorenz is spearheading. Denny Granstrand also led some very appreciative folks from Pennsylvania on a birding trip that netted them 17 lifers! Speaking of birding, the weekly Pop-poff Trail walks continue, starting at 6:30 am to beat the heat. Make plans to join the group on some or all of these trips to Yakima’s closest outstanding birding venue.

On a sadder note, we mark the loss of Larry Robinson, who passed away this past month after a five year battle with melanoma. If you missed the tribute acknowledging Larry’s many contributions, please take time to read the article in the May *Calliope Crier*. Also, Virginia Vredenburg passed away in Husum in the Columbia River Gorge. Virginia and Harold Vredenburg were perhaps YVAS’s most committed volunteers in maintaining the Vredenburg Bluebird Trail, your chapter’s longest running project, started more than 33 years ago in 1982. To date, more than 14,500 baby bluebirds have fledged from the 132 boxes placed along the North Wenas/Umtanum Road in the Wenas. Our chapter has very good reason to be proud of our success in increasing populations of Western and Mountain Bluebirds, both of which are species in decline due to loss of natural cavities in the forest and steppe landscape.

This year’s crop of bluebirds is coming along well, reports Richard Repp, who spearheads the YVAS Vredenburg Bluebird Trail. “Going into the 4th of July, 361 bluebirds had fledged from Vredenburg boxes. A quick look at the prior 4 years for the same period shows the average is 319...if the trend holds true this year, we have a chance of hitting 500 for the year. Not a record year but a good year nonetheless.” Dan Kinney maintains the bluebird boxes at Rocky Prairie and Canteen Flats in the upper Wenas Creek region, a project

started Bill and Edith Ryan, which they maintained for 27 years. Dan also notes it will be a good year for this trail, too. He says more than 150 juvenile bluebirds have already fledged from 62 boxes.

Joe and Karen Zook monitor 36 boxes on the north flanks of Cleman Mountain in the Wenas and report 107 bluebirds have fledged so far this year. Gus and Mary Pooler watch 21 boxes on Durr Road overlooking Ellensburg that attract mostly Mountain Bluebirds and appear to be on track to match last year’s 75 fledglings. Richard also watches 12 boxes in Hardy Canyon and another 21 along the paved portion of North Wenas Road between the canyon and Audubon Road; only eight of these boxes will fledge bluebirds this year.

Kerry Turley, YVAS Refuge Keeper, finished the spring “Open House” at Toppenish NWR. Every Sunday through spring, there was a pretty steady stream of visitors at headquarters who enjoyed watching the fuzzy Great Horned Owls grow and fledge in the nest next to the visitors center and experience the many waterfowl and other waterbirds out on the refuge ponds. The numbers of visitors trailed off only as summer heat ramped up. Kerry reports, and I agree, this first year manning the visitor center was a great success. We hope we can continue this program next year. On other Toppenish NWR news, both Kerry and I completed another year of point counts on the refuge. We each completed three censuses starting in mid-May and finishing by the end of June.

Teresa Lorenz led a field trip for wildlife biologists and forest managers to prescribed burns in the Naches District in late May. At issue is the cutting of charred snags, which are of tremendous value in the forest, not only for a variety of woodpeckers (the Naches District host 11 species in this clan, equaled in only one or two other areas in North America!), but also in their role in recycling forest nutrients. The Yakima Herald Republic ran a front-page feature on the importance of woodpeckers in the forest. Unfortunately, the politics of preserving these dead trees for woodpeckers was not addressed in the newspaper article. Teresa reports that because of pressure from citizen woodcutters, the Forest Service is not backing down on its policy of allowing snags to be felled by woodcutters. YVAS is ramping up its efforts to prompt the US Forest Service to recognize and protect snags. As part of this effort, I have penned two articles for the Wildlife Moment in the Yakima Herald-Republic on woodpeckers that are

*President’s Column (continued on page 2)*

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

*President's Column (continued from page 1)*

heavily dependent on burned trees: the black-backed in one and American three-toed in another. In my article on the American three-toed, I ramped up concern regarding the politics of snag protection. Teresa is also enlisting help from Conservation Northwest, who may offer to set up a web page informing the public of the importance of snags for wildlife. Teresa is also working with Audubon Washington which has plans to help raise concern and awareness over this issue throughout the state with a web page.

Teresa again helped raise awareness on the importance of snags in our nearby forests when she delivered the Saturday campfire program on woodpeckers to over 150 people attending the Audubon Washington Wenas Creek Memorial Day Weekend, a long-running event attracting Auduboners from all over the state.

Dan Kinney, YVAS Finance Chairperson, reports the Birdathon netted YVAS over \$2200 in the only direct appeal your chapter makes each year for funds to operate the various chapter programs. A hearty Thank You to everyone who contributed to this fund raiser!

Scott Downes, YVAS Field Trip Chairperson, organized and compiled the Yakima County Birdathon birding teams which canvassed the entire county, from low elevation shrub-steppe up through the incredible mosaic of dry and wet forest zones to the Cascade crest. Priest Rapids Lake on the eastern border of the county was covered by kayak! The teams compiled an impressive list of 184 species, not a record but a great total, nonetheless, and clearly documenting the exception diversity of birdlife here in Yakima County.

Though there is still several months of summer heat remaining, your chapter has a full slate of trips scheduled. Ellen and I will be leading a fieldtrip to the beautiful subalpine meadows and forests at Sheep Lake on Chinook Pass August 16. Eric Heisey will lead an early morning trip to Fort Simcoe targeting migrating warblers and other species August 29. These trips are in addition to the weekly Thursday Popoff Trail walks, led by Karen and Joe Zook, starting at 6:30 am. You are out into an area of good birding in the cool of the morning and hopefully back to home before the day heats up too much!

## Kudos For Karen Zook



**Peregrine anatum adult**  
Photo by Mike Roper

Karen Zook reported a sighting of a Peregrine Falcon on the Naches Ranger District, Wenatchee National Forest, that led biologists to a new nest site for this species. This information is extremely valuable because there are only a handful of known nest

sites for peregrine falcons on the Naches Ranger District. If you are birding on National Forest lands, especially during the nesting season (approximately March through July, depending on species), please report sightings of the following species to the District Wildlife Biologist, Joan St. Hilaire (jsthilaire@fs.fed.us):

<b>Spotted Owl</b>	<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>Great Gray Owl</b>
<b>Harlequin Duck</b>	<b>Common Loon</b>
<b>Sandhill Crane</b>	<b>Gray Flycatcher</b>
<b>Northern Goshawk</b>	<b>White-headed Woodpecker</b>
<b>Cooper's Hawk (nests or territorial behavior, only)</b>	<b>Black-backed Woodpecker</b>
<b>Sharp-shinned Hawk (nests or territorial behavior, only)</b>	<b>Williamson's Sapsucker</b>
<b>Lewis' Woodpecker</b>	
<b>Red-naped Sapsucker</b>	
<b>American three-toed Woodpecker</b>	

By reporting sightings, you will be helping these birds! Your sightings can help biologist can gain new insights into the occurrence and distribution of these species, and lead to measures to protect sensitive breeding habitat.

— Teresa Lorenz —



### MEMBERSHIP

**JOY MCKINNEY**

### Welcome New YVAS Members!

Toppenish—Jensen Thayer

Yakima—Nancy Jo Born, Leslie McClure, Helen Testerman

### Thank you for renewing your YVAS Membership!

Seattle—Rick and Anne Matsen, Melinda Stanojevic

Selah—Jerry Turner, Bob and Maia Middlestadt, Connie Buckley, Beverly Olson

Toppenish—Apanakhi Buckley

Union Gap—Lawrence Martin

Yakima—Jan and Judy Gano, George and Susan Vlahakis, Don Sattler, Karen Ireland,

Vi Whitmore, Nellie Jane Ridley, Julie Johnson, Susan Paoella

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

## Can Sage-Grouse Be Saved Without Shutting Down the West?

*The following article by Isabelle Groc appeared in the May 19, 2015 issue of National Geographic*

It struts around, it puffs its chest, but its numbers are plummeting. Governments are struggling to preserve enough habitat to save the bird.

LINCOLN COUNTY, Washington—When scientist Michael Schroeder was looking for a place to live in eastern Washington State, he chose to be within an hour and a half drive of seven species of grouse, the birds he has been studying for the last 22 years.

But when it came to North America's largest grouse species, the greater sage-grouse, Schroeder, a scientist at the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, had to bring in the birds himself.

Since 2008, his team has captured 279 sage-grouse in southern Oregon, where the population is more healthy, and has released them here in Lincoln County, Washington.

"Washington historically was a major part of the sage-grouse range. We had a lot of habitat here," Schroeder says. "Because so many areas were converted for wheat, we no longer have the birds."

The greater sage-grouse is in trouble not just here but all over its range, which covers 165 million acres in 11 western states and two Canadian provinces. Once numbering in the millions, the bird has lost nearly half its sagebrush habitat to development—to farms and ranches, to oil and gas operations, to spreading cities, and lately to wind farms. Fire and invasive plants have also taken a toll.

Just between 2007 and 2013, the bird's numbers plummeted by more than half, according to a study released in April by the Pew Charitable Trusts. The study found there are now fewer than 50,000 male sage-grouse engaged in the strutting, chest-puffing, tail-fanning courtship behavior that makes the two-foot-tall birds so charismatic.

As things stand, says Edward Garton, professor emeritus of wildlife ecology at the University of Idaho and lead author of the Pew report, most of the 42 distinct populations of sage-grouse will likely go extinct within a hundred years. "In the long-term, it doesn't look good at all except for three core populations" in Wyoming, northern Montana, and Idaho, Garton says.

Five years ago, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded that the sage-grouse warranted protection under the federal Endangered Species Act—but it put off deciding whether actually to list the bird. Under a legal settlement with environmental groups, it's required to decide by September 30. People all over the West are anxiously awaiting that decision. Since so many human activities affect sage-grouse, the economic impact of a listing could be large.

In Washington, where the sage-grouse population declined 80 percent between 1970 and 2014, the state Department of Fish and Wildlife listed the bird as threatened as long ago as 1998. Only 800 birds remain in four small isolated popula-

tions in eastern Washington. Those are the populations Schroeder is trying to boost with fresh recruits from Oregon.

### Birds of the Open Range

Sage-grouse require vast tracts of undisturbed sagebrush to survive. It provides their only food in winter and shelter for their nests in spring. It surrounds their ancestral breeding grounds—the great clearings, called leks, to which they return in late winter.

Migrating seasonally between different parts of their range, the birds have been known to cover distances of up to 100 miles—if

roads or fences don't block their path. They tend to avoid all signs of human presence.

Since 2010, the threat of an endangered species listing has galvanized efforts to conserve the sagebrush steppe, bringing together federal and state agencies, private landowners and industry leaders, and conservation groups. Western governors have argued that it is up to the states to determine how to protect the birds. Wyoming, which has nearly 39 percent of the entire sage-grouse population, was the first to adopt a conservation plan that protects "core areas" of habitat. Other states have followed.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the largest land manager in the West, is also devising regional plans, covering a total of 50 million acres, that will place some limits on human activities. Meanwhile the U.S. Department of Agriculture has invested nearly \$425 million in a Sage-Grouse Initiative. The money has funded conservation easements covering 380,000 acres on some 1,100 ranches, along with other projects such as the removal of invasive conifers.

"The number of people that are thinking about sage-grouse today is just incredible compared to five years ago," says Dave Naugle, a wildlife ecologist at the University of Montana in Missoula and the scientific advisor to the USDA initiative. The efforts on behalf of the sage-grouse, he adds, are helping preserve an ecosystem that supports 350 other species, including golden eagles, mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, and pygmy rabbits.

Will those efforts be enough? A few weeks ago, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that in one case they had been. The "Bi-State population," a distinct segment of the sage-grouse population that straddles the California-Nevada border, doesn't need protection under the Endangered Species Act, officials announced.



**Greater Sage Grouse**  
Photo by George Vlahakis

### *Can Sage-grouse be Saved? (continued from page 3)*

Environmentalists disagree—and worry that the decision may foreshadow the nation-wide one coming in September. “They did not address all the threats,” says Randi Spivak, public lands program director at the Center for Biological Diversity.

Her group and others have also criticized the first conservation plan issued by the BLM, for the region of Lander, Wyoming; it allows new oil and gas leasing within core sage-grouse habitat, the critics say, and doesn’t protect winter habitat at all. “Extinction may be delayed but it won’t be avoided when you go with half measures,” Spivak says.

The ongoing population decline documented in the Pew study suggests the critics have a case. “A lot of money is being spent to try and do things that would improve habitat for sage-grouse—people are really trying to make an effort to reverse the continual decline,” says Edward Garton. “But unfortunately there is not much evidence that we are being successful.”

“In spite of all that great effort,” he says, the sage-grouse “is just as likely to go extinct as it was, if not more so.”

#### *A Lek Is A Happy Place*

In eastern Washington, Michael Schroeder is not giving up. At 5 a.m. on a March morning, he leads a reporter and a videographer by flashlight to a large clearing in the sagebrush in Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area. Just a few years ago, Schroeder says, this lek was a very quiet place. Sage-grouse had been absent from the whole area since the 1980s.

But in the early 1990s, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the BLM consolidated and acquired a total of 50,000 acres of habitat for sage-grouse. Since 2008, Schroeder has been reintroducing birds to this place—capturing them at night in Oregon with a spotlight and a net, then releasing them here the next day.

That’s only a first step. If the species is to endure in eastern Washington, the small, isolated populations that now exist will have to be connected somehow across a landscape fragmented by transmission lines, highways, urban developments, and wheat fields. “It is an uphill battle, we don’t know if it can be done,” admits Schroeder.

But right now he’s recharging his optimism. Just before dawn, the white spots slowly start to appear on the lek. We count 17 of them—17 male sage-grouse, their drab brown bodies practically invisible in the twilight, but their white, puffed-up chests standing out like light beams. They’re fanning their tails like peacocks too. All is quiet except for the bizarre, regular whistling and popping sounds the males emit. They will keep this up for hours.

Seventeen of them dance, but only a few will be chosen. Somewhere in the dark, female sage-grouse are watching and listening. Hiding in a blind that blends in with the sagebrush, so are we.

“That was a big highlight when we finally got to the point where we had birds displaying on the lek,” Schroeder says. “Now people can go out and watch the birds. That makes people very happy.”



#### **FIELD TRIPS** **SCOTT DOWNES**

**July 23, 30, Aug. 6, 13, 20 and 27 - Poppoff walks.** Thursday Morning Birdwalks now start at 6:30. Meet the group at the new Poppoff Trail/Jewett Pathway parking lot at the east end of Valley Mall Blvd., at the north side of the eastern most roundabout. **For more info, contact the Zooks either by phone at (509) 225-9494 or by email at [gadzooks7@charter.net](mailto:gadzooks7@charter.net)**

**August 16 (Sunday) - Sheep Lake.** Andy and Ellen Stepniewski will lead a trip to Sheep Lake at Chinook Pass. This hike heads to the high country, a great place to be during Yakima’s hottest month. We hike 2 miles along a good trail to Sheep Lake. We like this route because it encounters a mosaic of subalpine habitats. First we cross a beautiful wild flower-covered slope, then dry slopes with brushy huckleberry and mountain ash thickets. Next are stunted forest of firs, hemlocks, and Alaska cedars. Rounding a bend on the trail onto wetter slopes is a taller subalpine forest of subalpine firs, mountain hemlocks, and Pacific silver fir. Beautiful Sheep Lake is ringed by wet sedge meadows, with Yakima Peak’s high cliffs looming.

An optional extension up to the Sourdough Gap brings us to the edge of the treeless alpine zone. Birds we will search for include Sooty Grouse, Gray Jay, Clark’s Nutcracker, and possibly Pine Grosbeak. Migrating warblers and sparrows should be about, too. Raptor migration may have begun, too, with Red-tailed Hawks, Cooper’s Hawks, and Prairie Falcons possibilities.

Meet 7 am at 40th Ave Bi-mart, on the east side of McDonalds. Please contact Andy at [steppie@nwinform.net](mailto:steppie@nwinform.net) to sign-up. Pack a lunch with plenty of fluids. Bring clothing for both warm and cool weather and the possibility of rain.

**Aug 29 (Saturday)- Fort Simcoe State Park.** Eric Heisey will lead a trip to this area west of Toppenish has the potential for a diverse array of fall passerine migrants. More details in the August Crier. Contact field trip leader Eric Heisey at [magicman32@rocketmail.com](mailto:magicman32@rocketmail.com) with any questions and to get the meeting time and location.

## Dickcissel found in Hardy Canyon

### Richard Repp adds new species to Yakima County list

(Editor's Note: No one can write as eloquently about this rare bird sighting as Richard, so here is Richard's e-mail to Bird-Yak with his blow by blow account.)

Subject line of Richard's email to BirdYak: **DICK in Hardy Canyon, the tail was gray; the tale is blue.**

Chirp,

And what a DICK it was. For those who are not familiar with people who band birds, people who capture birds and place identification bands on the birds' legs use a unique, all capital letter four-letter code for each species known to mankind. And the four letter code for Dickcissel is simply DICK. To the best of my knowledge, there is, unfortunately, no JANE. There is a JEAN (Jet Antbird) and a JAEL (Jamacian Elaenia) but it is unlikely that either of those will ever make it to Yakima County. Given that, it is unlikely I will see either of those species as I seldom wander outside this fine county. Well, it is fine for birding anyway.

And above, I used the word familiar; I will break that word into two parts. Those who know me are aware that I do have *famili* (a great one, to be sure). Others may feel I am a bit of a *liar* due to my silly, somewhat long-winded birding tales. I do try to keep the birds honest and straight though my mind and words wander between the lines. I have never banded birds, as that requires training and a license. While I am somewhat housebroken, I do not have much formal scientific training or any license other than a driver's. A poacher of sorts because I do take license with the English language at times and when it comes to birding, I frequently utter four letter words (codes?) with great emphasis when I encounter a bird species I cannot identify. This happens far more frequently than the encounter I had with that DICK up in Hardy Canyon today.

So there I was off to a late start and driving into Hardy Canyon heading for the very first bluebird nest box of the twelve I monitor in the Canyon. I had just paused at the bridge over Wenas Creek and picked up my first Pacific-slope Flycatcher (PSFL) for the year. For such a late start, I was quite pleased with that addition to my county year list. I bounced the Ford Ranger through a couple of turns and break out into the open when a bird in a dead sage catches my eye. I pull to a stop and it is only fifteen yards from my open passenger's window. My maximum effective birding range for a bird under robin size is about twenty yards...so I figure I will nail this guy. Bring up the bins, focus and my mind goes

blank. Okay, maybe I thought something like, "What the (enter four-letter code of your choice) is that?"

Mentors and field guides tell you that at moments like this, you should not reach for your field guide. Keep your eye on the bird and observe as many potential field marks as you can. For once, I follow this "rule." I reach for a note card and, as my short-term memory is about as long as a note card is thick, I look down only to jot notes. Thick bill, yellow supercilium and malar, gray/brown crown, black V on chest under white chin, yellowish breast, approximately Cedar Waxwing size, front view hints at chestnut shoulder, primaries extend just past vent, undertail grayish, white at throat hints at collar, appears to have pale lower-eye ring, etc. The bird is facing me the whole time, mildly preening...more likely greatly amused and chuckling over my all too obvious confusion. When I finally reached for my field guide, I first checked a species I have fantasized about but never seen, the Great Kiskadee (GKIS), which I knew was a flycatcher and this bird perched in the open like one might expect one of those to do. Realizing that the bill was too massive for a bug snatcher, I jumped to the back section where the big-billed buntings, grosbeaks and finches are. And in that mix was my boy the DICK.

When I looked back up, the bird was gone. Confident that I had the perfect ID (no, we're not talking Freud here, my id and ego could use therapy), I called four birders I thought might be free to chase this guy, which I figured was a county first or second. Each call, I showed my Yakima County only colors by pronouncing the name as dick-a-sell. The three that I reached all incredulously asked if I meant dick-sis-cell. I replied that I couldn't pronounce it but I was seeing it. John and Denny were able to roll on out and we were able to relocate the DICK. I relearned that John can point in the direction of birds he doesn't see but hears. I learned that Denny, arthritis and all can run rather quickly through sagebrush carrying a scope.

Later,

Richcissel

You can call me Rich, you can call me Richard, you can call me Rick, you can call me Richie...just don't call me DICK!!



**Richard's Dickcissel**  
Photo by Denny Granstrand

## In Memory of Virginia Vredenburgh

Virginia Vredenburgh, 97, passed away May 25, 2015 in Husum, WA. Virginia was an integral part of Yakima Valley Audubon Society's early years. She quietly exemplified the traits of America's greatest generation by making her community a better place for all. According to a 1993 article in the Yakima Herald-Republic, she and husband Harold were honored with the District Conservation Award presented by the Yakima Valley District Federation of Women's Club for their tireless efforts to help restore bluebird populations in the Wenas.

The article below appeared in the October 2002 Calliope Crier and was penned by Virginia's peer, Jeanne Crawford:

### Profiles – Virginia Vredenburgh

"Vredenburgh" and "Bluebirds" are synonymous for Yakima Valley Audubon Society. Here's why: When Virginia married Harold in 1979 and went with him to see Bill Thoren's bluebird houses in the Wenas, she recalled, "I just looked at those little birds and was so tickled I knew I had to do something!"

So she and Harold ("the greatest guy that ever lived") and some friends made about 80 bluebird boxes and put them along the North Wenas Road. Another year, friends from as far as Seattle and Mercer Island gathered at the Oak Creek Ranger Station to help build and repair 100 boxes. "We had a potluck of course", Virginia recalls. "Auduboners always love to eat."

Virginia has lived in the same house, on a two-acre mini-ranch in East Selah, since she and her first husband built it "from scratch" 60 years ago. Skookum, her little black and white dog, keeps her company.

Her home is an on-going exhibit of her quilting skills: pillows, wall hangings, table runners, you name it! What will she



**Harold and Virginia Vredenburgh - Date unknown but judging from the binoculars and name tags, probably attending birding event.**

do when she runs out of wall space? "I already have," she admits.

do when she runs out of wall space? "I already have," she admits.

"I'm too busy to leave home," Virginia says. She is quilting, sewing, canning, gardening, watering, keeping up with Audubon friends of many years. (No time for TV or computers.)

Boxes of brilliant petunias frame her house. From her vegetable garden she harvests tomatoes, potatoes, onions, lettuces, radishes and multiple squashes. In one day in September, she canned 27 pints and four quarts of tomato juice, jointly on her kitchen

wood stove and an outdoor propane one. She's raising two cows from calves she bought in the spring, "not for butchering", she explains, "but because they eat the grass and it doesn't have to be mowed."

Several years ago, after keeping up with the paperwork for the Bluebird Trail, Virginia relinquished that post. The trail of 132 nest boxes is officially named the Vredenburgh Bluebird Trail in honor of her and Harold, who passed away in 1983. A smaller trail which she established along the Durr Road is now monitored by Mary and Gus Pooler.

Yes, Virginia feeds the birds. Her huge sunflowers attract the goldfinches during the summer, and when cut, provide a haven for them later in the year. About October 1, she started feeding the birds that come for the winter.

If you bid high enough at this year's Audubon Auction, you might be lucky enough to win Virginia's specially made quilt with a birdhouse design. Or a box or two of her walnuts. She's still doing her part for Audubon.

***A graveside service for Virginia will be held at Terrace Heights Memorial Park on Saturday, August 15, 2015, at 11:30 AM.***

## Wenas Lake Closure - Attention Birders

At Wenas Lake, the only places where access is now allowed is the resort area and the boat launch area. New "No Trespassing" signs are in place along other parts of the lake's shoreline. Thoughtless littering and vandalism by a few has prompted the Wenas Irrigation District to take this drastic action. Write to the Wenas Irrigation District (543 Sisk Rd., Selah, WA 98942) asking them to open other areas around the lake for birding.

One area that is important to birders is the trail that heads

west out of the parking lot near the boat ramp. The trail leads to good riparian habitat that YVAS field trips have gone to for years. According to Jim Christenson, it is also a very good place to find butterflies.

It is hard to tell if the mudflats that become visible in the fall as the lake is drawn down are closed or not. Wenas Lake in the fall is the premier shorebirding area in the county. YVAS members have spent many wonderful hours there slogging through the mud searching for shorebirds.

### Yakima Valley Audubon Society Membership

Renew my annual membership to the Yakima Valley Audubon Society to receive 10 issues of the Calliope Crier and all chapter benefits. National Audubon membership and Audubon Magazine are not included.

Yakima Valley Audubon Membership .....\$ 25.00 per household  
 Yakima Valley Audubon Senior (62+) OR Student Membership .....\$ 15.00 per household  
 (please circle which apply)  
 Yakima Valley Audubon Society Life Membership .....\$ 500.00 per household

I do not want to receive any solicitations or communications from NAS (please check if applicable)

I prefer to read the Crier online and not receive my copy by mail (please check if applicable)

Please make any corrections to your contact information as needed.

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Please return this form and your check payable to: **Yakima Valley Audubon Society (YVAS)**

Send the form and your check to: **YVAS Membership, P. O. Box 2823, Yakima, WA 98907**

**If you have any membership questions, contact Joy McKinney at [joycatbird@gmail.com](mailto:joycatbird@gmail.com) or 698-4110.**

### **2015 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD**

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			Yakima Valley CBC	Denny Granstrand ( <a href="mailto:dgranstrand@gmail.com">dgranstrand@gmail.com</a> )	453-2500
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Former YVAS board member Luke Safford (right), now living in Arizona, joins Poppoff walkers on a recent visit. On the left is Joe Zook who deftly spots hidden birds and shares scope views with field trip participants.



At the Memorial Day Wenas Campout, Karen Zook (left) explains proper techniques for monitoring the Vredenburg Bluebird trail to campers as Richard Repp (right) looks on.

The photo on the left was taken by Karen Zook.

The photo to the right was taken by Joe Zook.

## **Coming Attractions:**

**July 23, 30, Aug. 6, 13, 20 and 27 - Thur. Morning Birdwalks**

**Aug. 16 Sheep Lake**

**Aug. 27 YVAS Chapter Meeting**

**Aug. 29 Fort Simcoe State Park**