



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 46, Number 02

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

February 2017



FEBRUARY PROGRAM BILL DRENGUIS

GREENLAND AND ARCTIC CANADA Presented By Andy and Ellen Stepniewski



Photo by Ellen Stepniewski

I hate to admit it, but all this snow has gotten to me. As a chapter, we need a break. We need to take an exotic trip. We are fortunate to join our own Andy and Ellen Stepniewski (at our February chapter meeting) as they recount their recent trip to Greenland. Greenland!! Why didn't they go to Africa? Well, it was summer in Greenland.

Actually, I do not know anything about Greenland. However, with a presentation by these two you can sure that we will learn about Greenland's birds. I also know that they will cover a lot more than that. There will be large doses of geology, anthropology, and general biology for this very unique region. Plus Ellen has taken some amazing pictures of the icebergs!

So it won't be tropical, but it will be topical. And a great escape from our winter doldrums. (Hint, do not ask about the penguins).

Mark your calendar for Thursday, February 23, at 7:00 to see this presentation at the Yakima Area Arboretum



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN KERRY TURLEY

THE LOVE OF NATURE



Mrs. Schmauder was my 6th grade teacher at Ki-Be Elementary School in Benton City. She was my favorite teacher because she always seemed to find innovative ways to make learning interesting and fun and if you did exceptionally well your paper was posted

on the bulletin board, which was quite an honor.

One winter she assigned us a special poetry project in which we were to use pictures she had chosen as our inspiration to write our own poem. There were several pictures of landscapes, animals, birds, etc. to choose from and we were to turn our imagination loose.

So I wrote: *Brown trees and purple hills,
the ground all covered with snow.*

*The old white owl is back,
now I know that winter has come at last.*

What I wrote didn't seem like much, but to my surprise it made the bulletin board of fame and I've been a closet poet ever since.

As I sat looking out the window, watching my feeders in all this wintery, white mess (sorry folks I'm not really a snow enthusiast), my thoughts turned to Mrs. Schmauder and how she helped me understand that my love of nature can be expressed in my poetry so others can enjoy it and that nature can trigger the poet in me.

I must admit though that right now I would like nature to give me something to influence a poem of the beauty of spring or better yet a ballad about the demise of a certain Pennsylvania groundhog.

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



MEMBERSHIP
JOY MCKINNEY

Thank you for renewing your YVAS Membership!

- Naches:** Phil Fischer and Teresa Lorenz
Seattle: Martha Fleming, Mary Williamson
Selah: Jan Brydsen
Yakima: Elizabeth and Greg Bohn, Jim Christensen, Dee and Toby Hastie, Jennie Hodge, Karen Hyatt, Jeff and Cindy Kozma, Alice Presson, Jim and Barbara Riley, Cheryl Meenach
Zillah: Nan Ide
Welcome New YVAS Members!
Selah: Jean Ragland

BLUEBIRD BOX SPONSORS

Is your bluebird box due for renewal? Not sure? Check pages 7 & 8 of the October 2016 Crier and look at the "Paid Thru" column for your box. If that column states 2016 or earlier, payment for the 2017 season is due. Make your check payable to YVAS and mail it to P.O BOX 2823, Yakima, WA 98907. Questions? Contact Richard Repp - at bbirder247@gmail.com or 509-965-1134



**THIS MONTH'S YVAS
CALENDAR**

- Feb 23** **Audubon Chapter Meeting** at the Yakima Area Arboretum at **7:00 pm. Great program.**
Mar 14 **Board Meeting** at Bill and Jan Drenguis's house (7707 Poplarview Way. Yakima, WA) 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 Annual Meeting of the Society is held the first Thursday of December at 6pm. 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.

CITIZENS' CLIMATE LOBBY - Finding Common Ground
Inspiring, Educating and Collaborating Around Effective Climate Action

It's time to register for our Greater Pacific Northwest Regional Conference March 4-5, 2017, Seattle, Washington

We are excited to invite you to join us at our Regional Conference, an opportunity to develop skills, knowledge, and confidence in advocating for national carbon fee and dividend legislation, and to meet and exchange ideas with others doing this inspiring and energizing work.

- Speakers will inspire you to expand your sphere of influence to build political will for a national revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend to address climate change.
- Workshops will educate you on writing powerful letters and Op-Eds for newspapers.
- Kyle Murphy from Carbon Washington will draw lessons learned from the Washington State revenue-neutral carbon tax initiative.
- Panelists will educate you on the latest technologies available now to reduce carbon emissions.
- New volunteers will get the basic training they need to be effective in advocating action on climate change.
- You'll learn how to find common ground on climate change with both progressives and conservatives.

- Workshops will offer interactive experiences in communication techniques for sharing our vision with communities and congressional delegations.
- In discussions, we will share successes, strategies and resources to help us apply CCL's unique methodology in working with regional differences concerning skepticism and enthusiasm for climate legislation.

Citizens' Climate Lobby methods for grass roots lobbying are having an impact around the world in developing support for a national, market based solution to carbon reduction and economic stimulation - carbon fee and dividend legislation. Volunteers describe the experience of participating with CCL as life-changing and empowering. We want to expand on that experience through this conference.

Citizens' Climate Lobby Pacific Northwest Region covers Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska, and Hawaii. Everyone is welcome to attend the conference.

More information is available at:
<http://citizensclimatelobby.org/>



FIELD TRIPS SCOTT DOWNES

Feb 26 (Sunday) - Young birders field trip to Toppenish NWR. This trip is specifically intended for youth (18 and under) and their parents who are wanting an a wonderful afternoon around the Toppenish NWR while we study waterfowl, raptors and other birds that late winter brings to the refuge. We'll meet at the refuge HQ at noon and stay out until sunset (feel free to leave earlier if desired). **Contact leaders Scott and Sierra Downes downes@charter.net to sign up** (I'd like to have a count of number of people attending) and for more information. Sierra herself is a young birder and is eager to share the birds will fellow youth. Scopes will be available, but bring binoculars or scopes if you have them. Some limited driving will occur around the refuge roads.

March 25 (Saturday) - Shrub-steppe Zone fieldtrip. Led by **Andy and Ellen Stepniewski**. Contact Andy and Ellen for details and meeting place and time: **steppie@nwinfo.net**. On this trip we will head out into the sagelands of the western Columbia Basin starting in the Yakima Canyon, then heading north of Gled into the Wenas Wildlife Area. Ellen and Andy introduce you to the plants and birds of the shrub-steppe ecosystem, a northern extension of the Great Basin semi-desert. There are a variety of different plant communities in this landscape, each with a different assortment of birds. Some of targets will be: Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, Chukar, Long-billed Curlew, Canyon and Rock Wrens, Burrowing Owl, Say's Phoebe, Loggerhead Shrike, Horned Lark, Sage Thrasher, various "desert" sparrows: Brewer's, Vesper, and Sagebrush, and Western Meadowlark.

Further out.. Save the date, Register now:

April 15 (Saturday) - Greater Sage-grouse lek trip on the Yakima Training Center (YTC) April 15th. Scott Downes will lead a group of people to join a YTC biologist for an early morning visit to one of the leks of the greater sage-grouse on the training center. Witnessing this bird's display on the lek is a truly memorable experience. Some words of caution are that we will be a considerable distance from the birds, so this is not a trip for photo opportunities and scopes are helpful. Scopes will be on hand if you don't have one yourself. Meeting time will be announced to participants a couple weeks beforehand, but will be at least an hour before sunrise and the trip will likely conclude about mid-morning after the visit to the lek is over. Expect to dress in warm clothes as we will need to stand for several hours watching the lek. The trip is limited to 15 people, and I need to finalize the list by March 15, so if intending to attend, please get me your name and information no later than March 15th, hopefully sooner as I expect this trip to fill. **Email is the preferred method for signing up: downes@charter.net. Phone works as well if you don't have access to email: 509-833-8331. For this trip, participants need to have either an enhanced driver's license or passport and likely will need to provide me that information by March 15th so the YTC can prescreen us. If you are not a US citizen, please note that in your sign up info and get me your information sooner as there is extra screening time for non-citizens. Carpooling will be required to minimize the amount of vehicles entering. If planning on driving, make sure your vehicle has good tires and you will need insurance and proof of registration for your vehicle. Once I have the list of people, I will be in contact with the group by the end of March to finalize the meeting place and time.**

YAKIMA AREA NATURAL HISTORY FIELD TRIPS

The most remarkable avian feature around Yakima is its diversity of breeding birds. This is because the Cascade Range creates a pronounced rain shadow effect as Pacific storms dump much of their moisture on the west slopes of these mountains, leaving the east slopes much drier. Annual precipitation decreases dramatically eastward from the wet Cascade crest where about 80" falls annually to semi-arid Yakima east of the mountains where only 8" occurs. Between these two wet-to-dry extremes, there is a mosaic of vegetation zones on the east slopes of the Cascades and western Columbia Basin. These varied ecosystems host a remarkably high diversity of breeding birds. It may



Shrub-steppe Zone
Photo by Ellen Stepniewski

come as a surprise to many that the diversity of birds in the warm months on the eastern slopes of the Cascades is considerably greater than on the west slopes of these mountains.

That is because basically all the zones (and birds) found on the "Wetside" of the Cascades also occur on the "Dryside" at high elevations. Those species only found on the lower, more open dry forests and shrub-steppe zone of the eastern slopes result in greater diversity.

This year YVAS has planned a variety of field trips along this transect along the "elevation, precipitation, and moisture gradients" that result in such fabulous biodiversity

ATTRACTING HUMMINGBIRDS – A CLASS FOR YOU!!



On March 18th Yakima Valley Audubon and The Yakima Area Arboretum are sponsoring a class on hummingbirds and attracting them to your garden. All are welcome to attend. Information on the class and registration is below.

Hummingbirds are truly incredible birds! They amaze us with their boldly colored iridescent plumage, their wild aerial acrobatics, their overly aggressive personalities, and their miraculous migrations. Please join wildlife biologist and expert birder Jeff Kozma for a class focusing on how to identify and attract the four species of hummingbirds regularly found in Washington to your garden. Jeff has been growing nectar producing plants and providing feeders in his yard to attract hummingbirds for the last 12 years and he looks forward to sharing his techniques with you.

During the class, Jeff will cover 1) a brief overview of hummingbird biology (e.g., habitat, migration, territoriality,

etc.), 2) where and when to expect each hummingbird species, 3) how to landscape your yard with the types of plants that are most attractive to hummingbirds, while focusing on native plants that grow best in our warm dry climate, 4) the proper use of feeders (e.g., making sugar water, maintenance/cleaning/location of feeders, etc.), and 5) how to feed hummingbirds through the challenging winter months.

The two hour class will be at the Yakima Area Arboretum on **Saturday, March 18, 2017 at 10 am**. The cost will be \$20 (Arboretum and Audubon members) or \$25 for non-members.

To register or for more information, contact the Arboretum: (509-248-7337 or www.ahtrees.org).

— **Ellen Stepniewski** —
(509-731-6805)

Yakima Natural History (continued from page 3)

in the Yakima region. Ellen and I will be leading the first trip to driest and warmest **Shrub-steppe Zone** on March 25.

Higher in elevation, Ellen and I will be conducting a field trip along the White Pass Highway on June 10. The first of the dry forests we will bird will be in the **Oregon White Oak Zone**, then higher into the classic dry forest of Western North America: the **Ponderosa Pine Zone**. Yet higher along our climb into the Cascades, we will make stops in several more forest zones transitioning from dry forest to progressively wetter and colder ecosystems: **the Interior Douglas-fir, Grand Fir, and Mixed-conifer Zones**. On July 15, again

Ellen and I will venture to still higher zones leading a trip from Chinook Pass to Sheep Lake and Sourdough Gap, featuring the snowy **Subalpine Zone** and upwards to the edge of the treeless **Alpine Zone**.

We hope members with an interest in natural history will make plans to accompany Ellen and me on these trips, which showcase remarkable plant life and birds, not to mention pretty cool vistas and outdoor experiences. Look for details on these trips in the Crier, with the first trip featured in this issue.

--- **Andy Stepniewski** ---

WHAT'S IT WORTH? DO BIRDS AND WILDLIFE HAVE ECONOMIC VALUE?

By Phil Fischer

How much do you spend on bird feeders or field trips to view birds each year? Is the cost commensurate with the enjoyment that you gain from the activity? An economist may assume that you are a rational person and how you allocate your resources follow economic principles such as supply/demand relationships, price flexibility, and other rules. Recent social, psychological, and economic research indicates that the human animal is far from rational. Many of the cost allocations that we make are based more on herd mentality; we make choices based upon what the rest of our tribe is doing.

With the preceding as backdrop, an article in the current issue of *The Wildlife Professional* caught my attention. Authors Phillip Hohensee, Michael D. Samuel, and David Drake try to determine how much value the overall United States human herd assigns to wildlife and how monetary figures might be derived for the economic benefit of various aspects of wildlife. The first aspect of wildlife value that came to my mind was hunting of game animals and fishing. What was once a necessity to feed frontier families has morphed into a big business hobby which counts revenue streams from sales of arms, ammunition, equipment, clothing, vehicles, outfitters and guides, licenses, and many other services, and incidentals. The article indeed covered hunting and fishing but included other aspects wildlife that are of economic value such as birding which is included in the broader non-consumptive category of wildlife viewing. Wildlife viewing also has its streams of quantifiable revenue many of which parallel those of hunting and fishing.

Also mentioned were wildlife values that are more difficult to quantify but are of value none the less. Wildlife conservation volunteers provide services to both governmental agencies and non-governmental conservation organizations. This is more of an expenditure for wildlife giving a measure of how much the volunteers value the wildlife projects they work for, but also generates revenue streams as volunteers add their stimulus to the economy pursuing their interests. Amenity value of residential properties relates to property values of residences that are located close to National Wildlife Refuges (NWR). Researchers have compared the values of single family homes near an NWR to properties with similar physical characteristics that are a predetermined distance from the NWR. Property values are higher near the refuges.

To standardize results, all economic values were converted to the value of the U.S. dollar in 2015 using the consumer price index (CPI) in the original year and that for 2015. Resulting economic figures are summarized in the charts from the article included here. The surprise for me was that the authors found wildlife viewing contributed an economic benefit (Chart A) about twice that of hunting. Also of note is the amount wildlife economic value (Chart B) compares to other segments of the U.S. economy.

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) website posts a document (Chart C) that supports these findings.

Wildlife is worth it. Now I have a little better understanding of why and how much. Check out the entire article: "For What It's Worth, APPRECIATING THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF WILDLIFE" by Phillip Hohensee, Michael D. Samuel, and David Drake, in *The Wildlife Professional*, January/February 2017, published by The Wildlife Society. (Editor's note: The article is not available online but a pdf can be sent to you by contacting bbirder247@gmail.com.)



Over the last few decades, the popularity of backyard birdfeeders visited by birds like these Evening Grosbeaks has increased sales of birdseed, binoculars and other merchandise that now contribute more money to today's economy than hunting activities.

Photo by Karen Zook

WDFW economic info can be found on-line at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01160/>

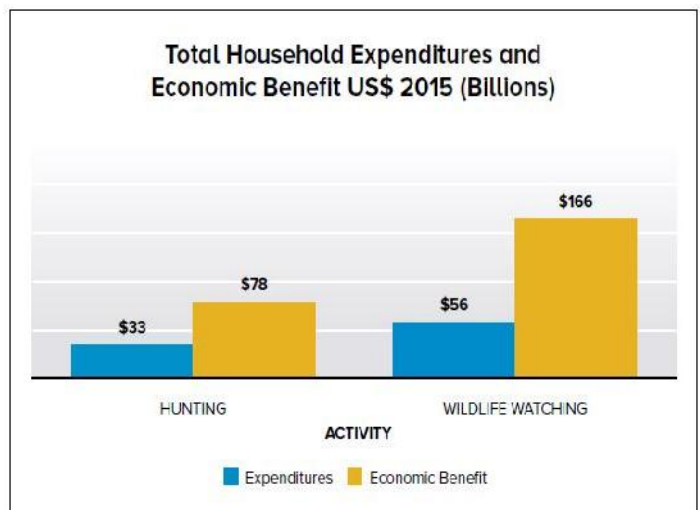


Chart A

DO BIRDS AND WILDLIFE HAVE ECONOMIC VALUE? (continued from page 5)

Washington’s fish & wildlife mean business and jobs

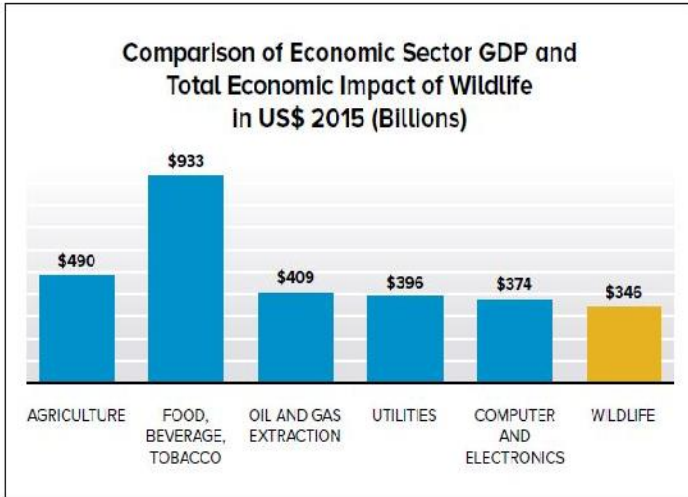


Chart B

Annual economic activity in Washington:

	Annual Economic Activity	Associated Jobs
Hunting	\$313 million	5,595 jobs
Sport Fishing	\$1.1 billion	14,655 jobs
Wildlife Watching	\$1.5 billion	26,000 jobs
Commercial harvest/wholesale	\$1.4 billion	14,000 jobs
Total	\$4.5 billion	60,250 jobs

(Data from U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NOAA Fisheries, Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, American Sportfishers Association)

Chart C

Greetings from San Carlos, Mexico!

Chris and I fled the cold, snowy winter and are spending six weeks in San Carlos, Mexico! San Carlos is on the west coast of Mexico, about halfway down the Gulf of California. The weather is great, the landscape (with the Sonoran

Desert going right down to the sea) is remarkable and the birds are lots of fun! I thought you would like to see some of the birds I am finding here.

— Denny Granstrand —



Clockwise from upper left: Roseate Spoonbill, Greater Roadrunner, Brown Pelican, a Broad-billed Hummingbird that comes to our feeders, White Ibis, American Oystercatcher and Black-vented Oriole.



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.

2017 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD

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More photos from San Carlos, Mexico

With a wide variety of habitats ranging from saltwater estuaries to rugged Sonoran Desert, the San Carlos area has a wide variety of bird species. Clockwise from upper left: immature Common Black Hawk, Painted Redstart, Zone-tailed Hawk, Reddish Egret, Vermillion Flycatcher, and Thick-billed Kingbird.



Coming Attractions:

Feb 23 - Chapter Meeting: Greenland

Feb 17-20 - Great Backyard Bird Count

Feb 26 - Young birder's field trip to Toppenish

Mar 18 - Hummingbird Class at the Arboretum

Mar 25 - Shrub-steppe Zone field trip

Apr 15 - Greater Sage-grouse lek trip