



# 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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A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

January 2019



**JANUARY PROGRAM**

**PHIL FISCHER**

## Demystifying Pacific Lamprey: History, Ecology, Biology, Threats, and Restoration with Dave’y Lumley

Dave’y Lumley has been working as a Fisheries Technician III for the Yakama Nation Fisheries since 2013.

She recently finished a degree in Biology with a specialization in Ecology at Central Washington University and is now a fish biologist with the Yakama Nation Fisheries Resource Management Program (FRMP), Pacific Lamprey Project.

Pacific Lamprey, commonly call “eels” by tribal members and others, is an incredibly important species for the Columbia River tribes in terms of food, medicine and culture. They also serve many roles in the stream ecology, benefiting many, many native species.



Dave’y Lumley and friend.



Dave’y Lumley sharing information and her interest in Pacific Lampreys or “eels” with student groups.

*Mark your calendar for Thursday, January 25, at 7:00 to see this presentation at the Yakima Area Arboretum*

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



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### BILL DRENGUIS

Reflections on New Year's: Well I had fun last year, hope you did too. Some of my highlights were---

The speakers for the monthly meetings were superb. I loved the variety of talks. Highlights included the talk on beavers, those giant teeth are yellow from a high iron content! Also really enjoyed the "Are birds really dinosaurs?" talk. Oh yeah, I almost forgot Eric's lecture on his South American studies.

The Field Trips again offered a great way for all level of birders to get out and explore the many habitats of central Washington. Andy and Ellen's series of walks really emphasized the wonderful biodiversity that we are so lucky to have.

Our education arm was also very active. Audubon was a real presence at the Arboretum's Arbor Fest, and at the Environmental Summit attended by the local school districts. And hats off to Kerry for opening up the Toppenish Wildlife Refuge on the weekends.

Lastly, I must recognize this very newsletter. I do not think that any other of our environmental cohorts is able to produce a monthly update, full of local and national stories like we do. (Be sure and check out the online version to see the pictures in color!)

2019 is already shaping up to be another "Big Year" for Yakima Audubon. Come join us!!



## MEMBERSHIP

### JOY MCKINNEY

### Welcome New Members!

**Yakima:** Reese and Theo Lolley, Sara Cate  
**Moxee:** Alan and Susan Adolf

### Thanks for renewing your membership:

**Selah:** Carolyn Comeau and Jim Leier  
**Yakima:** Clark and Debra Satre, Tom Wilson, Phyllis Thayer, Stan and Lori Isley, Renee Navarette, Joyce Lucas



## THIS MONTH'S YVAS CALENDAR

**Jan 24 Audubon Chapter Meeting** at the Yakima Area Arboretum at 7:00 pm. **Great program.**

**Feb 12 Board Meeting** at Starbucks on Summitview and 58th Ave

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society meets on the fourth Thursday of January, February, March, April, May, August, September, and October at 7pm at the Yakima Area Arboretum, located at 1401 Arboretum Drive, Yakima, WA. Guests are welcome at these meetings. The Board of Directors meets each month except December at 7pm at locations announced in the Calliope Crier. Members may attend Board meetings; however, please notify the host because of possible space restrictions.

## The Great Backyard Bird Count



Art by Charley Harper

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time. Now, more than 160,000 people of all ages and walks of life worldwide join the four-day count each February to create an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds.

You are invited to participate! This year's count will occur on all four days of Feb 15 through 18. The procedure is simple. At any location you choose (your backyard or neighborhood, requires no travel), you simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see during a period of at least 15 minutes. On any or all days of the count, you can count from as many locations, anywhere in the world, for as little as 15 minutes or as long as you wish. Don't let your feathered friends at your very own favorite spot go uncounted!

In 2013, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) merged with eBird. If you use eBird, all eBird lists you submit during the count period are automatically entered into the GBBC database...just make a point to do some birding during the four day count and submit your observations. If you are not using eBird, you must create a free online account to enter your checklists. The procedure is simple; just visit the GBBC website at: <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>

In 2018, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 100 countries counted more than 6,400 species of birds on more than 180,000 checklists! Birding enthusiasts in Yakima County reported 86 species on 64 individual checklists. Surely during the four day count, valley residents could

**The Great Backyard Bird Count** continued on page 6



## FIELD TRIPS

### SCOTT DOWNES

**January 26** Poppoff Trail walk half-day trip. Andy and Ellen Stepniewski. The Poppoff Trail consistently boasts the highest diversity of birds of any single site in Yakima. Join Andy and Ellen Stepniewski for a leisurely morning walk at the South end of the Yakima Greenway. We'll look for wrens, chickadees, warblers, thrushes, and sparrows in the riverside riparian growth, raptors overhead, and waterfowl in the ponds. Meet Andy and Ellen 8 am at the east end of Valley Mall Blvd. in the Greenway parking lot. Questions and to sign up, email Andy at [steppie@nwinfo.net](mailto:steppie@nwinfo.net), or call 949-7404.

**February 9** It's time to find some ducks! YVAS is having a field trip on Saturday 2/9 to look for water fowl. This is a fun trip because:

- ◆ Ducks are big and easy to see. (Not always easy to ID);
- ◆ Hopefully we can see lots of them before they may migrate on;
- ◆ They are often in breeding plumage;
- ◆ Hunting season is over, so they won't be so flighty;
- ◆ It looks like the refuge will not be frozen over like last year!

We will probably go to the McNary area (just past Pasco, at the confluence of the Snake and Columbia rivers). but I will scout out the possible areas to find the (hopefully) most interesting spots. Bring your bins, scope if you have one, and lunch. We leave at 7:30, contact me for the meeting spot and other details at [bdrenguis@gmail.com](mailto:bdrenguis@gmail.com) or 965-5808.

## The Great Backyard Bird Count



(Continued from  
page 2)

top 100 checklists and likely exceed 100 species. Make it your personal challenge to help exceed both of those targets!

Every bird, every yard or location, every day possible will have an impact. Other than putting some birding fun in your personal life, is there any value in participating? Simply put, YES!!

Scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Bird populations are dynamic; they are constantly in flux. No single scientist or team of scientists could hope to document and understand the complex distribution and movements of so many species in such a short time.

Scientists use information from the Great Backyard Bird Count, along with observations from other citizen-science projects, such as the [Christmas Bird Count](#), [Project Feeder-Watch](#), and [eBird](#), to get the "big picture" about what is happening to bird populations. The longer these data are collected, the more meaningful they become in helping scientists investigate far-reaching questions, like these:

- ◆ How will the weather and climate change influence bird populations?

- ◆ Some birds, such as winter finches, appear in large numbers during some years but not others. Where are these species from year to year, and what can we learn from these patterns?
- ◆ How will the timing of birds' migrations compare with past years?
- ◆ How are bird diseases, such as West Nile virus, affecting birds in different regions?
- ◆ What are the differences in bird diversity in cities versus suburban, rural, and natural areas?

During (and after) the count, visit the GBBC website where you can explore what others are seeing in your area or around the world. Share your bird photos by entering the photo contest, or enjoy images pouring in from across the globe. You can even add photos and sounds to your checklist.

Remember, your help is needed this and every year to make the GBBC successful.

— Richard Repp —

The Great Backyard Bird Count is now sponsored by:



## Warm, sunny day highlights Toppenish NWR Christmas Bird Count

On Saturday December 15th, 22 courageous birders ventured into the field for the Toppenish Christmas bird count. The weather was very pleasant; the sun shone down on us for much of the day, and the temperature got up into the mid 40s. This was certainly the warmest bird count I can remember being a part of, and I think this is reflected by the species we found and their numbers.

The most obvious correlation might be the number of Horned Larks we observed this year, our second lowest count ever with only 14 seen. Most years, larger numbers of larks are pushed into the valley by snowfall, of which we had none. Another species we had a low count of for the second consecutive year was Western Meadowlark, with only 6 seen this year. The cause for this low count is not so obvious to me.

We also had several high counts this year: Cackling Goose (107), Greater White-fronted Goose (26), Common Goldeneye (39), Hooded Merganser (9), California Scrub-Jay (3), and Yellow-rumped Warbler (181). Additionally, we had our second highest count of Red-winged Blackbirds, with 4,111. The high counts of waterfowl are likely due to the amount of open water afforded by the warm weather, as we had above average counts of most waterfowl species this

year, with an interesting exception being swans. The Yellow-rumped Warbler high count may also be attributable to the warm weather, as these insect and fruit eating warblers might have been allowed to stay further north this year. As for the Scrub-Jays, this is certainly a continuation of their expansion into the valley, as they were noted on two separate routes, but for only the third time on the count.

We had a plethora of notable species this year. The continuing Black Phoebe along Lateral C Rd (15 months after this insect-eating bird was found!), 4 California Scrub-Jays and 8 Lesser Goldfinches along Marion Drain Rd were count firsts. Greater White-fronted Goose, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Greater Yellowlegs, Say's Phoebe, American Tree Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow were all noteworthy finds as well.

We had a few misses this year, but still managed to end up with an above-average total of 89 species, 90 when including count week species. It's always great fun to look at birds with other enthusiastic bird-lovers, and this count was no exception. Thank you to all who participated, and thank you especially to Ron and Debie Brown for hosting the post-count dinner!

— Eric Heisey —

## Warm weather and wind hamper Yakima Valley CBC

It was an odd Saturday morning on December 29 that greeted the birders on the Yakima Valley Christmas Bird Count. Weather conditions made it seem like an early spring day: high temp. of 57°, low 29°, no snow on the ground, and only the shallowest little pools of water frozen but soon melted as the day warmed. If it hadn't been for the wind that picked up as the day went on, it would have been very comfortable and totally contrary to what our CBCers usually experience.

The 57° high temperature is possibly the highest in the history of the Yakima Valley CBC. I checked my spreadsheets back to 2000 and found there was only one year when the high temperature was over 50°: in 2017 the high was 52°. Only two other years was the high in the 40s. Are we now seeing the affects of global warming in our Christmas Bird Count data?

At the end of the day, we counted 85 species, with two subspecies, plus three "count week" species. We also added two new species to the all-time count list. The Blue Jay that has been in the area just north of Randall Park since the end of October was found by Jeff Kozma's group and a Say's Phoebe that was seen in Terrace Heights by Joe and Karen Zook's team were new additions. Say's Phoebe, though, had been seen two times as a count week bird. A Canada Jay was seen at the Department of Wildlife headquarters on S. 24th Ave. two days before the count and was also a new count week species. The new additions bring the Yakima Valley CBC all-time total to 157 plus three count week species.

Probably the unusual sighting of the day was a Rock Wren that was found in Terrace Heights in a gravel parking

lot by the Zooks and Mike Roper. Other highlighted sightings were:

- ♦ Three Great Egrets seen by John Hebert, Stan and Lori Isley, Jennie Hodge and Karen Raney;
- ♦ Two Long-eared Owls seen by Kerry Turley and Bill Drenguis on the Yakima Training Center;
- ♦ One White-throated Sparrow found by Ellen Stepniewski and Renee Navarrete at Windy Point Ranch;
- ♦ Ten Purple Finch and one Lesser Goldfinch found by Stan and Lori Isley.

We set new highs for numbers of individuals seen for Cackling Goose (89), Northern Shoveler (55) and California Scrub-Jay (78). The one American Coot seen by Scott Downes was well below the average of about 30 we usually find. One would have expected that with a mild winter coots would be abundant.

One species we usually see was missing this year: American Dipper. Perhaps the absence of ice has allowed them to stay along the mountain rivers instead of wintering in the valley.

Thank you to the 25 participants and four feeder-watchers and to Andy and Ellen Stepniewski for hosting the compilation dinner. Ellen's soups were the highlight of the dinner!

The warmest temperature I can remember on one of our CBCs was on the Toppenish count 10-15 years ago when the high was just over 60°. This was the day after the high on the Yakima count was in the mid-thirties but it was a very foggy, miserable day for birding.

— Denny Granstrand —

## The Data — The Christmas Bird Counts Species by Species

	<u>Yakima</u>	<u>Topp</u>		<u>Yakima</u>	<u>Topp</u>
CACKLING GOOSE	89 H	107 H	STELLER'S JAY	1	
CANADA GOOSE	1559	2464	CALIFORNIA SCRUB-JAY	78 H	<b>3 H</b>
GR. WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE		26 H	BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE	359	186
TUNDRA SWAN		8	AMERICAN CROW	309	31
<b>TRUMPETER SWAN</b>	<b>CW</b>		COMMON RAVEN	44	83
swan sp.		28	HORNED LARK	50	14 L
WOOD DUCK	196	5	BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	139	29
GADWALL	18	13	RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	6	
AMERICAN WIGEON	195	334	BROWN CREEPER	3	
MALLARD	924	1042	<b>ROCK WREN</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
NORTHERN SHOVELER	55 H	40	CANYON WREN		6
NORTHERN PINTAIL	1	323	BEWICK'S WREN	93	39
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	130	216	PACIFIC WREN	4	2
CANVASBACK		1	MARSH WREN	5	13
RING-NECKED DUCK	98	92	GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	32	10
LESSER SCAUP	3	2	RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	27	28
COMMON GOLDENEYE	208	39 H	HERMIT THRUSH	7	1
BARROW'S GOLDENEYE	7		AMERICAN ROBIN	1895	750
BUFFLEHEAD	44	3	VARIED THRUSH	33	7
HOODED MERGANSER	17	9 H	EUROPEAN STARLING	2920	1967
COMMON MERGANSER	78	CW	CEDAR WAXWING	250	17
RUDDY DUCK		1	YEL.-RU. (MYRTLE) WARBLER	1	26
duck sp.	81	6000	YEL.-RU. (AUDUBON'S) WARBLER	123	181 H
CALIFORNIA QUAIL	457	197	SPOTTED TOWHEE	38	14
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	4	18	FOX SPARROW (SOOTY)	11	
PIED-BILLED GREBE	14	23	AM. TREE SPARROW		2
GREAT BLUE HERON	21	19	SONG SPARROW	131	100
<b>GREAT EGRET</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>SWAMP SPARROW</b>		<b>1</b>
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON		4	LINCOLN'S SPARROW	3	9
BALD EAGLE	19	6	<b>WHITE-THROATED SPARROW</b>	<b>1</b>	
NORTHERN HARRIER	8	42	<b>HARRIS'S SPARROW</b>	<b>CW</b>	
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	15	6	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW	269	774
COOPER'S HAWK	17	12	GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW	78	34
RED-TAILED HAWK	110	115	DARK-EYED (SLATE-COLORED) JUNCO		2
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK	2	3	<b>DARK-EYED (CASSIAR'S) JUNCO</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
AMERICAN KESTREL	57	94	DARK-EYED (OREGON) JUNCO	977	616
MERLIN	6	3	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	292	4111 H
<b>PEREGRINE FALCON</b>		<b>1</b>	WESTERN MEADOWLARK		6 L
PRAIRIE FALCON	2	1	BREWER'S BLACKBIRD	105	1262
VIRGINIA RAIL	4	2	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD		33
AMERICAN COOT	1 L	2	blackbird, sp.	400	300
KILDEER	25	31	<b>PURPLE FINCH</b>	<b>10</b>	1
WILSON'S SNIPE	23	13	HOUSE FINCH	511	630
GREATER YELLOWLEGS		1	PINE SISKIN	2	
ROCK PIGEON	428	587	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	148	165
EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE	423	240	<b>LESSER GOLDFINCH</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8 N</b>
MOURNING DOVE	116	95	HOUSE SPARROW	677	402
BARN OWL	1	6			
WESTERN SCREECH-OWL	1		<b>TOTAL INDIVIDUALS</b>	<b>15800</b>	<b>23952</b>
GREAT HORNED OWL	7	4	<b>TOTAL SPECIES</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>LONG-EARED OWL</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>+2 FORMS</b>	<b>+4 FORMS</b>
SHORT-EARED OWL		4	<b>COUNT WEEK SPECIES</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD	12		<b>COMBINED SPECIES FOR BOTH COUNTS</b>		<b>100</b>
BELTED KINGFISHER	16	8			
DOWNY WOODPECKER	78	11	<b>N</b> — New species or subspecies for the count		
<b>HAIRY WOODPECKER</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>H</b> — All-time high for individuals of that species		
NO. (RED-SHAFTED) FLICKER	187	83	<b>L</b> — Very low number of individuals of that species as compared to other years		
NORTHERN SHRIKE	1	4	<b>CW</b> — Seen count week (three days before the count or three days after) but not count day		
<b>BLACK PHOEBE</b>		<b>1 N</b>	<b>Bold Face</b> — Unusual species for our counts		
<b>SAY'S PHOEBE</b>	<b>1 N</b>	<b>1</b>			
<b>CANADA JAY</b>	<b>CW N</b>				
<b>BLUE JAY</b>	<b>1 N</b>				

# The Yakima Area Arboretum Presents a Class: Attracting Birds to Your Yard with Jeff Kozma

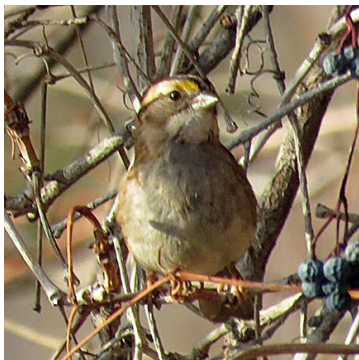
When: March 17, 2019 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM  
Where: The Yakima Area Arboretum  
To Register: Call 248-7337  
How Much: General Public \$25  
YAA and YVAS Members \$20

Whether you have a small, urban back yard or a couple of acres, you can attract birds to your yard! Join wildlife biologist Jeff Kozma for an informative class on the best ways to attract birds to your yard. Jeff will highlight native trees and shrubs attractive to birds, discuss the best foods to offer birds in feeders, the importance and ease of attracting birds with water, and how to identify some of the more common birds you can expect to visit your yard for your efforts. It can be as easy and simple as planting a single tree or hanging up a bird feeder, or as involved as completely landscaping your yard with trees, shrubs, feeders and a water feature. The best thing is, no matter how much time and effort you put in, the results are the same . . . attracting these winged wonders to your yard where they are easily viewed and marveled at!



**Male Varied Thrush in the crabapple tree in Jeff Kozma's yard.**  
Photo by Jeff Kozma

## Some of the birds seen on our Christmas Bird Counts



**White-throated Sparrow**  
Photo by Ellen Stepniewski



**Rock Wren**  
Photo by Mike Roper  
(This is the now-famous "parking lot" Rock Wren)



**Hermit Thrush**  
Photo by Ellen Stepniewski



**Black-capped Chickadee**  
Photo by Eric Heisey



**(Right) Merlin**  
Photo by Eric Heisey

### Yakima Valley Audubon Society Membership

Join/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 Society Membership.....\$ 25.00 per household  
 YVAS Senior (62+) \_\_\_\_ OR Student Membership \_\_\_\_ (please check one).....\$ 15.00 per household  
 Yakima Valley Audubon Society Life Membership .....\$ 500.00 per household

New Member \_\_      Renewing Member \_\_ (please check one)

In addition to my membership payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_, my check includes an additional donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_ 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.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form and your check payable 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.**

### **2019 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD**

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Conservation	Andy Stepniewski ( <a href="mailto:steppie@nwinfo.net">steppie@nwinfo.net</a> )	949-7404	YVAS Facebook	( <a href="http://www.facebook.com/yakimaaudubon/?fref=ts">http://www.facebook.com/yakimaaudubon/?fref=ts</a> )	

The continuing battle of wits between ducks and hunters takes a swing in the duck's favor:



## Coming Attractions:

Jan 24 Chapter Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

Jan 26 Popoff Trail Half-day Birding Walk

Feb 9 Winter Waterfowl field trip

Feb 15-18 Great Backyard Bird Count