

# The Pygmy Owl



Volume 30  
Issue 5  
Jan. 2022

The Newsletter of the  
Spokane Audubon Society

**January 12 , 2022, 7:00 p.m.**

This meeting is only via Zoom on-line since pandemic conditions and prevention restrictions continue to keep us from meeting in person. To join the Zoom meeting

(Meeting ID: 868 2049 7886, Passcode: 738998), link to

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86820497886?pwd=OFZsM0xUS0k1bG5ibXUrSlhrTCsxZz09>

## **BELIZE – Birding in the Land of the Mayas**

presented by Paul Nistico



Though primarily North American birders, Paul's and Patsy's 2010 visit to Panama whetted their appetite for neotropical birding experiences. In 2016 they decided to visit the little Central American nation of Belize. They stayed at the famous Chan Chich Lodge near Belize's border with Guatemala. This is the heart of the

ancient Mayan civilization, and the ruins of those people were all around them. During their time at the lodge, they enjoyed daily tours with excellent local guides. The colorful trogons, toucans and parrots were highlights, of course, but every "little brown job" was an exciting find during a most rewarding week of birding and photography.

Paul was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He earned a degree in Chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh before entering the army and serving over three years in the US and in Vietnam. Patsy was born and raised in the Gulf Coast town of Highlands, Texas. She earned degrees in English and History from the University of Texas.



**White-necked Jacobin**  
© Paul Nistico



In 1971, Paul and Patsy met while Paul was completing his military obligation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. They married the next year and settled in

the Maryland suburbs of Washington DC, where Patsy was a teacher and reference librarian, and Paul pursued a career in data processing.

In 1973 they bought their first townhouse, put up a bird feeder and began watching birds. In 1975, they expanded their search for birds far and away from their little backyard. They knew at once that they had discovered the avocation of a lifetime. In the 46 years since then, they have birded extensively throughout North America and in a number of countries around the world.

In 2005 they retired to central Florida where they continue their hobbies of birding and bird photography.



**Gartered Trogon**  
© Paul Nistico

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Volume 30 Issue 5 Jan. 2022

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# Membership Report

by Alan McCoy

## Update of Members' Status November 21, 2021 through December 20, 2021:

Welcome and thanks to our **new members**:

**Individual:** Ruth Wagley, Sharon Vore,  
Donna Pickens

Many thanks to our **returning members**:

**Individual:** Mary Jean Porter, Carla Joyal,  
Dorothy & Mike Forster, Ruth Daugherty,  
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**Family:** Jim & Bea Harrison, Melissa O'Hara,  
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If you change your email address, please send your new email address to me, Alan McCoy, at [ahm2352@gmail.com](mailto:ahm2352@gmail.com) and I will make sure you get the Pygmy Owl in your email inbox. Another way to get the Pygmy Owl is to go to our website: <https://www.audubonspokane.org/the-pygmy-owl>



**Snowy Owl family**  
© Galatee Films

# Thompson Creek Beaver Dam Analog (BDA) Project

By Kat Hall

The Lands Council (TLC) is excited to announce that - in partnership with the Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program at Turnbull NWR, Gonzaga University, and Spokane County Public Works - we have just completed Phase I of our much-anticipated Thompson Creek beaver dam analog (BDA) project!

## WAIT. WHAT'S A BDA?

BDAs are light engineering projects designed to mimic beneficial riparian ecosystem processes provided by beavers, such as aquifer storage, creation of wetlands and wildlife habitat, and water quality improvement. Essentially, BDAs are beaver dams built by humans! When strategically-placed, BDAs



diminish and deflect erosive forces away from vulnerable streambanks, accumulating sediment behind them and reducing turbidity. BDAs have the effect of raising the water table, expanding natural riparian forest buffer area, and reconnecting an incised channel to its floodplain. In effect, they reduce the overall “flashiness” of degraded streams.

## WHY THOMPSON CREEK?

Thompson Creek drains into the north end of Newman Lake. Over the past 30 years, deteriorating water quality in Newman Lake, as evidenced by high algal growth, has sparked community concern. Algae blooms—fueled by excess nutrient inputs (e.g. nitrogen and phosphorus)—reduce water clarity, increase oxygen demand (which can cause fish kills), degrade cold water habitat, and, if toxic blue-green algae is

present, can pose a human health risk. Recent studies have indicated that (1) the primary source stimulating algae growth in Newman Lake is the release of phosphorus from sediments during the summer; and (2) the majority of this phosphorus originates in the upper watershed and is transported to Newman Lake via Thompson Creek. We expect our BDAs to



trap phosphorus-laden sediment and restrict its entry into Newman Lake. This will ultimately improve the water quality of the lake while creating a healthy, meandering stream system that reconnects with its floodplain, raises the water table, and enhances wildlife habitat.

## SO WE'RE TRYING TO BE LIKE BEAVERS?

Yes! But our methods are slightly different. In each BDA, we pound untreated lodgepole pine posts (which measure 8' or 10' long, have a diameter of 3", and are tapered at one end) into the stream bed with a pneumatic post driver powered by a small towable air compressor. Posts are typically spaced at 1' and inserted to a depth of 4-6.5'. We then weave Ponderosa pine and grand fir branches in-between posts, starting from the channel bottom and working our way up...a la underwater basket weaving! Our BDAs are sourced locally and don't obstruct fish passage. While the posts are temporary and biodegrade over time, they withstand flows long enough to accomplish their intended purpose. In total, we've pounded over 400 posts and woven the equivalent of over a dozen truck/trailer loads of brush to create 18 BDAs along a 3,000' reach of Thompson Creek!

## COOL. WHAT'S NEXT?

We'll maintain and adaptively manage our BDAs through spring runoff each year. We've also implemented a sophisticated monitoring protocol which will quantify water storage, sediment, and phosphorus. And come spring, we'll begin planting a 700'-long, 50'-wide riparian buffer to further enhance habitat and restore the Thompson Creek ecosystem. Stay tuned for opportunities to be part of this.

Many thanks to our partners Brian Walker (USFWS), Dr. Sue Niezgodá (Gonzaga University), Dawson Matthews (Spokane County Environmental Programs), the Newman Lake Property Owners Association, and the Newman Lake Flood Control Zone District for being such an instrumental part of this amazing collaborative project!

Want to read more? Check out the Spokesman Review's latest article:

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/nov/11/in-hopes-of-healing-newman-lake-gonzaga-students-l/>



**Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, Black Rosy-Finch, Brown-capped Rosy-Finch**  
by Alan McCoy (Albuquerque, New Mexico, January 2005)



**Common Redpoll**  
by Bob Cashen

# Winter Finches

contributed by Jon Isacoff

Winter brings snow, cold, and dimly lit days to the Inland Northwest. Many of our dear summer breeding birds are on vacation somewhere between Texas and South America. However, if it is snowy, cold, and dark in Eastern Washington, it is even snowier, colder, and darker in Northern Canada, where daylight is just a few hours and temperatures often go days at a time without rising above zero Fahrenheit. That brings us a group of birds affectionately known as "winter finches."

True winter finches are comprised of four species in the Western US: Pine Grosbeak, White-winged Crossbill, Common Redpoll, and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (Purple Finches and Pine Siskins are "winter finches" in the Eastern US). All the winter finches, save for Rosy-finches, are prone to irruptions. Irruptions occur at random intervals when much larger than normal numbers of a migrating species show up in a region. Irruptions are poorly understood, with "cone failures" being a cause in some, but not all, cases.

Where do winter finches come from? Small numbers of Pine Grosbeaks and White-winged Crossbills actually breed in the Spruce zones of the Selkirk and Kettle River Range mountains, but most breed further North in the Canadian boreal forest. Gray-crowned Rosy Finches breed at high elevations above tree line throughout the Rocky Mountains and also the North Cascades and Canada coast ranges. Common Redpolls are strictly tundra breeders.

Of the winter finches, Redpolls are the most likely to visit yard feeders, often with Pine Siskins or Goldfinches. Pine Grosbeaks love Mountain Ash berries. White-winged Crossbills can be found feeding on cones of larger Blue or Norway Spruce in parks, campuses, and cemeteries. Rosy-finches, the scarcest and hardest to find of the group, are often seen on the fringes of gravel roads in the wheat country.

Paradoxically, not all winter finches are in fact finches! The "non-finch-winter finches" consist primarily of Bohemian Waxwings, the Boreal cousin of our familiar Cedar Waxwing, and Snow Buntings, which are actually in the Sparrow family. Bohemians are compulsive berry eaters and will devour Mountain Ash berries, whether in the woods or right in your yard. Snow Buntings love gravel roads in winter and are typically much easier to find than Rosy-finches.

# 25th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count

## Be part of a global birding event Feb. 18-21

By Madonna Luers

The 25th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is Feb. 18 – 21, and you can be a part of the world coming together for the love of birds.

Over these four days you can spend time in your favorite birding place – at home or at another bird habitat -- watching and counting as many birds as you can find, and reporting them to the GBBC data collection. These observations help scientists better understand global bird populations before their annual spring migrations.

Launched in 1997 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the GBBC was the first online citizen or community-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real time. Birds Canada joined the project in 2009 to provide an expanded capacity to support participation in Canada.

In 2013, the GBBC became a global project when data was entered into eBird, the world's largest biodiversity-related citizen-community science project. You can watch bird observation lists roll in online from around the world, with each submitted checklist becoming a glowing light on the GBBC bird sightings map, including your own.

Participating is easy, fun to do alone or with others, and can be done anywhere you find birds. First, decide where you will watch birds. Then watch birds for 15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days, February 18-21.

After you make a count of all the birds you see or hear within your planned time/location, use one of these tools for sharing your bird sightings:

- If you are a beginning birder and new to the count, try using the free, easy-to-use Merlin Bird ID application on your cell phone to enter your bird list (see instructions at <https://www.birdcount.org/merlin-bird-id-app/>)



- If you are already using eBird to track your birding activity, the free eBird Mobile app is a fast way to enter your data (see <https://www.birdcount.org/ebird-mobile-app/>)
- If you prefer to enter your sightings on a computer, perhaps after making a list while on a hike or watching your feeders, you can do so at <https://www.birdcount.org/ebird-on-computer/>
- If you are participating as a group, see instructions at <https://www.birdcount.org/group-counts/>

You can start entering bird lists at midnight local time on the first day of the count, anywhere in the world. Data entry remains open until March 1, but the information you enter should only be from the four days of the Great Backyard Bird Count.

You can also submit photos of birds you see during your count at <https://www.birdcount.org/learn/photos/>.

For all the details on this project to connect to birds, nature, and each other, see [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org).

# Bald Eagles Annual Migration at Lake Coeur d'Alene

By Carlene Hardt

On a brisk 29° morning, I ventured out to see the Bald Eagles at Lake Coeur d'Alene. The Bureau of Land Management noted that on November 26th there were 108 eagles spotted. It's their annual migration to Lake Coeur d'Alene in search of the spawning kokanee salmon.

I was approaching Higgins Point when I saw a lot of cars and photographers with big cameras pointing upward toward one tree in particular. I pulled over and was delighted to see an eagle nestled in the pine tree. It watched us for quite some time before it flew off for all of us watching to enjoy.



As the eagles were flying overhead, I noticed that they soar with their wings almost flat. They can cruise up to 30 mph and their wingspan can be up to 8 feet.



I finally reached Higgins Point and remained there for about 3 hours, watching eagles watching people (and dogs) from a branch. And every once in a while one

would fly overhead and dive to catch a salmon, but one of the eagles just stayed up in a tree watching the whole time that I was there!

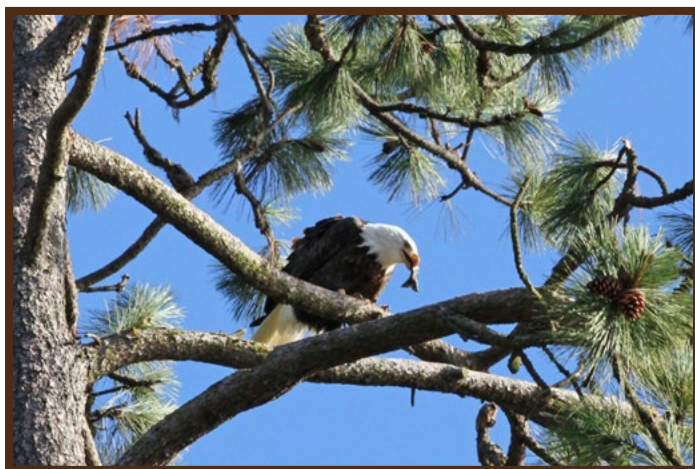
The eagles' dive is fast (up to 100 mph) and they pull up quickly too. The kokanee must be very close to the surface of the water, and the snatch is so quick that you can't tell if they have a fish or not until they go to a tree to eat it, or you see it later in your pictures. Looking at my pictures later, I see that sometimes they lost the fish shortly after they started their climb from the water.



Eagles have 4 talons (and toes) on each foot, a hallux talon at the back of the foot that faces front, and 3 toes on the front of the foot, where the talons face toward the back. These talons help them in catching the fish, and using them to hold it down while the bird tears it into bite-sized pieces.

(cont on page7

Those lucky enough to hang onto their meal would then fly to a branch to eat it. The branches must be pretty thick in order to hold their weight - around 14 pounds. Sometimes they were left alone to eat, and other times another eagle would be watching or dropping in for an opportunity to steal it.



all photos by Carlene Hardt

## Registration is open for the Winter Wings Festival

**22nd Annual Snow Goose Festival  
of the Pacific Flyway**  
One of the premier birding events in  
California!

**January 27 – 30, 2022  
Chico, California**

See our lineup of field trips at [snowgoosefestival.org](http://snowgoosefestival.org)

Grab your binoculars, download your bird app, pack a field guide, and get ready for 4-days of action-packed field trips led by experienced trip leaders. Join us in the search for winter birds of the Pacific Flyway, in the Northern Sacramento Valley.

There will be more than 50 field trips, visiting forests, lakes, wildlife refuges, wetlands, riparian zones, restoration sites, working farms & ranches, and other scenic birding locations.

To more safely hold the 2022 festival, outdoor-only field trips are offered. The big, indoor gatherings, including the banquet, exhibit hall, and indoor workshops, will be on hold.

Festival Headquarters (masks required indoors):  
January 27-30 at the Patrick Ranch Museum  
10381 Midway, between Chico and Durham, California (map)

We look forward to seeing you!

[www.snowgoosefestival.org](http://www.snowgoosefestival.org)  
[info@snowgoosefestival.org](mailto:info@snowgoosefestival.org)



# PACIFIC NORTHWEST BUMBLEBEE PROJECT COMPLETED

By Bea Harrison

## **Fuzzy Buzzy Bumblebee Alighting on my apple tree Flower to flower, dawn to dusk Gathering pollen as she must**

BH

A three-year project to gather data on our local bumblebees has concluded. Several Spokane Audubon members participated in the citizen-science project called Pacific Northwest Bumblebee Atlas.

The project, covering Washington, Idaho and Oregon, had 276 volunteers, who adopted areas to survey, resulting in one of the most complete bumblebee studies in the world. Twenty-seven bumblebee species were detected in the three-state area. A total of 21,514 individual bumblebee observations were made. Participants also noted the species of flower the bee was on, leading to valuable information about which flowers bumblebees prefer.

Bumblebees are essential pollinators in both wildlands and agriculture, especially of fruits and vegetables. They are large and strong, giving them the ability to push themselves into tight spaces to pollinate. They have a special skill called buzz-pollination that other bees don't have which allows them to vibrate their bodies, releasing the flower's pollen. This makes them great at pollinating tomatoes and potatoes, as well as the beautiful shooting-star wildflower!

Bumblebee numbers are declining worldwide. The causes are not totally understood, but insecticides, especially the widely used group of neonicotinoid pesticides, are deadly to bees and other insects. The baseline data gathered in this study may help scientists understand more about how to save bumblebees.

We can all do our part to help conserve bees by:

- Avoiding the use of pesticides
- Buying organic fruits and vegetables
- Using native plants in landscaping

Follow the links below to read more about Bumblebee Atlas and habitat restoration recommendations, as well as Xerces Society information about bumblebees.

Click to Download

<https://xerces.org/publications/guidelines/pnw-bumble-bees>

[How Neonicotinoids Can Kill](https://www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation)

<https://www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation>

For additional current scientific information on insect decline, try the book *Silent Earth: Averting the Insect Apocalypse*, by Dave Gouldson. It is available at Spokane County Libraries.



**Bumblebee on Camas Flower  
from The Bumblebee Atlas**



# Field Notes

Bird Sightings for the Inland Northwest, compiled by Jon Isacoff

It's been a somewhat wet early winter so far, with mother nature not seeming to decide what kind of season it will be. As winter settles in, bird activity is relatively low, but keep a look out for winter specialties. Redpolls are being seen here and there around the region. Perhaps some additional goodies will join them. In other news, Lesser Goldfinches continue their march into Northeastern WA and North Idaho. Happy Holiday birding!

Greater White-fronted Goose: Saltese Wetlands (11/28-eBird)

Surf Scoter: Lake Pend Oreille (11/19-TL)

White-winged Scoter: Coeur D'Alene Lake (11/28-eBird)

Red-breasted Merganser: Sandpoint (11/19-TL); Hawkins Point (11/22-KS and PO); Harrison (11/21-KS and PO); Nine Mile Falls (11/27-CM);

Anna's Hummingbird: Spokane Valley (12/18-MC); Moscow (12/2-NP); Kendrick (12/17-JH)

Pacific Loon: Bonner's Ferry (12/11-JR)

Blue Jay: Bonner's Ferry (12/10-JR and SE)

Pine Grosbeak: Elmira (12/10-DR)

White-winged Crossbill: Moscow Mountain (11/22-KD); Snow Creek (11/28-SE and JR)

Lesser Goldfinch: Hayden (11/26-eBird); Paradise Prairie (12/1-AM); Saltese Flats (12/2-TO); Rice (12/6-TD); North Spokane (12/7-eBird)

Golden-crowned Sparrow: Heyburn SP (11/21-KS and PO)

White-throated Sparrow: Pullman (11/21-eBird); Little Spokane NA (11/27-CM and TB); Silverton (12/2-eBird); Bonner's Ferry (12/5-SE and JR); Priest River (12/17-eBird)



**Lesser Goldfinch Male**  
© Sharif Uddin



**Lesser Goldfinch Female**  
© Sharif Uddin

Observers: RB-R.J. Baltierra; DB-Donna Bragg; BB-Ben Bright; TB-Taylor Baldwin; Marlene Cashen; FC-Forest Corcoran; RC-River Corcoran; WC-Warren Current; RDC-Rich Del Carlo; KD-Kas Dumroese; TD-Tim Durnell; SE-Shannon Ehlers; Jacob Elonen; NE-Norm Engeland; FF-Fred Forssell; DG-Don Goodwin; CG-Cierra Gove; LH-Lindell Haggin; JH-John Hanna; CH-Cameron Heusser; I-Jon Isacoff; SJ-Steve Joyce; BK-Bob Kemp; GL-Greg Lambeth; TL-Terry Little; CL-Carl Lundblad; AM-Alan McCoy; CM-Curtis Mahon; MM-Mason Maron; AM-Alan McCoy; BM-Ben Meredyk; NM-Nancy Miller; WM-Will Merg; PO-Peter Olsoy; TO-Tim O'Brien; NP-Neil Paprocki; DR-Diana Roberts; JR-Jethro Runco; SS-Sandy Schreven; MS-Mark Selle; KS-Katie Sorenson; CS-Charles Swift; NT-Norma Trefry; AT-Andrew Thomas; DW-Doug Ward; MW -Michael Woodruff

# Disappearing Birds?

by Alan McCoy

Actually, there's no doubt about it. Bird numbers are in steep decline. But that's not what this article is about because I know what you thought as soon as you read the title. "Oh no! Not another depressing article with even more bad news." Well, I am here to oblige. Mostly, I know that everyone reading this already knows of the decline in birds so I am not going to point it out in excruciating detail here. I expect that every reader also knows that habitat loss is the leading cause of human-caused avian mortality. But did you know that according to a leading researcher on human-caused avian mortality, Dr. Daniel Klem, "collisions with clear and reflective sheet glass and plastic cause the deaths of more birds than any other human-related avian mortality factor." These collisions happen wherever buildings with windows are found, from city skyscrapers to your home and mine. Measuring these fatalities is not easy but estimates range up to an annual mortality of a billion birds in North America alone.

Let that sink in. One billion dead birds each year!

But before you reach for that bottle of scotch, hear me out. My mother used to tell me that when you are feeling "blue" you need to reach out to someone, get involved and engaged in something and stop thinking about yourself. Taking her advice to heart, we at Spokane Audubon are starting an initiative this year to make it easy (or at least easier) to be part of the solution to this problem. Sure, maybe you haven't found a dead bird under one of your windows, or maybe you only find a few a year. But think of it this way. If there are 250 million homes each with "only" one dead bird, that is still a lot of dead birds, right?

I have heard that thud when a bird has hit one of our windows and I've rushed outside to see if it is still there dazed and confused or dead. It is a sickening feeling and I don't want even one more bird to be killed or injured by colliding with any of my windows. I have an idea that you are with me; you don't want that either.

In the coming months, working in my shop, I will build some window models with a variety of home solutions. When the weather is a bit nicer (after all, meeting inside during a pandemic is still not a great idea!) and we can have an outside workshop/demonstration, we will demonstrate these models to anyone interested in being part of the solution. If you are like me, you want to know how much it would cost. Other concerns I have are how it would affect the amount of light entering the house, how much would it impact the visual field of view, what about washing the windows and what about curb appeal? These are all good questions and there is no single solution that works for everyone. For my house I think there are two products that will work. One for our larger windows, and another for smaller windows. We hope to help you discover which solution(s) will work for you. Having an in-person and hands-on demonstration I think will really help in evaluating the different products that are available to the homeowner, but there are a few websites that will help you get informed about this issue.

A portion of the website of the American Bird Conservancy is devoted to window collisions and is well worth your time. For an overall picture, here is a great place to start: <https://abcbirds.org/glass-collisions/>. For existing homes and buildings practical information can be found here: <https://abcbirds.org/glass-collisions/homes-existing-buildings/>. Our speaker for our February meeting will be Jim Cubie who has worked with Dr. Klem on this issue and created a document called the Consumer Guide to Window Strike Prevention (available as a downloadable pdf) that pulls together several effective solutions. He also created a website that is useful especially for the homeowner: <https://birdfriendlyyards.net/>.

Please join us in reducing the number of birds killed at our homes. This is the first step. Once this part of the program is running, the next step is to address the issue as it pertains to commercial buildings, building codes and local and statewide legislation.

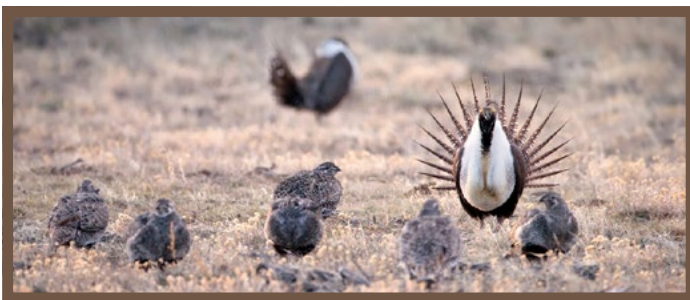


# Greater Sage-Grouse

BIRD OF THE WEEK

American Bird Conservancy

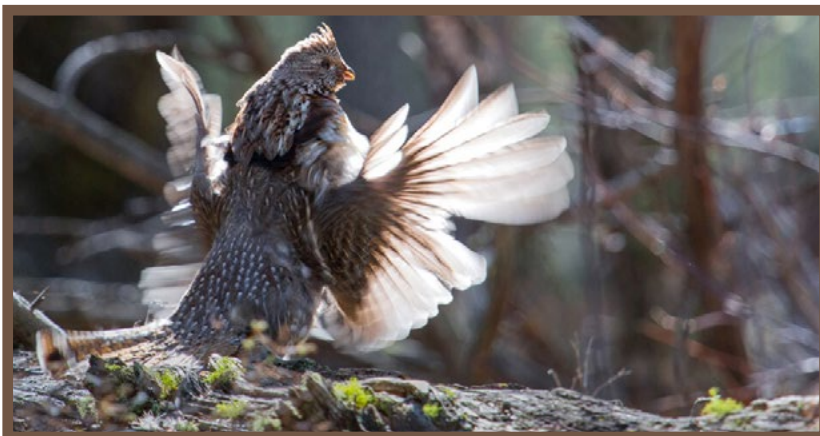
Each spring heralds a unique spectacle on brushy western plains of North America. Year after year, male Greater Sage-Grouse congregate on ancestral display grounds known as leks. There, the males strut about, fanning spiky tail feathers and raising feathered white collars while inflating bright yellow throat sacs — all the while making a weird assortment of booming, swishing, and popping noises. Female sage-grouse, the object of all this parading, look on with a critical eye.



Greater Sage-Grouse Lek  
© Agnieszka-Bacal

The Greater Sage-Grouse hens and their young sometimes gather with other females in food-rich areas. Post-breeding, other individual grouse may join these groups, sometimes forming winter flocks that number in the hundreds.

The quality of nesting habitat surrounding a lek is one of the most important factors for sage-grouse nesting success, with adequate cover being one of the most critical components.



Greater Sage-Grouse Drumming  
© Neal Herbert

## Sagebrush Sea

The charismatic Greater Sage-Grouse is an “umbrella” species, meaning that efforts to conserve it also benefit a wide variety of other wildlife. It is one of the most prominent inhabitants of the sagebrush “sea,” which encompasses millions of acres of open lands across 13 U.S. states and small portions of a few Canadian provinces. These plains are more complex than they first appear, with many varieties of native sagebrush, bunchgrasses, and wildflowers. The sagebrush sea is home to hundreds of bird species besides the grouse, including the Sagebrush Sparrow and Sage Thrasher, plus scores of other animals, ranging from the unique Pronghorn antelope to the Great Basin Spadefoot toad. It is also an important migratory corridor for birds, and provides winter habitat for Mule Deer and Elk.

Greater Sage-Grouse utter a chicken-like cackling call when flushed from cover. Displaying males make a weird assortment of booming, swishing, and popping noises, produced by rattling their stiff tail and wing feathers and inflating and deflating their throat sacs.

## Surviving on Sagebrush

The Greater Sage-Grouse needs large expanses of healthy sagebrush habitat to thrive. Since it lacks a muscular gizzard like other birds have, it cannot grind and digest hard seeds, and must feed on softer plant material. Sagebrush buds, leaves, and bunchgrasses constitute over 70 percent of its diet year-round, supplemented by insects, fruits, and small amounts of grit. The sage-grouse forages on the ground in open habitats, seeking sheltered feeding spots in harsh weather.

## Life at the Lek, and Beyond

Male Greater Sage-Grouse are well-known for their display “dances” on traditional gathering grounds known as leks. Traditional lekking grounds may be used for many years. Although many male sage-grouse gather to display at a lek, only a few are chosen by the majority of visiting females for mating. After mating, the females disperse to areas around the lek to nest.

(cont on page12)

Like other lekking species such as the Lesser Prairie-Chicken and Buff-breasted Sandpiper, the Greater Sage-Grouse male plays no role in raising the young. Hens nest under a sagebrush or other large shrub in a well-hidden, grass-lined depression on the ground. A hen lays and incubates a clutch of six to 10 eggs. The downy chicks hatch after two to three weeks and immediately walk out of the nest to follow their mother. In their first week of life, chicks eat many protein-rich insects, but switch to a plant-based diet as they mature.



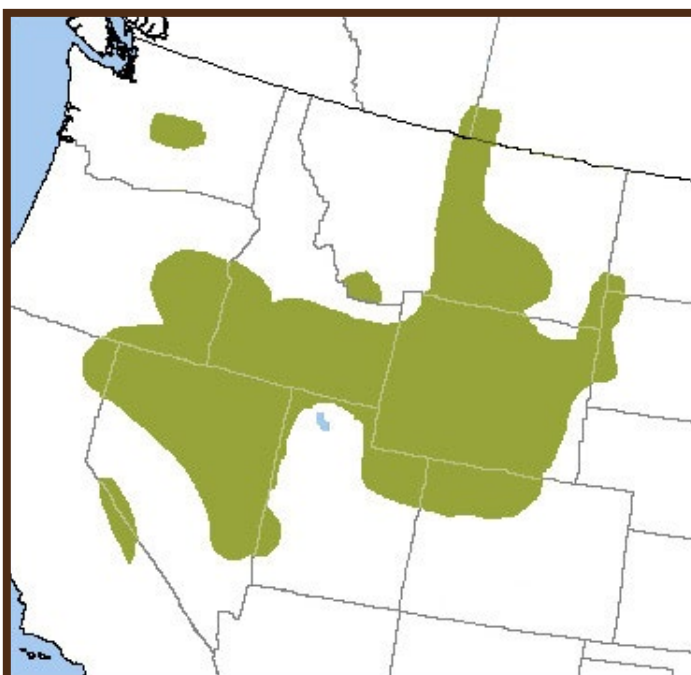
**Greater Sage-Grouse Males facing off**  
© Dorian Anderson



**Greater Sage-Grouse - Male**  
© James Yule



**Greater Sage-Grouse**  
© Bob Steele



**Greater Sage-Grouse Range**



**Greater Sage-Grouse Lek**  
© USDA/Mark Gocke

## Pygmy Owl Contributions

Spokane Audubon Society members who want to contribute to the Pygmy Owl newsletter can submit articles on, and photos of, birds and bird conservation issues to [info@spokaneaudubon.org](mailto:info@spokaneaudubon.org) for publishing consideration.

The newsletter deadline is the 20th of the month for the next month's edition.

Details of the field trips will be found on our website <https://www.audubonspokane.org/upcoming-events>.



The Pygmy Owl  
**Spokane Audubon Society**  
P.O. Box 9820  
Spokane, WA 99209-9820

**The Spokane Audubon Society advocates for birds and their habitats in the Inland Northwest and connects people with nature.**

**Visit our website:**

**<https://audubonspokane.org>**

### Spokane Audubon Society Membership Form

Annual Membership and Donation:

Student (under 21): \$10 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Individual: \$20 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Family: \$30 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting: \$50 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Contributing: \$100 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Lifetime: \$500 \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual memberships provide ongoing support for our many conservation and educational activities.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



Please make check payable to: Spokane Audubon Society

Send this form and your check to:  
Audubon Membership  
Attn: Alan McCoy  
615 W Paradise Rd  
Spokane WA 99224

Join us, or renew your membership, online at our website:

<https://www.audubonspokane.org>.

Click "Support Us" or "Join Us" We accept PayPal, credit/debit cards or Apple Pay. Receiving duplicate newsletters? Errors or other changes to your email address? Contact Alan McCoy at [ahm2352@gmail.com](mailto:ahm2352@gmail.com) or (509) 999-9512.