



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 48, Number 04 A Chapter of the National Audubon Society April 2019



APRIL PROGRAM
PHIL FISCHER

Wolves In Washington State with Ben Maletzke

After years of bounties and persecution, wolves were extirpated from Washington State by the 1930's. Wolves have returned on their own by dispersing in from neighboring states and provinces. The lookout pack, which was the first known pack in 80 years, settled in northcentral Washington. Since that time, wolves have steadily recolonized parts of northeast, the Blue mountains in the southeast, and are working their way south down the Cascades in the central western portions of Washington. For those interested, biologist, Ben Maletzke, will give a presentation on ecology and current status of wolves in Washington.

Ben Maletzke graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin and shortly thereafter moved to Washington State. From 2002 - 2010, he completed his MS and PhD at Washington State University, researching habitat selection of lynx and the effects of hunting on cougar spatial organization in Washington. Since the completion of his graduate work, Ben has worked as a Wildlife Biologist with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife conducting research and management on black bear, cougar, lynx and wolves. He currently serves as the Statewide Wolf Specialist for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.



File photo of a male wolf from the Smackout pack in Northeast Washington State.
WASHINGTON DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE



Wolf track from the Anatone area of Southeastern WA.

Mark your calendar for Thursday, March 28, 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>



MEMBERSHIP

JOY MCKINNEY

Welcome New Member!
Gail Welch, Naches

Thanks for renewing your membership!

GOLDENDALE: Robert and Mary-Lane Baker

NACHES: Peggy Briskey, David Churchill

SEATTLE: Rick and Ann Matsen

SELAH: Gus and Mary Pooler

SUNNYSIDE: Myra Dorsey, Lorri Gilmur-Dillman

TOPPENISH: Kathleen Ross, Don and Jane Gargas

YAKIMA: Bill Drenguis, Tyler Shepherd, Deborah Severtson-Coffin, Marjorie Henderson, Jim Christensen, Kim Cody, Vi Whitmire, Bob and Darlene Fay, Julie Johnson, Ben Dover, Bob and Carrie Chicken, Terry Davis, Karen Ramey



THIS MONTH'S YVAS CALENDAR

Apr 25 YVAS Chapter Meeting at the Yakima Area Arboretum at 7:00 pm. A great program is scheduled!

May 14 Board Meeting at Starbucks on Summitview and 58th Ave at 7:00 pm.

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.

Printing and mailing the Calliope Crier newsletter is by far the largest expense in the YVAS budget. Starting with the August 2019 edition, the Calliope Crier will only be available electronically as an email attachment or on the YVAS website. Starting in August, there will be no more printed newsletters. To insure that you get an email every month announcing when the Calliope Crier is on the YVAS website, please send Joy McKinney (joycatbird@gmail.com), our membership chair, an email so she can put your email address on the electronic mailing list.



FROM THE BOARD

SCOTT DOWNES

As this Crier arrives in your mailbox, spring will be in progress. Spring is always one of my favorite times of year as long-distance migrants complete another year of their amazing migration spectacle as they leave the comfort of the tropics and return to our regions to take advantage of the abundant food and sunlight that the northern regions possess during spring and summer months. We all endured during a long late winter period when we probably thought spring would never come as we stared out at the feeders, straining with cabin fever while snow, snow and more snow fell. Eventually as it always does, spring did come and the birds returned. As you can see in this Crier, your chapter has planned a busy month of field trips and activities to take advantage of the birds, weather and the amazing habitats our area has. Did you know that during May, over 200 species of birds call Yakima County "home"? Yakima County is one of a small number of Washington Counties that can boast such biodiversity.

While Audubon is focused on birds, nature and wildlife is of key interest to the board and our members. Field trips not only show off the amazing birds, but delight in other wildlife. Last Friday, I was birding at Toppenish Wildlife Refuge with my daughters and was lucky enough to watch a Mink swim next to us at the Lateral C Road bridge over Toppenish Creek. Our upcoming programs also highlight the wildlife delights

that we have in our region. This month will be a great program by Ben Maletzke, wolf researcher for WDFW. Come learn how this predator is doing as they re-colonize Washington State and how their prey and other predators must adapt to this species. In May, Jocelyn Akins of the Cascades Carnivore Project will showcase her work where she has studied such unknown predators such as Cascades Red Fox and Wolverine in the southern Cascades. Last winter, they documented breeding activity of Wolverines in western Yakima County. What did they find this winter?

Finally, the board and the chapter is committed to making sure that all wildlife from shorebirds that use the marshes of the lower Yakima Valley to the birds and mammals that use snags of our forested environs will have habitats into the future so that all of our members and future Audubon members and their children can marvel at the amazing biodiversity of Yakima County. The chapter does this through an active conservation and education committee that strives to preserve these wonders for future generations. I encourage you this spring to get out, explore Yakima's amazing variety of habitats and catch a glimpse of your favorite migrant just returned from parts further south. Perhaps you'll do this while joining our wonderful field trip leaders on a trip to their favorite place!



CONSERVATION
ANDY STEPNIEWSKI

Washington state is a winner in Public-lands bill passed by Congress

President Donald Trump signed on March 12 a landmark public lands bill with huge implications for national land acquisition for conservation, as well as for Washington state issues and projects. Every member of the Washington delegation in the U.S. House of Representatives passed this wide-ranging bill. Important for land acquisition of priority lands for permanent conservation protection and promotion of outdoor recreational projects, the bill permanently reauthorizes the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Washington Sen. Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson, a legendary figure in Washington state conservation, sponsored this legislation in 1964. Using no taxpayer money, the LWCF has directed a portion of revenues from offshore federal oil and gas royalties to federal, state and local park projects and land acquisitions throughout the United States. In recent years upwards of \$ 900 million in offshore royalties has been deposited in the fund, though only \$ 300 million or so has typically gone to LWCF projects, the remained siphoned off to other federal projects. In Washington state alone, over \$ 600 million dollars of LWCF monies has been invested in conservation and outdoor recreation projects (see <http://projects.invw.org/data/lwcf/grants-wa.html>). In recent years, the LWCF, which has required congressional reauthorization, has become a political football, as some politicians against federal land acquisition, have made vigorous attempts to stymie renewal of the fund. "People still wanted to take a whack at it," Washington Senator Cantwell, D-Wash., said, in a recent Seattle rally in support of the LWCF. "There's nothing better than being outdoors. It's such an important part of our Northwest culture. Fighting to preserve this tool has been a great honor."

The Oak Creek Wildlife Area is just one of many sites in Washington to receive LWCF grants. Photo by WDFW. The bill includes measures sought by lawmakers all across the United States to further local "pet projects." This may be an indication that to reach broad consensus in Washington, D.C. "the sausage-making requires a serving or two of locally sourced pork."

The bill was an "omnibus" bill, a patchwork of previously pitched bills from both Republicans and Democrats. It was stitched together in the Senate by Cantwell and Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, in consultation with House leaders. It passed in both chambers in early March. Support from the House was resounding affirmation of bipartisan support of the legislation. Washington's Kim Schrier, D-Issaquah, and Dan Newhouse, R-Sunnyside, both encouraged colleagues to approve the legislation and each touted a major Washington state project in the bill, the Yakima Basin Integrated Project, as "a model" on water-scarcity issues and compromise. Many outdoor and environmental groups across the country have praised the bill.

What does it do for Washington state? If permanent reauthorization of the LWCF is the national headline stemming from passage of this bill, the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan portion of the bill is the

attention-getter in Washington state. It gives the go ahead for federal involvement in a multibillion-dollar Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. The plan, promoted for nearly a decade by both Democrats like Cantwell and Republicans like Newhouse, of Sunnyside, has the potential of transforming the watershed for both fish and farmers. A very large collection of irrigators, farmers, fish advocates, tribes and political officials has been working on the plan, estimated to cost at least \$4 billion dollars, for about a decade. Washington state has already invested many millions of dollars already into the 30-year plan. With passage of the bill, at least 10 years of federal financial support is all but ensured. The project, which realizes the effects of climate change on water in the Yakima River basin, aims to increase water storage to help both fish and provide to farmers with water in drought years that scientists predict will increase in frequency.

Newhouse has said in an interview "There's no question that we are dependent on the precipitation of the Cascade mountains, and if the form of that precipitation is more often rainfall than snow, as we've enjoyed for so many years, we've got to be prepared for that. Increasing storage capacity is a huge part of the solution moving forward." Newhouse has said he has been grateful to partner with Cantwell and Schrier in promoting the plan. "She and I have been working on this together the whole time I've been in Congress. It's gratifying we're able to work in a bipartisan manner," he said of Cantwell. "This is an important step in achieving a great balance between the human needs and environmental needs in the Yakima."

Several other important Washington issues are also in the bill. Community and state conservationists and politicians in the Methow Valley have been organizing against a Canadian mining company's exploratory drilling in the valley for several years. Cantwell and Washington Sen. Patty Murray, also a Democrat, have introduced several bills against "mineral withdrawal" in the Methow, but these have not had enough traction to advance in Congress. The bill prohibits mining on federal land in the Methow Valley, a region of national and international acclaim for its scenic and recreational resources.

The bill also creates a volcano early warning system, important because of the possibility of renewed geologic activity on Mt. Rainier and other Cascade volcanoes could imperil huge numbers of the human population in the Pacific Northwest. It also directs federal agencies to explore new wildfire-fighting technology with drones and GPS tracking.

Also in Washington, much of the Interstate 90 corridor across Snoqualmie Pass has become an official National Heritage Area called the Mountains to Sound Greenway. Many miles of shoreline in western Washington will become the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area. These designations could open up funding opportunities for organizations that promote them.



FIELD TRIPS SCOTT DOWNES



April 26 (Friday). Sunnyside Wildlife Area. Sunnyside Wildlife Area has graciously offered a tour of the headquarters unit. During this tour you will get to experience the unique marsh habitats and the wonderful spring birds that both use these marshes for breeding in addition to migration stopovers. During similar periods last year, birds such as Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet and Wilson's Phalarope were present on the refuge. In addition to these regular waterfowl and shorebirds, the refuge also hosted unusual species such as Sandhill Crane and White-faced Ibis. Participants should be prepared for a mixture of driving and walking and will need to carpool in a minimum number of vehicles for the tour. Water, food and bug spray are encouraged. Scope is helpful but not required. The trip will be limited to 15 individuals, so you must contact the leader to sign-up. To sign-up and get meeting place and time contact Denny Granstrand (dgranstrand@gmail.com)

April 28 (Sunday). Xupnish (formerly Zimmerman Ponds) — South Lateral A Road and Toppenish Marion Drain Rd. Each spring, snow-melt in the Cascades rushes down Toppenish Creek filling ponds and flooding valley bottoms, creating a bonanza for water and marsh birds. The marshes, fields, and riparian patches in the lower valley rise to their birding peak in late April. We'll look (and listen) for American Bittern, Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets, Cinnamon Teal, Virginia Rails, Sora and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. The Zimmerman Farm was restored by the Yakima Nation and is closed to the public except by special permit. This is a great half day field trip and with the refuge visitors center opening at noon there will be birding opportunities close by for those who want to extend the day. Meet at 7:30 am at the Valley Mall parking lot north of Sears (old IHOP location) to carpool. To sign-up contact Kerry Turley (509-840-0980 or email him at kdturley@embarqmail.com).

May 3-6 (Friday-Monday)- Yakima County Migration Count. YVAS's annual "Birdathon" will be a county-wide bird count, as we try to tally species from different sectors in the county. Scott Downes will be putting teams together to cover all of the best areas to bird around Yakima including the White Pass, Chinook Pass, Lower Valley, Ahtanum, Yakima Training Center, Toppenish and Wenas areas. Some teams start before dawn with owling, while most teams go all or most of the day. In addition to cheering on teams on their long journeys around the various habitats of the county, you can contribute as well! If you see an unusual species of bird while out birding during the 3rd-6th of May, email Scott Downes, downes@charter.net to have your unusual species added to the team effort. You can also contribute by helping YVAS to raise money for important conservation actions in the chapter. See the article in this Crier on how to contribute a donation to the birdathon effort.

May 11 (Saturday)- Migratory Bird Day at Toppenish NWR. Coordinated by Kerry Turley. [Come celebrate International Migratory Bird Day at Toppenish National Wildlife Refuge \(NWR\). Activities will include bird banding, guided bird walks, live raptor program, children's games, and hay rides. See article in this Crier for more information or contact Kerry Turley at: \[kdturley@embarqmail.com\]\(mailto:kdturley@embarqmail.com\)](#)

May 18 (Saturday)- Sportsman State Park half-day trip. Karen and Joe Zook. Join Joe and Karen Zook for a morning trip to Sportsman State Park on Saturday, May 18. We will be looking (and listening) for whatever birds are there. Birds we have found there in the past include Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds, Virginia Rail, Sora, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Wood Duck, Downy Woodpecker, Golden and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Great Horned Owl, swallows, and House Wren, to name a few. If you have never heard a Yellow-headed Blackbird sing, you may be in for a crazy treat! Like any birding trip, you never know what you are going to see or hear. This time of year, we may see migrating birds such as Wilson's and Townsend's Warblers, and perhaps a hummingbird or two. Please contact the Zooks via email: gadzooks7@charter.net (preferred) or phone 509-225-9494 (this number does not accept text messages) for meeting time and place. Bring binoculars, scopes if you have them and maybe a light snack. Insect repellent is advised.

May 24-27 (Friday-Monday)- Memorial Day Wenas Campout. The annual Memorial Day weekend Wenas Audubon Campout. Located at the Wenas Creek Campground on Audubon Road. Birding field trips and flower walks abound at this casual and friendly gathering. In past campouts, activities have included field sketching, bat and owl prowls, and much more. You do not need to be an Audubon member to attend, but a Discover Pass is required. Drive up for a day or camp. All are welcome. **SPECIAL NOTE: YVAS member Jeff Kozma (see well deserved kudos in article on page 6) will be the featured speaker at the Saturday evening campfire gathering. Program starts at 7 pm with Jeff talking on his research on White-headed Woodpeckers. The Wenas committee has reorganized and the website has been updated with many improvements.** Visit the Wenas Audubon website (www.wenasaudubon.org) for directions and complete information.

A word from our treasurer

I would like to start by thanking each and every one of our members. Your membership fees and donations support all of our activities and projects, and also allow YVAS to donate to local organizations. Every dollar counts – from a donation to the dollar table at the auction to memberships and Bluebird box payments to Birdathon donations. We are blessed with generous members, which we are very thankful for.

Our money is spent in many different ways. Between postage and printing, the Crier is our largest expense. Our second largest expenditure is donations. We donate to local organizations such as Cowiche Canyon Conservancy, the Yakima Greenway and the Yakima Environmental Learning Foundation (YELF). We also give our support to Blue Mountain Wildlife. Blue Mountain takes in and rehabilitates injured wildlife – mainly birds – rehabilitates them and releases the animals back into the wild when possible. The Snowy Owl that visited the area near Costco several years ago was hit by a truck, and Blue Mountain took him in and rehabilitated him. His injuries were such that he could not be returned to the wild and he now serves as an education bird. In addition to donating to local organizations, last year we had the opportunity to help the Malheur Field Station make essential repairs so that they could remain open. This year a field trip to Malheur has been planned, and as visitors we will get to see what our donation has helped to support.

Other expenses include bird seed for both the Arboretum and Poppoff sparrow patches. Your donations help keep a lot of birds fed when the temps are low and the ground is covered with snow. If you feed birds at home, you know how quickly they can devour bird seed during the cold winter

months.

Your donations also pay for our programs. We need money to pay rent for our meeting room at the Arboretum and to pay our speakers for their time, efforts and great presentations.

Another great project we have been working on involves the Snag Conservation Working Group. This multi-agency group has members from YVAS, WDFW, WA DNR, USFS, Yakama Nation, Washington State Audubon and Conservation NW. This group has just created an educational video to help wood cutters and other forest users to identify snags with nesting cavities, and how to tell when they are too close to a nest. The group is working with the USFS to try and find alternate sources of wood for woodcutters so that more snags can be retained in the forest, and educate the woodcutters and the public on the importance of leaving snags standing for birds and other forms of wildlife. We have also created an educational Snag Brochure, which has information and photos about the importance of snags. There are copies of the brochure available at the local WDFW office, The Naches Ranger District office and of course at our Chapter meetings.

YVAS has an annual budget. I create a budget every January which is reviewed and voted on by the YVAS Board of Directors. If you ever have a question on our budget, please feel free to ask me about it – I will be happy to answer any questions. And once again, THANK YOU for your generous support.

— Karen Zook —

Field trip to Selah Cliffs Natural Area was an exciting day!

On March 23, thirteen of us spent a nice morning exploring the Selah Cliffs Natural Area. It was a nice day with a great group of people, and although it wasn't super birdy we did see some nice birds.

As we gathered in the parking lot, we heard a California quail calling, followed by the sweet cascading song of the Canyon wren. We walked toward the corral, seeing goldfinches and hearing a Bewick's wren in the underbrush next to a grove of Alders. A Say's Phoebe greeted us at the corral, giving us great looks when it decided to sit still. Violet-green swallows swooped over our heads and around the cliffs.

After the corral we continued to see swallows and hear a Canyon wren. Finally, the wren appeared and we were able to get scope looks at it. Ravens and a Red-tailed hawk (carrying sticks in its talons) flew over, but otherwise it was a bit quiet. Along the way we found two marmots exploring the rocky areas to the north, and saw a few deer. We had interesting conversations about birds, mammals,



Prairie Falcon
Photo by Karen Zook

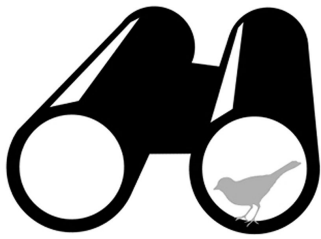
geology and natural history. As we got closer to the Redmon Bridge, Prairie falcons appeared. We saw a mated pair, and there was a third falcon which appeared from time to time. We also found a Kestrel and a Northern Flicker. When we turned around to head back, two Turkey Vultures soared into view.

The return trip did not add any birds to our list, but many of us witnessed the pair of Prairie falcons mating on the face of the cliff. Breeding season is in full swing in the canyon! Joe and I did a scouting trip on Friday and witnessed a male Kestrel feed a lizard to a female Kestrel, and later we saw them mating on the cliffs as well.

We thought it was interesting that we did not see any sparrows at all - not even a Junco or a White-crowned - and the Chukars we'd heard the day before were silent. Maybe the falcons had something to do with that.

—Karen Zook —

BIRDATHON—DOLLARS FROM DONORS, BIRDS FROM BIRDERS

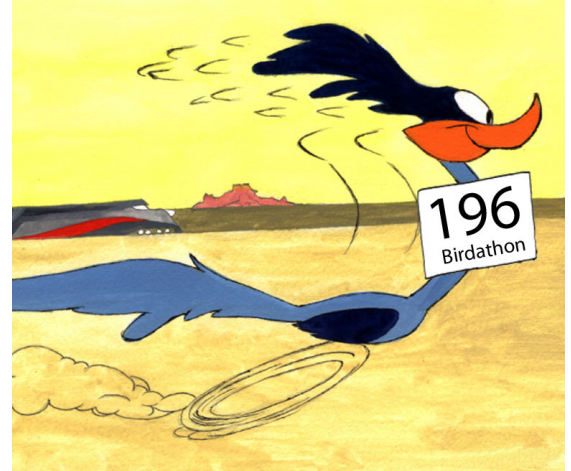


BIRDATHON

This year's BIRDATHON is **May 4 thru 6** and will entail a county-wide birding effort. In this endeavor, up-wards of 10 teams, each with a mapped portion of Yakima County, head out into the field to tally as many species and individuals as they can find. Each team's tally will be added into an overall spreadsheet, Christmas-count style. In 2011, teams set a record by finding 195 species. Can we break that record? .

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

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



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

I Pledge \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

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

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

Jeff Kozma's presentation wowed a class at the Arboretum

Each year Yakima Valley Audubon teaches a class at the Yakima Area Arboretum. This year, on March 17th, Jeff Kozma gave a class "Attracting Birds to Your Yard." As your yard is perhaps the easiest place for most of us to study and appreciate birds, it makes sense for both you and the birds to create a yard that brings birds into your home setting. About 40 folks attended this informative class, giving Jeff rave reviews. Jeff gave tips on landscaping to attract birds, especially focusing on native plants that provide food and cover. He highlighted the various native trees and shrubs one can plant that are attractive to birds, and why (seeds, berries, flower nectar, or cover). Jeff also showed how to provide water. He also provided an introduction to the common birds you might expect in

your yard. As Jeff said "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!"

Thanks to Jeff for his excellent teaching and beautiful slides. Thanks also to Sarah Shippen and Karen Zook for helping with set-up and organization, and to both Colleen and Garrett at the Arboretum who helped with registration and publicity.

Yakima Audubon will present another class next year for the Arboretum, so please let the board know if you have a topic on birds you would like to learn about or, if you are willing to teach a class!

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 or 698-4110.

2019 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD

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Coming Attractions:

Apr 25 Chapter Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

Apr 26 Sunnyside Wildlife Area field trip

Apr 28 Xupnish (Zimmerman's) field trip

May 3-6 Birdathon

May 11 Migratory Bird Day at Topp. NWR

May 18 Sportsmans St Pk field trip