



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 47 Number 09

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

October 2018



OCTOBER PROGRAM PHIL FISCHER

The life and times of the Gray Flycatcher presented by Jeff Kozma

Come join us for a presentation by YVAS member Jeff Kozma on his research into the Gray Flycatcher and its breeding biology. And, no, that is not a flycatcher he is holding in the photo in this article. It is a White-headed Woodpecker, another species Jeff has studied extensively in recent years.

The Gray Flycatcher breeds in a variety of habitats in the arid and semi-arid regions of the western United States. Detailed information on their breeding biology is lacking, especially in the northern portion of their range where they nest in ponderosa pine forests. During May through July, of both 2014 and 2015, Jeff Kozma monitored Gray Flycatcher nests and

measured vegetation at nest sites. He and his co-authors found that predation accounted for 90% of failed nests. Also they found evidence of a positive association between daily nest survival and both nest height and distance of nest substrate to the nearest tree. No support for other habitat variables was found but evidence documented that period survival rate was higher during the nest building stage than the incubation and nestling stages. Higher nests may be less exposed to terrestrial predators and nests in trees that are farther from other trees may be less exposed to arboreal predators such as jays and squirrels that may search for nests in patches with connected canopies. In addition to nest survival, Jeff will also present summaries of nest site characteristics and demographic variables (e.g., clutch size, number of fledglings, etc.).



Jeff holds a study subject fitted with a tracking transmitter

Jeff works as a Wildlife Biologist in the Timber, Fish and Wildlife Program within the Department of Fisheries Resources Management of the Yakama Nation. His education in wildlife biology and ecology includes a BS in Environmental Forest Biology from the State University of NY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and an MS in Wildlife Science from Texas Tech University. His main research interests focus on the life history and reproductive biology of birds and how habitat characteristics influence nest survival. He has worked in a variety of different habitats including the Chihuahuan Desert in New Mexico, sagebrush/shrub-steppe on the US Army's Yakima Training Center, and currently in managed ponderosa pine forests where he has been studying the reproductive biology of the White-headed Woodpecker and other cavity-nesting birds for the last 15 years.

Editor's Note: The first Gray Flycatcher documented in Washington State was found by L. J. Larrison at the Wenas Campground on May 31, 1970. At the campground in May of 1972, he photographed a Gray Flycatcher and its nest containing two eggs. The following year, he found two more nests and ten flycatchers in the surrounding area. Jeff's research has documented the continuing population rise of this species and added much to our understanding of this species life history.

Mark your calendar for Thursday, Oct 25, at 7 pm, at the Yakima Area Arboretum to see this presentation

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



MEMBERSHIP

JOY MCKINNEY



THIS MONTH'S YVAS CALENDAR

Thank you for renewing your membership!

SELAH: Cindi Confer Morris

YAKIMA: Denny Granstrand, Mary Lou Rozdilsky,
Joyce Hernandez, Philip Murphy

ZILLAH: Eugene Miliczky

Oct 26 YVAS Chapter Meeting at the Yakima Area Arboretum at **7:00 pm**. A great program by Jeff Kozma will excite us!

Nov 13 Board Meeting — at the new Starbucks at 5906 Summitview Avenue at **7:00 pm**.

Election YVAS Officers at October Chapter Meeting

This year, an even-numbered year, it's time to elect our chapter's President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. Vera Backstrom and Karen Zook, our current secretary and treasurer (respectively) have agreed to run for re-election. Renee Navarrete, our current Vice President, has consented to be a candidate for President-Elect. Please note that YVAS by-laws allow a person to serve as both Vice President and President-Elect at the same time. Further nominations may be made at the October general meeting for all three positions, provided the nominee has agreed to serve if elected. Elections will be held by show of hands when nominations close at this meeting.



FROM THE BOARD

PHIL FISCHER

Happy cats, Healthy ecosystems American Bird Conservatory advocates for responsible pet ownership

Cats make wonderful pets but are detrimental to native wildlife. Extensive research has been conducted on the impacts of domestic cats on wildlife. As a result, leading wildlife and ornithological societies now recognize that cats are one of the largest human-caused mortality threats to wild birds. Cats are also one of the worst invasive species in the world. Many owners assume their cats do not kill birds when cats do not bring home avian prey. However, cats kill an estimated 2.4 billion birds in a year in the U.S. Cats also negatively impact birds by their mere presence. For example, one study found parent birds alter their behavior in the presence of cats, leading to reduced nest survival. On top of this, their prowess as rat hunters may be overstated. A 2018 study in New York City found cats rarely kill rats. Rats are smart and quickly learn to avoid areas where they detect the recent presence of cats. Meanwhile, cats prefer smaller and more easily subdued prey, like birds. Thus, cats fail at urban rat control. However, because rats change their behavior to avoid cats, rats may be perceived as less abundant by humans in the presence of cats.

There are many things owners can do to help both cats and wildlife:

1 – Have an outdoor cat? Train your cat to an indoor lifestyle. Gradually increase the time your cat stays indoors until they are no longer allowed outdoors. A slow transition makes for a happier and more peaceful transition for cats and their human family.

2 – Adopt a senior cat - Thinking about getting a new cat? Get a senior! Most pet owners are enthralled by the cuteness factor in a kitten. However, senior cats make calmer pets that are happy indoors. Cats have a high energy level for up to five years. Many cat owners tire of the exuberance of a young cat as it grows. This contributes to problems with pet abandon-

ment. Senior cats make excellent pets but unfortunately are often euthanized because people perceive they will not bond with human companions. Nothing could be further from the truth! If you decide to adopt a kitten, train it to an indoor lifestyle from the beginning. Kittens will learn to prefer an indoor lifestyle, especially if started at a young age.

3 - Provide a safe outdoor environment for your cat and wild birds at the same time - Build a catio (cat patio) for your cat, or build a fence to keep your cats in designated bird-free zones of your yard. This will make you a better neighbor. Nobody tolerates dogs freely roaming and defecating in gardens and neighborhoods. Keeping cats confined will also enhance the life of your cat. Outdoor cats have a shorter life expectancy than indoor cats and can die painful deaths from rodenticide poisoning, automobiles, or predators long before their indoor compatriots.

4 - Have a rodent problem? Use snap traps. Better yet, use live traps so that non-target wildlife can be released unharmed. Sherman traps are excellent, effective traps that are a standby for wildlife professionals. They are more effective than cats for rodent control. Upfront, Sherman traps are more costly than snap traps but are durable and last for decades. They will outlive any outdoor cat. State laws prohibit trap and release for most wildlife, for excellent reasons - the same reasons cats should not be trapped and released. For recommended euthanasia of captured rodents, see resources below. These methods are humane alternatives to death by domesticated, predatory felines.

Keep your cat healthy and with a long, happy life indoors. Educate your friends, neighbors, and community. Every cat you keep indoors can save the lives of hundreds of birds.

To learn more about the suggestions offered in this article, check out the resources listed at the bottom of page 4.



CONSERVATION

ANDY STEPNIEWSKI

Congress takes a first step towards addressing National Parks' maintenance woes.

One of America's Treasures, Mt. Rainier (located in Yakima's backyard) is but one of hundreds of natural, cultural, and historic sites managed by the National Park Service. Adequate monies for infrastructure and upkeep of these sites has long been neglected. Moreover, this has become a partisan issue. One of my cousins from overseas, who has traveled widely to parks around the world, said to me a few years ago: "No one does parks better than America." To maintain America's position on the global stage as No. 1 in national parks, these sites desperately need an assured source of funding for maintenance. If the bill described below is passed, it should help provide a secure, dependable, and sorely needed source of funding for our cherished parks.

-Andy Stepniewski-

Washington, DC – The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resource passed **The Restore Our Parks Act (S.3172)**, an important piece of legislation that would provide dedicated funding to reduce the National Park Service's deferred maintenance backlog – including nearly \$12 billion in needed repairs across the National Park System.

The bill, introduced by U.S. Senators Rob Portman (R-OH), Mark R. Warner (D-VA), Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Angus King (I-ME), will use revenue the government currently receives from energy production on federal lands and waters – up to a total of \$6.5 billion over five years – to repair park roads, visitor facilities, crumbling trails and other structures.

The committee's action prompted the following statement from Theresa Pierno, President and CEO for National Parks Conservation Association:

"We commend Congress for taking another step toward fixing our national parks. For years, NPCA has urged our lawmakers to address our national parks' repair needs. Too many of our parks' water systems, visitor centers, roads and trails



Mt. Rainier from Chinook Pass (less than 90 minutes from Yakima)

Photo by Ellen Stepniewski

have been neglected—not because of lack of will but because of lack of money. Park rangers have had to make due with shoestring budgets while aging infrastructure takes its toll."

"With the Energy and Natural Resources Committee's passage of the Restore our Parks Act, Congress is one step closer to ensuring that our parks can continue to provide safe and enjoyable conditions for millions of visitors, while supporting local economies and protecting the resources that help tell our nation's stories. Congress must ensure final passage of this bill before the end of the year."

About National Parks Conservation Association: Since 1919, the nonpartisan National Parks Conservation Association has been the leading voice in safeguarding our national parks. NPCA and its 1.3 million members and supporters work together to protect and preserve our nation's most iconic and inspirational places for future generations. The National Parks Conservation Association has long advocated for this much-needed funding to address some of the most critical repair needs of America's national parks. For more information, visit www.npca.org.

National Park Service sites to visit in Washington State

Mount Rainier National Park
North Cascades National Park
Olympic National Park
Ebey's Landing, NHR, Coupeville, WA
Fort Vancouver, NHS, Vancouver, WA
Ice Age Floods, NGT, Eastern Washington
Klondike Gold Rush, NHP, Seattle, WA
Lake Roosevelt, NRA, Columbia River upstream from Grand Coulee Dam

Lewis and Clark, NHT, along the route the Corps of Discovery took in Washington in 1805 and 1806
Lewis and Clark, NHP, Long Beach, WA
Manhattan Project, NHP, Hanford, WA
Nez Perce, NHP, Eastern Washington
San Juan Island, NHP, Friday Harbor, WA
Whitman Mission, NHP, Walla Walla, WA
Wing Luke Museum, Seattle, WA

NGT: National Glacial Trail
NHP: National Historic Park

NHR: Nation Historic Reserve
NHS: National Historic Site

NHT: National Historic Trail
NRA: National Recreation Area



FIELD TRIPS SCOTT DOWNES

Nov 17 (Saturday) – Vantage. Leader - Scott Downes. Vantage and the Columbia River are the focus of this trip. We'll travel through the Yakima Canyon and Vantage Highway on route to Vantage and keep an eye out for raptors. Later fall can be impressive at Vantage for waterfowl with numbers in the hundreds to thousands and often unusual diving ducks/loons are seen at this time of year including scoters, possibly long-tailed duck and Pacific loon, plus sometimes a good collection of gulls. The parks along the river also usually host a nice variety of wintering passerines. Field trip will leave Yakima at 7:00 am. Expect a return to Yakima around 5:00 pm. Bring lunch, water and dress for varied weather conditions. We could get nice weather near 60 degrees or it could be near freezing at Vantage. Scope is helpful, but not required, to attend. We'll be carpooling; we'll stop at several places that need a Discover Pass so drivers should plan on having one. Contact leader Scott Downes for meeting location, downess@charter.net.

Dec 15 (Saturday) — Toppenish NWR CBC. Andy Stepniewski comes out of semi-retirement to reprise his role as compiler of the Toppenish NWR Christmas Bird Count.

Dec 29 (Saturday) — Yakima Valley CBC. Denny Granstrand is the compiler for the 49th Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count. See the November Calliope Crier for more information on both counts.

Youth Environmental Summit October 30, 8:30am to 2:00 pm

Every two years, the Yakima County Solid Waste sponsors an Environmental Summit at the convention center for youth in our area. Students from middle, junior and high schools attend. As well as listening to presentations by nationally recognized experts, the students share projects they plan or have accomplished in their own local schools. Students visit the booths set up by local groups such as Audubon. Here they learn about environmental issues and projects going on in our area.

This year's guest speakers are Dylan D'Haeze, and Roger Williams. Dylan, at 14 years of age, was the director of Kids Can Save the Planet, a three-part series of award-winning documentaries. Roger is an award-winning director, producer and cinematographer of the film, River Blue.

At previous environmental summits, I have been very impressed with the students who attended and their involvement. Not only did I learn from the presentations, I felt privileged to be able to add Audubon's



Young people visit YVAS's booth at last year's Youth Environmental Summit

voice to their program. You are invited to help with the Yakima Valley Audubon booth on October 30th. We need help setting up, and for any or all of the day. Please contact Ellen Stepniewski to help volunteer or if you have any questions email her at steppie@nwinfo.net (509-731-6805).

Resources for information related to the indoor cat program:

American Bird Conservancy Cats Indoors program – abcbirds.org/program/cats-indoors/
 Catios – catiospaces.com
 Cat fences – www.purrfectfence.com
 DIY cat fences – www.instructables.com/id/Catproof-Your-Yard
 Seniors for Seniors; Adopt a Senior Pet – www.paws.org/cats-and-dogs/adopt/seniors-for-seniors
 Sherman live trap for rodent control – www.shermantraps.com
 Rodent euthanasia – www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Documents/euthanasia.pdf

Vredenburg Bluebird Trail - They did it!! Wait, who did what??

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 each breeding season. Sponsorship of individual boxes has been a hallmark of the trail since its inception.

So that is part of the who did what referenced in this article's title. As radio broadcaster Paul Harvey (active on the airwaves from World War II until his death in 2009) would say on his show, "now for the rest of the story" ...the bluebirds themselves.

I first monitored one-half of the Vredenburg Trail in 1998 and was immediately hooked. While YVAS has records on the trail going back to its inception in 1982, I assumed the responsibility of compiling the yearly recap in 2004. At that time, I was given a trove of records and quickly discovered a chart inserted in the 1996 Crier compiled by Bill and Edith Ryan depicting the year by year fledge success of the trail. I noted that the yearly fledge total exceeded 500 (508) birds for the first time in 1987. A year total of 500 or more was not recorded again until 1997 (533) for a new record only to be broken in 1998 (550).

The year 2000 mustered 542 exceeding the magic 500 number for the fifth time. The trail was averaging nearly 440 fledges a year with some years below 400. As those who came before me had done, I fantasized about setting a new record. It was slow in coming but in 2008 (569) and 2009 (578) the bar was set higher. It seemed inevitable that 600 could be reached.

However the weather in 2010 slapped the bluebirds and me in the face and only 378 birds took flight from the nest boxes. In several subsequent years, favorable weather for the entire nesting season was elusive. Many a promising start would be nipped by cool and wet weather in the spring or excessively

hot and dry summers...both variables undoubtedly impact the insect population and without insects, nestlings suffer losses.

2014 (553) and 2016 (542) were bright spots that kept faint hopes of a 600+ year alive but I no longer associated the word "inevitable" with the prospect.

This year on an early May monitoring trip on the lower half of the trail, Joe and Karen Zook were pleased to find bluebirds active at 62 of the 66 boxes they checked. Twenty-eight boxes already contained eggs and one box actually had six young nestlings, somewhat remarkable for May 14 in recent years!

In the same time frame, the upper-half of the trail suffered the loss of three boxes over the winter and then an additional four were stolen after the initial monitor check. By Memorial Day weekend when Audubon Campers monitor the boxes, bluebird activity was unusually high and Box 125, dedicated to the memory of Virginia Vredenburg, had fledged four Mountain Bluebirds.

Have you ever prepared a batch of popcorn? The kernels heat slowly, and then a few begin popping followed by a short span when there is a crescendo of exploding kernels. That is what June on the trail was...eggs popping and nestlings everywhere! The stage was set for a record but what of the coming heat of July and August and its effect on second nest attempts?

Once again, summer was hot and dry. Birds balked. Eight new nests on the first section of the trail alone were abandoned without any eggs laid. Plus a total of 29 nestlings perished overall in

this period on the trail.

Bluebirds and bluebirders are resilient breeds. But would both be forced once again to take up Major League Baseball's Chicago Cubs' mantra of "Wait 'til next year!" After all, every new season starts fresh and full of hope.

Did the trail set a new record? Was 600 reached?

Sorry folks, but to learn the rest of the story you must search at the bottom of the chart on page eight.



Male Western Bluebird waits patiently while its mate sits on eggs in the nest box.

Photo by Karen Zook



This male Western Bluebird is jumping for joy at the prospects of a great year on the Vredenburg Bluebird Trail.

Photo by Karen Zook

2018 VREDENBURGH BLUEBIRD TRAIL

Box	Sponsor	Sp	Egg	FI	PT
1	Harold Vredenburg	W	10	10	2020
2	Jeanne Crawford Memorial	W	9	5	2019
3	Tanager Nevue-Cushing	W	11	8	2019
4	Steven & Marcia Shotwell	W	5	2	2018
5	Sparrow Nevue-Cushing	W	7	6	2019
6	Don Peterson Memorial	W	10	5	2018
7	Karen Ireland	W	6	0	2018
8	Betty & Carolyn Lagergren	W	6	4	2018
9	Sandie Deighton	W	5	4	2022
10	Joe & Alberta McGuire	W	9	0	2018
11	Steven & Marcia Shotwell	W	5	5	2018
12	Schurman Family	W	0	0	2019
13	Karen & Joseph Zook	W	6	0	2020
13A	Phil Fischer	W	12	12	2018
14	Friedenson Family	W	6	5	2019
15	Joy McKinney	W	11	9	2019
16	Rachel Bold	W	6	4	2018
17	Michael West	W	6	4	2022
18	Betty & Carolyn Lagergren	W	4	1	2018
19	Janna & Steven Hayes	W	5	0	2018
20	Toppenish Garden Club	W	9	0	2020
21	Pete & Pam Neumann	W	5	4	2018
22	Brian T. & Alezea M.	W	5	5	2020
22A	Robert English	W	6	6	2018
23	Karen Zook	WBNU	5	5	2020
24	Virginia Gill	W	0	0	2018
25	Don Peterson Memorial	W	11	6	2018
26	Arlene Wood Memorial	W	10	8	PMBD
27	Kay Marsh Memorial	W	6	5	2030
28	Sherry Morris	W	11	5	2018
29	Donna Zimmerschied	W	5	4	2018
30	Betty & Greg Neumann	W	5	5	2018
31	Donna Zimmerschied	W	9	5	2018
32	Larry & Doris Robinson	W	12	4	PMBD
33	Stan & Lori Isley	W	10	3	2020
34	Sarah Burke	W	8	4	2019
35	Joe & Alberta McGuire	W	3	3	2018
36	Larry Robinson	W	7	5	2021

Box	Sponsor	Sp	Egg	FI	PT
37	Alice Presson	W	6	5	2018
38	Charlotte Pfeiffer Memorial	W	6	0	2018
39	Maia Mittlestaedt	W	6	5	2019
39A	Joan Gilman	W	11	7	2019
40	Gertrude Repp Memorial	W	12	0	2035
41	Joan Gilman	W	2	0	2019
42	Women's Cent Garden Club	W	5	5	2018
43	Teresa Lorenz	W	5	5	2018
44	Dorothy Munroe	W	11	6	2018
45	Jerry & M. A. Ruthruff	W	10	8	2018
46	Pocholo Martinez Memorial	W	9	8	2027
47	Irene Gilman Memorial	W	9	7	2019
48	Tomas Sawyer Memorial	W	9	0	2029
49	Ellen Stevenson Family	W	6	5	2019
50	Tom Mansfield	W	10	6	2033
51	Ron Sell	W	5	5	2018
52	Linda Knutson	W	8	5	2018
53	Megan & Steven Pooler	W	10	10	2018
54	Jerry & Margaret Turner	W	11	8	2020
55	Martha Taylor	W	7	5	2018
56	Denny Granstrand	W	2	0	2018
57	Schurman Family	W	5	0	2019
58	Karen & Joseph Zook	W	5	5	2020
59	Denny Granstrand	W	12	5	2018
60	Megan & Steven Pooler	W	9	7	2018
61	John Meyer Memorial	W	8	5	2022
62	Schurman Family	W	9	5	2019
63	Tom Wilson	W	12	3	2018
64	Mike & Carolyn Wood	W	6	5	2018
65	Lucky Hall	W	11	10	2019
66	Carol Phillips	W	6	0	2021
66	2nd species in box	TRES	4	3	
67	Schurman Family	W	10	9	2019
68	Ruth Knoke Memorial	W	11	10	2018
69	Janet White	W	13	4	2021
70	Irene Gilman Memorial	W	7	0	2019
71	Helen Stuckey	W	11	0	2019
72	Nancy Born	W	8	6	2018

2018 VREDENBURGH BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT CONT.

Box	Sponsor	Sp	Egg	Fl	PT
73	Chris Sorenson	wren	x	x	2018
74	Hannah Born	W	6	5	2018
75	Ryleigh Hayes	W	10	3	2018
76	Margaret Morris	W	4	3	2018
77	Shannon O'Malley	W	10	8	2021
78	Conner O'Malley	TRES	3	0	2021
79	Scott Downes	W	11	10	2019
80	Adam Newhouse	W	10	10	2025
81	Hunter Headley	W	11	7	2018
82	Ariana Faith	W	10	10	2018
83	Ken Tolonen	W	12	11	2018
84	Cailin O'Malley	W	12	7	2021
85	Bettie Soden	W	6	6	2018
85	2nd species in box	M	5	5	
86	June Rayner Memorial	W	5	4	2018
86	2nd species in box	M	5	5	
87	Oliver Deighton	W	10	5	2022
88	Marie Brangwin	W	11	10	2018
89	Peter Sorenson	M	8	5	2018
90	Bill & Edith Ryan	W	6	5	2018
90A	Sandra Bowman	W	11	5	2018
91	Patrick Burke	W	11	11	2019
92	Les Burke	W	11	11	2019
93	P. Kevin Gilman Memorial	M	8	6	2019
94	John & Sally English	W	0	0	2018
95	Joyce Meyer	W	11	9	2022
96	Charlotte Deighton	W	6	0	2022
96A	Ewell & Rosemary Jones	W	10	8	2018
97	Schurman Family	W	10	3	2019
98	McCrone Family	W	9	9	2019
99	Ken & Laurie Knittle	W	7	6	2033
100	Susie Lattomus	M	11	0	2018
101	Amy Sinden	W	0	0	2021
102	Jean Chott	W	6	3	2026
103	Bob & April Adamson	W	6	5	2020
104	Richard Repp	W	4	2	2018
105	Jim Ehret	M	12	12	2018
106	Joan Miler	W	10	9	2025
107	Joan Miler	M	10	9	2025
108	Raleigh Watts	W	6	6	2021

Box	Sponsor	Sp	Egg	Fl	PT
109	Andy & Ellen Stepniewski	M	6	0	2018
110	Martha Fleming	W	3	0	2018
111	Martha Fleming	TRES	1	0	2018
112	Dotty Armstrong	W	5	0	2018
113	Karen Ireland	W	0	0	2018
114	P. Kevin Gilman Memorial	M	6	4	2019
114	2nd species in box	W	4	3	
114A	Justine Repp-Faith	M	5	4	2018
115	Vera Backstrom	W	10	8	2018
116	Dorothy Munroe	W	10	6	2018
117	John & Ann Brangwin	M	6	4	2018
118	Don Knoke Memorial	n/u	0	0	2018
119	Jack Whitnall	W	11	0	PMBD
120	Apple Blossom Garden Club	n/u	0	0	2018
121	Andy & Ellen Stepniewski	W	8	7	2018
122	Toppenish Garden Club	W	0	0	2020
123	Alice Nevue	M	4	4	2019
123A	Jeff Kozma	M	0	0	2018
124	Mt. Clemen Garden Club	M	2	0	2018
125	Virginia Vredenburgh	M	10	9	2020
	TOTAL FLEDGED			620	
	Western Bluebird			545	
	Mountain Bluebird			75	
	Other Species			8	

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

Key

Sp = species Egg = eggs Fl = Fledged PT= paid thru

M = Mountain Bluebird W = Western Bluebird

TRES = Tree Swallow wren = House Wren

MOCH = Mountain Chickadee chip = chipmunk

WBNU = White-breasted Nuthatch n/u = not used

PMBD = Proclaimed Memorial by
Board of Directors

Vredenburg Fledged Bluebirds 1982-2018

	WEBL	MOBL	BB sp	BB total
1982	72	54		126
1983	125	86		211
1984	144	133		277
1985	115	82	17	214
1986	259	150		409
1987	299	209		508
1988	311	151		462
1989	319	148		467
1990	304	118		422
1991	204	87		291
1992	211	147		358
1993	267	125		392
1994	310	167		477
1995	258	128		386
1996	319	152		471
1997	413	120		533
1998	347	141	62	550
1999	276	118	7	401
2000	383	115	44	542
2001	347	105	6	458
2002	315	81	59	455
2003	283	93	19	395
2004	332	90	17	439
2005	320	16		336
2006	235	66		301
2007	334	91		425
2008	518	51		569
2009	504	74		578
2010	344	34		378
2011	369	52		421
2012	311	57		368
2013	406	78		484
2014	514	39		553
2015	366	54		420
2016	460	82		542
2017	428	63		491
2018	545	75		620
TOTAL	11867	3632	231	15730

WEBL = Western Bluebird
MOBL = Mountain Bluebird
BB sp = Bluebird, species unknown

Thank you, Vredenburg Monitors!

Once again, YVAS has been blessed with committed volunteer monitors who gathered data during the nesting season: Joe and Karen Zook, the Brad's Blues Team (Nancy Jo & Hannah Born, Caroline & Felix Calvillo, Nancy Rush and moral support from Adam, Kristina, Ian & Hunter Newhouse), Vera Backstrom, Dotty Armstrong, and Melanie Schafer. Also, birding enthusiasts attending the Washington Audubon Memorial Day Wenas Campout assisted with the monitoring.



What do monitors see? Six nestlings in Box 13A. Note the spotting on the back and protruding tail feathers.

Photo courtesy of Marty Walz

Campers participating this year: Courtenay, Doug & Brooke Schurman (Seattle), the Lee Rentz Team (Shelton), Marty Walz & Leah Kroon (Seattle), Matty White (Burien), Mary McCallum (Olympia) Lee Barnes (Seattle), and Ann & Rick Cotton (Vancouver).

These volunteers ensured that each of the trail's 132 nest boxes was inspected weekly throughout the breeding season and pertinent information on the nests' contents was dutifully recorded. Their efforts enabled us to compile the detailed information presented in the Vredenburg Bluebird Trail Report elsewhere in this Crier. Once again, THANK YOU MONITORS!!

Vredenburg Bluebird Trail Nest Box Sponsors

Sponsors – please check the Paid Thru (PT) column in the trail recap on pages 6 & 7. If 2018 is listed in this column for your box, your sponsorship expires on December 31, 2018. 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 the 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 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 me at: bbirder247@gmail.com

In the upcoming nesting season, I hope to send *email* progress reports on the activity along the Vredenburg Trail to sponsors who we have *email* addresses for. 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.

— Richard Repp —

Bird Banding Class Nets Rave Reviews

I conducted a bird banding demonstration on October 6th at the Yakima Area Arboretum. In addition to twelve attendees, we had 4 volunteers assist with set up, take down, and banding; Kevin Lucas, Ellen Stepniewski, Karen Ramey, and Jennie Hodge. We set up four mist nets, which we opened about 7:15 AM. The banding started at 7:30 AM and ran until 11:00 AM. After a night of rain, the weather turned out great with no wind and partly to mostly sunny skies.

Our first catch of the day was an adult female Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon race). That was followed by three White-crowned Sparrows, a Song Sparrow, and 2 Spotted Towhees (one a gorgeous adult male). The next check of the nets yielded three White-crowned Sparrows, two Golden-crowned Sparrows, and another Song Sparrow. That was followed by an adult male Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon race), three Spotted Towhees, and then a Fox Sparrow. In total, we captured 18 birds and all were measured (bill length, tarsus length, weight, and wing length) and banded with a USGS aluminum numbered band. Participants asked lots of questions and, best of all, everyone got to release a bird!

It was a great day and something I look forward to doing again next fall. On your next visit to the arboretum Sparrow Patch, you might see some of these banded



Veronica and Jennie watch as Jeff measures a Song Sparrow



Jeff gives Isaac an up-close look at a Spotted Towhee.
Photos by Ellen Stepniewski.

birds . . . look for the cute silver ankle bracelet. Thanks again to all the volunteers who helped out and to the Yakima Area Arboretum for providing tables, chairs, and tape to block off the paths where the nets were placed.

— Jeff Kozma —

Board note: All participants were afforded extreme close up views of the captured birds...it is not every day that one is able to obtain intimate looks of a bird in hand! We are extremely appreciative of Jeff for sharing his expertise with young and old (well, older, to be gentler) alike. If you missed this event, look for a repeat class next year. And as a reminder, Jeff is presenting the program at our October 25 chapter meeting. Don't miss it!!

Annual Christmas Silent Auction — First Call

Thursday December 6th is the date we all have been waiting for. Yes, it's the return of the Audubon Christmas Auction™ (tm)! Oh, we will have an amazing potluck and a surprise speaker. However the highlight will once again be the Audubon Christmas Auction (tm). We need to start collecting auction items and your donated treasures are welcomed and needed. Bird related items seem the most popular.

In past years we have had an increase in members donating hosted dinners and even fishing trips. These are much appreciated by the chapter and by the members who purchase them. It's also a great chance to show off your garden/bird sanctu-

ary. Large items are sold in the silent auction. We will also have a "bargain table" for smaller items like books.

The Audubon Christmas Auction™ is the second largest fundraiser for the chapter. We have been able to earmark all the proceeds for education and conservation.

So please contact Bill Drenguis™ at 965-5808 or bdrenguis@gmail.com. I can pick up items before the auction. It helps to get the items early so they can be labeled. See you at the Audubon Christmas Auction™. (Does anyone know how to apply for a trademark?)

Oct. 7 field trip to Cascades had great sightings of many birds and one incredibly cute mammal

Seven Auduboners headed up into the Cascades to search for the various migrant waterbirds that occur in this area in fall such as scoters, loons, grebes, and gulls. Some are quite rare in Yakima County. October is probably the best month to look for these boreal breeders, here on their migration south and west to coastal waters.

We started at the Tieton Airport Marsh which was pretty quiet, though Mallards were about, along with a few Green-winged Teal. We had our best luck a short distance away, in a wet meadow rimmed with willows. There were lots of forest birds here, including Red-breasted Nuthatches, both kinglets, sparrows (Fox, Golden-crowned, Song and Dark-eyed Juncos). Our best find here was a Northern Pygmy-Owl which gave us great scope views. See Denny Granstrand's photo and audio (with a nuthatch in the background) at: <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S49034083>.

Moving around the peninsula at the east end of Rimrock Lake, we made our first stop at a viewpoint overlooking the lake. We quite easily found Surf Scoters and Common Mergansers, along with numbers of Western Grebes, a few Horned Grebes, and California Gulls. At other stops along the lake, we added Red-necked Grebe, a few Ring-billed Gulls, and Common Loons.

We spent about four hours at Clear Lake, first taking in the Kokanee Salmon spawning-spectacle below the dam. Birds attracted to this event, which we saw, included Osprey, Bald Eagle, Common Merganser, and American Dipper. We also had a Wood Duck, an uncommon species in the Cascades. Everybody had spectacular views of a very close Pileated Woodpecker.

We next walked the Clear Lake Day Use Site Trail, a nice paved path that offers several vantages of the lake. After walking the trail, we enjoyed lunch at one of the picnic tables. On the lake, we tallied 10 species of waterfowl, including a continuing Greater White-fronted Goose and several more Surf Scoters.

After lunch, everybody was excited about heading higher into the mountains so we next stopped off at Dog Lake, which was very quiet. Leech Lake was our last stop, again with few birds, though we did see two more Surf Scoters. The big hit here were a number of Pikas, which posed nicely. This mammal is in the same order as rabbits, though you'd hardly



American Dipper in Clear Creek
Photo by Denny Granstrand

guess this is so.

We finished the day with 46 species, a nice total for October in the Cascades.

— Andy Stepniewski —



Pileated Woodpecker beside Clear Creek, just downstream from the dam
Photo by Kerry Turley



Pika at the White Pass summit on the west side of Leech Lake
Photo by Denny Granstrand

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If you have any membership questions, contact Joy McKinney at joycatbird@gmail.com.

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Coming Attractions:

Oct 25 Chapter Meeting

Nov 17 Vantage Field Trip

Dec 6 YVAS Christmas Banquet and Silent Auction

Dec 15 Toppenish NWR CBC

Dec 29 Yakima Valley CBC