



September 2023
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The Calliope Crier

Newsletter of the Yakima Valley Audubon Society
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

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.

October Program

Yakima Valley Audubon Society presents:

Bluebird Country

Presented by **KAREN ZOOK**

Thursday, October 26

In-person program begins at 7pm

Live Zoom opens at 6:55

*Yakima Area Arboretum
1401 Arboretum Drive*



Male Mountain Bluebird, photo by Karen Zook

Join Karen Zook on a photographic journey along the

Vredenburg Bluebird Trail. She will talk about bluebirds, but also about the flora and fauna that make the area such a great habitat for the birds and other forms of wildlife as well. You'll see butterflies, wildflowers and even some scenic photos, and you'll learn about the different stages in a bluebird chick's development.

We will be gathering with Karen at the Yakima Arboretum for this monthly program. We hope to see you there, but for those unable to attend we will have a live Zoom version available and a recording of the program on the YVAS website, www.yakimaudubon.org.

The link for the live Zoom version will be:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85751241932?pwd=K0lseGlvbng4WGIKN3NaeEdaL2VTQT>

Karen is the current chair of the Vredenburg Bluebird Trail. She has been watching and listening to birds for years and she and her husband Joe have been involved with the bluebird trail since 2011. She became the chair in 2021. Karen organizes the monitoring of the trail and keeps the data, working with a great team of volunteers. She and Joe maintain the boxes and do monitoring as well.



Events Calendar

Thu, Oct 26	<i>YVAS Program: Bluebird Country, Karen Zook</i>
November	<i>No program this month</i>
Wed, Dec 6	<i>YVAS Holiday Party and Program. More next month!</i>

Field Trip Report

Spruce Grouse Field Trip, Sept. 23, 2023

Four enthusiastic birders participated in the Yakima Valley Audubon Society field trip to Conrad Meadows, the largest sub-alpine meadow in the Cascade Range, in hopes of finding the quiet, boreal, Franklin’s Spruce Grouse. In Washington this subspecies of Spruce Grouse, the “Franklin’s Grouse,” is most common in our area.

The usually quiet and well camouflaged little forest character proved to be hard to find in the traditional locations, the only one found was actually spotted on the road well before the parking area. The group spent over 4 hours of searching the area to no avail,

as no other grouse was found. It was noted that a lot of the prime habitat had been walked through and flagged for future fire control maintenance and it is speculated that the extra activity may have temporarily caused the grouse to relocate.

The group also noted belted kingfisher, hairy woodpecker, Canada jay, Steller's jay, common raven, mountain chickadee, chestnut-backed chickadee, golden-crowned kinglet, red-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, American robin, dark-eyed junco, white-crowned sparrow and spotted towhee.

~ Kerry L. Turley



The Canada jay and spruce grouse turned out to be a life birds for one of the lucky birders.
Photo credits © Denny Granstrand

Bluebirds

2023 End of Season Recap

Prepared and submitted by Karen Zook

It's time to look back at the Vredenburgh and Durr road nesting season. I would call it "The year of the Mountain Bluebird." Mountain bluebirds fledged 252 chicks on the Vredenburgh, breaking the old record of 209 set back in 1987. In addition, Mountain bluebirds in the Durr road boxes fledged 75 chicks, bringing the total number of fledglings to 327! Western bluebirds fledged 354 chicks, White-breasted nuthatches fledged 4 chicks and House wrens fledged 4 chicks as well (that is quite a decline from the previous year). In addition, the Durr road boxes produced 8 Violet-green swallow fledglings. Total fledglings of all species for both trails are 703 birds. It was a great year for bluebirds!

Of course, nothing is perfect and as you can see, the first 14 boxes fledged no birds. This is an unfortunate trend. None of the boxes in the first part of the trail are in the burned area. Box 13.1 was lost to firefighting equipment creating fire lines. All the burned/destroyed boxes were replaced, and most did quite well. I left the burned boxes highlighted in red for reference. Two of the burned boxes (14 and 16) were relocated to a part of the trail that was also burned, and they did well. So, we are thinking about moving two more boxes out of the troubled area and into a more productive area next year, provided there is room for them.

I'm sure you've all heard the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child." Well, it takes a village to have a successful Bluebird trail as well. We have a great team of volunteers that have made this trail a success. Many thanks to Vredenburgh monitors Nancy Born and her "Team Blue Jeans" (formerly Brad's Blues): Hannah Born, Caroline Calvillo, Jim Newhouse, Leslie Smyer, Adam, Kristina, Ian, and Hunter Newhouse; Terry and Dale Critchlow, Becky and Dick Drew, Martha Fleming, Jan and Judy Gano, Sara and Ron Montgomery and Deborah Severtson-Coffin. Thank you to Richard Repp and Sue Wright for monitoring the Durr road boxes. Thank you as

well to Randy Poulson and Morris Howland (and friends) for making us new boxes.



Finally, thank you to two people I consider co-chairs: Richard Repp and Joe Zook. Richard, despite giving up his position as chair, has continued to contact sponsors about box payments and has helped me by keeping track of the box payments and sponsors as well. In addition, he has been an invaluable source of information and assistance with my nemesis: the Excel spreadsheet. I'm getting better, thanks to his patience and helpful guidance. Joe is a wonderful, helpful trail monitor and in addition, helps with box repair and this year, with box replacement. With the help of Dale and Terry Critchlow, we replaced all 22 boxes that were destroyed in last year's fire.



Pair of Western Bluebirds, photo by Karen Zook

If you have any questions about this report, the box that you sponsor or anything else about the trail, please contact me via email: gadzooks7@charter.net. Until next year – Karen Zook

2023 Vredenburg Trail Report												
Box	Sponsor	Sp	Egg	Flg	PAID THRU	Box	Sponsor	Sp	Egg	Flg	PAID THRU	
1	Harold Vredenburg		0	0	PMBD	39	Maia Mittlestaedt	W	11	10	2025	
2	Jeanne Crawford Memorial	W	6	0	2024	39.1	Joan Gilman	W	4	3	2024	
3	Tanager Nevue-Cushing		0	0	2023	40	Gertrude Repp Memorial	W	9	4	2035	
4	Steven & Marcia Shotwell		0	0	2023	41	Joan Gilman		0	0	2024	
5	Sparrow Nevue-Cushing	HOWR	7	0	2023	42	Jimmy Baddeley Memorial	W	5	3	2023	
6	Don Peterson Memorial		0	0	2024	43	Teresa Lorenz	W	6	3	2023	
7	Karen Ireland	W	2	0	2023	44	Dorothy Munroe	W	6	3	2024	
8	Betty & Carolyn Lagergren		0	0	2025	45	Hazel Clestine	W	9	6	2022	
9	Sandie Deighton		0	0	2023	46	Pocholo Martinez Memorial	TRES	6	0	2027	
10	Joe & Alberta McGuire	HOWR	3	0	2029							
11	Steven & Marcia Shotwell		0	0	2023	47	Irene Gilman Memorial	W	3	0	2024	
12	Schurman Family		0	0	2023	48	Thomas Sawyer Memorial		0	0	2030	
13	Karen & Joseph Zook	HOWR	7	0	2025	49	Ellen Stevenson Family	W	6	4	2023	
13.1	Phil Fischer		0	0	2023	50	Tom Mansfield	M	9	4	2033	
15	Joy McKinney	W	7	7	2026	51	Ron Sell	W	4	4	2023	
17	Michael West	HOWR	1	0	2033	52	Linda Knutson	M	10	8	2023	
18	Betty & Carolyn Lagergren	W	6	5	2025	53	Megan & Steven Pooler		0	0	2024	
19	Janna & Steven Hayes	W	3	3	2023	54	Jerry Turner Memorial	W	6	5	2024	
20	Toppenish Garden Club	W	5	3	2025	55	Martha Taylor	W	11	11	2025	
21	Pete & Pam Neumann	W	6	4	2024	56	Chris Reid Memorial	HOWR	7	4	2024	
22	Brian T. & Aleeza M.	WBNU	4	4	2025	57	Schurman Family	W	6	6	2023	
22.1	Available	W	6	5		58	Lynne & Mike Stallcop	W	6	6	2025	
23	Karen & Joe Zook	W	13	6	2025	59	Chris Reid Memorial	W	7	7	2024	
24	Virginia Gill	W	6	0	2023		Second species	M	5	5		
25	Don Peterson Memorial	W	11	4	2024	60	Megan & Steven Pooler	M	6	4	2024	
26	Arlene Wood Memorial	W	7	7	PMBD	61	John Meyer Memorial	M	4	4	2033	
							Second species	W	6	6		
27	Kay Marsh Memorial	W	7	0	2030	62	Schurman Family	W	6	5	2023	
28	Sherry Morris Memorial	W	12	0	2023	63	Tom Wilson	W	11	11	2023	
29	Donna Zimmerschied	W	6	6	2023	64	Mike & Caroline Wood	M	4	1	2023	
30	Betty & Greg Neumann	W	6	6	2024	65	Lucky Hall	W	11	8	2025	
31	Donna Zimmerschied	M	7	0	2023	66	Carol Phillips	W	5	4	2027	
	Second species	W	6	5		67	Schurman Family	W	6	6	2023	
32	Larry & Doris Robinson	M	4	4	PMBD		Second species	M	5	5		
33	Stan & Lori Isley	M	7	7	2024	68	Ruth Knoke Memorial	W	2	0	2023	
34	Sarah Burke	W	6	4	2024	69	Janet White	W	1	0	2027	
34.1	Friedenson Family	W	6	4	2024							
35	Joe & Alberta McGuire	W	6	5	2029	70	Irene Gilman Memorial	HOWR	2	0	2024	
35.1	Rachel Bold	W	8	6	2024	71	Bob & Helen Stuckey Mem.	W	12	8	2024	
36	Sarah and Ron Montgomery	W	8	4	2023	72	Nancy Born	W	4	4	2024	
37	Alice Presson	W	6	6	2024	73	Herbert Shippen Memorial	W	10	8		
38	Charlotte Pfeiffer Memorial	W	10	8	2023	74	Hannah Born	M	9	8	2024	



Violet-green Swallow, photo by Karen Zook

Vredenburgh Box Sponsors – Time to renew?

Sponsors – please check the Paid Thru column in the trail recap . If your sponsorship expires in 2023, please consider this your first cue to remit your renewal. Reminders will be sent to sponsors for boxes that have not been renewed by Dec 31. You may now pay either by **check or online**.

BY CHECK:

Make your check payable to YVAS and mail to:

YVAS
P O BOX 2823
YAKIMA, WA 98907-2823
Attn: Bluebirds (this helps our Treasurer know what you are paying for)

ONLINE:

To pay online go to the YVAS website: <https://yakimaudubon.org/>



Female Mountain Bluebird, photo by Karen Zook

Click on the "Join" tab at the top right of the hummingbird logo. Click on "Join/Renew/Donate here"; click on "Custom amount" and enter the amount you wish to pay then type in "bluebird box" in the "Write us a comment" box. Both you and the YVAS Treasurer will receive a receipt.

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

2024 Board of Directors

We are still seeking volunteers for open Vice-president and Director positions. Volunteers welcome! Please contact Sarah Shippen, YVAS President, at ses1440@outlook.com.

New Volunteers for Chair positions-thank you!

Field Trips: Kerry Turley and Bill Drenguis

Membership – Joy McKinney

Welcome New Members!

Jill Scott, Yakima; Tom O’Callahan, Mercer Island; WA, Jay Horstman, Sunnyside, WA

Thanks for renewing your membership!

Karen Zook, Lucy and Jeffrey Stevens, Patrick and Kathryn Kinney, Michael and Kimberly Lawler, Richard Repp, Sara Montgomery, Renee Navarette, Scott Downes, Martha Taylor, Ross and Diane Bornfleth



Meet Your YVAS Board and Committee Members

President	Sarah Shippen	Newsletter Chair	Volunteer needed	Toppenish Refuge Volunteer	Kerry Turley
Vice President	Volunteer needed	Conservation Chair	Stan Isley	Toppenish CBC	Volunteer needed
Secretary	Deborah Severtson-Coffin	Education Chair	Ellen Stepniewski	Yakima CBC	Scott Downes
Treasurer	Rich Mathieu	Field Trips Chair	Scott Downes	Yakima Migration Count	Scott Downes
Director	Bill Drenguis	Fundraising	Bill Drenguis	Arboretum Bird Blind	Kathy and Joe Howell
Bluebird Trail	Karen Zook	Membership Chair	Joy McKinney		
Programs Chair	Andy Stepniewski	Website Administrator	Volunteer needed		

To Contact YVAS

YVAS Information: info@yakimaaudubon.org
 Newsletter content: newsletter@yakimaaudubon.org
 Bird questions: birds@yakimaaudubon.org
 Donations: donations@yakimaaudubon.org

For more information about Yakima Valley Audubon Society, visit our website: <https://yakimaaudubon.org>
 To Join: https://yakimaaudubon.org/assets/pdf/yvas_membership_form.pdf