

# The Pygmy Owl



Volume 30  
Issue 9  
May 2022

The Newsletter of the  
Spokane Audubon Society

**May 11, 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: 838 3490 7769, Passcode: 407454), link to

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83834907769?pwd=bUxGY203VVRyTVM2SnJoNDNFZjFudz09>

## Growing Sagebrush for Shrub Steppe Habitat Restoration and Public Outreach

presented by **Melissa MacKelvie**



Melissa MacKelvie, a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife habitat biologist for Lincoln and Whitman counties, will present her work with students and other groups to grow sagebrush and

“It can be easy to mistake arid ecosystems as empty land,” Melissa says, “but really they are full of life and provide habitat for many unique plant and animal species. The goal of this project is for kids to learn about the importance of local habitats through hands-on experience. This kind of community involvement can help protect this special ecosystem for future generations.”

other shrub-steppe plants for habitat restoration. Her recent work with 7th and 8th grade students at the West Valley City School resulted in some shrub-steppe habitat drawings.



Student Artwork  
by Melissa MacKelvie

Melissa grew up in Eastern Washington, which inspired her passion for shrub-steppe and arid ecosystems. She graduated from the University of Washington with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies and also has a graduate certificate in Wildlife Management from Oregon State University. In her free time, Melissa enjoys hiking, gardening, mountain biking, reading, and spending time with her family.

Currently Melissa is working with the West Valley School District's Outdoor Learning Center to help raise awareness among young people of the value of the shrub-steppe ecosystem. The “public outreach” part of the project is as important as use of the plants they grow for restoration work on the ground.



Flowering Sagebrush  
by Melissa MacKelvie

# The Pygmy Owl

Volume 30 Issue 9 May 2022

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Spokane Audubon Society  
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Owl illustrations on pg. 1, 11 and 12 © Jan Reynolds.



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# Membership Report

by Alan McCoy

## Update of Members' Status March 16, 2022 through April 20, 2022:

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

**Individual:** Jane Stewart, Silvia Oliver, Lisa Klapp, Theodora Sallee, Lois Strand, Ruthie Dearing, Ron Krueger, Della Meyer, Sean Clynch, Barbara Foltz, Irene Arm, Zara Stevens, Lee Wolfand, Billie Severtsen, Lola Frederick, Ellen Imsland, Ellie La Rocca, Linda Carroll, Jane McNew

**Family:** Heather Kuta, Paul Lindholdt, Peggy Blum, Diane & Harvey Morrison, Michael Henneberry, Connie & Dale Heldt, Minde & Jan Connelly, Janice & Ernie Verdugo, Carolyn Wright

**Supporting:** W T Soeldner, Ryan Grant

**Contributing:** Lea Smith, Barbara Morkill, Peter Wildman

Many thanks to our **returning members**:

**Student:** Theo Goodwin

**Individual:** Sharon Genung, Sue Orlowski, Claudia Kroll, Joanne Powell, Tom Munson, Peter Goldberg, Delores Schwindt, Fran Haywood

**Family:** Jim Hudlow, Rachel Brabeck, Gary Lee, Don Goodwin

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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>.

# Spokane Audubon Calendar Photograph Contest Guidelines

Submission Period: April 15 – May 15, 2022

Submit photos to: [sauduboncalendar@gmail.com](mailto:sauduboncalendar@gmail.com)

## Requirements

- All photographs must be submitted by a Spokane Audubon Society member in good standing (i.e., a current member).
- A maximum of four photographs can be submitted per person.
- Photographs must be submitted electronically via email to [sauduboncalendar@gmail.com](mailto:sauduboncalendar@gmail.com).
- Each photograph must be submitted in jpeg format, be in landscape orientation with dimensions of 9.25" wide by 6.75" high, have a resolution of at least 300 pixels per inch, and be no larger than 10MB in size.
- Submitted photographs shall not have the © symbol with the photographer's name or other inserted script.
- For images selected for the calendar, the photographer maintains copyright and agrees to provide perpetual use of the photograph(s) to Spokane Audubon Society for the calendar and other promotional and educational purposes.
- All photos must be of wild birds and must be taken in Eastern Washington or Northern Idaho. Please include the species name(s) and location where each photograph was taken.

## Call for Entries

Photographers may submit entries starting Friday, April 15th. The deadline is Sunday, May 15th; no entries will be accepted after that date.

## Judging and Selection

- Selection will be made by a panel of three to five impartial judges, at least one of whom is a Spokane Audubon Society board member. At least some panel members will have moderately advanced bird identification skills and experience with bird photography.
- Photographers who submit entries will not be judges.
- The bird in a natural setting must be the focus of the photograph. Preference is given to interesting behaviors, unusual or hard-to-see species, and eye-catching compositions. Habitat and artificial features should not overpower nor draw attention away from the bird(s).
- Judging criteria are photo composition, technical excellence, artistic merit, and overall impact. Normal processing is allowed but over-processed or altered photos will be rejected.
- Submissions must comply with the specified size requirements.
- Following selection, all entrants will be notified of the decisions.

## Publication

Each photograph will be published with the common name of the bird species and © with the name of the photographer.

**Special Note:** Photographers whose images are selected for the calendar may need to provide a TIFF version of the photograph for printing purposes.



# Field Notes

Bird Sightings for the Inland Northwest, compiled by Jon Isacoff

Defying recent trends and expectations, we are having the coldest April in decades, with several iterations of accumulated snow. As is normal, huge masses of waterfowl are in the region, but will be leaving soon. Following on their tails will be our beloved Spring passerine migrants. Will we get more snow or will it be warm and dry? Or warm and wet? We shall see. Not too many unusual sightings this past month, but with migration about to kick in, hopefully that will change soon!

Greater White-fronted Goose: Saltese Flats (3/20-TO); Valley (4/16-TL)

Ross's Goose: Sprague (4/1-TL)

White-winged Scoter: Spokane Valley (4/8-AT)

Long-tailed Duck: Hope (4/3-FC and RC)

Anna's Hummingbird: Spokane Valley (4/15-MC); Moscow (4/16-NP)

Sandhill Crane: Spokane Valley (3/30-MC); Kootenai NWR (4/10-eBird)

Short-billed Gull: Hope (3/29-RDC)

Black-backed Woodpecker: Little Pend Oreille NWR (4/16-eBird)

Prairie Falcon: Usk (4/8-TL)

Peregrine Falcon: Davis Lake (4/8); Lake Pend Oreille (4/15-TL)

Blue Jay: Sandpoint (3/27-RDC); Bonner's Ferry (4/10-JR and SE)

White-throated Sparrow: Silverton (4/2-Shelley Hicks)

Fox Sparrow: Bonner's Ferry (4/10-JR and SE)



Greater White-fronted Geese  
© Richard MacIntosh



Greater White-fronted Goose  
© Ryan Schain

Observers: RB-R.J. Baltierra; RyB-Ryan Bart; DB-Donna Bragg; BB-Ben Bright; Marlene Cashen; FC-Forest Corcoran; RC-River Corcoran; WC-Warren Current; RDC-Rich Del Carlo; KD-Kas Dumroese; TD-Tim Durnell; SE-Shannon Ehlers; JE-Jacob Elonen; NE-Norm Engeland; DG-Don Goodwin; CG-Cierra Gove; LH-Lindell Haggin; JH-John Hanna; CH-Cameron Heusser; I-Jon Isacoff; LF-Louise Johnson; BK-Bob Kemp; DK-Dave Koehler; GL-Greg Lambeth; TL-Terry Little; AM-Alan McCoy; CM-Curtis Mahon; MM-Mason Maron; BM-Ben Meredyk; NM-Nancy Miller; WM-Will Merg;; 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; WY-Will Young

## Member Profile:

# Tina Penny

by Madonna Luers



Tina Penny prepares to release a rehabilitated immature bald eagle that left its nest early during last year's heat wave.

Tina Penny is always hands-on busy with birds.

If she's not up a ladder re-nesting a baby Great Horned Owl that bounced out of its nest, she's transporting to a wildlife rehabilitator one that injured itself in the fall. Or she's rescuing a Sharp-shinned Hawk with a broken wing or a Bald Eagle that's been shot. Or she's telling school kids how the Red-tailed Hawk perched on her arm was permanently injured and can't be released to the wild.

Tina says it's just the way she can do her part to address what she believes is the number one issue affecting the future of birds and birding – humans. "Whether it be from loss of habitat with our land changes or from the pressure of birding crowds 'overviewing' a delicate species, we humans impact birds," she said.

Tina joined Spokane Audubon Society because she wanted to be involved with "like-minded people who share their passion for the natural world and for birding." She's been involved in bird banding and other work with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and Gonzaga University. She's assisted the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with Spotted Owl surveys. She's a volunteer rescuer/transporter for injured birds of prey for Kettle River Raptor Center, Birds of Prey Northwest in Idaho, and Washington State University (WSU) Wildlife Ward. She also volunteers at the West Valley School District's Outdoor Learning Center where several non-releasable birds of prey are used for education, and as an educator at Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge. She's a key part

of the chapter's new wildlife rehab assistance team, providing other team members with training in raptor handling.

Birds of prey have been her favorites since she was about ten years old. Her dad always loved nature and wildlife and took her on motorcycle rides to look for birds on power poles. A Red-tailed Hawk was the first one to catch her attention. "Growing up in the '80's," she recalls, "the only Bald Eagle I saw was at the zoo. Now I'm so happy to see my home state of Ohio has so many nesting bald eagles."

Tina Biller was born in Aberdeen, Maryland, in 1972. After the family moved with her father's work in the Navy to St. John's in Newfoundland, Canada, and up and down the coast of California, they settled in Clyde, Ohio. After graduating high school in Ohio, Tina earned a bachelor's degree in environmental management from the University of Maryland in College Park, and did some graduate work at Columbia Southern University in Orange Beach, Alabama.

Her father's career in the Navy influenced Tina's desire to serve and she joined the U.S. Air Force, working as an engineering technician from 1992 to 1999. She was a land surveyor and computer-aided draftsman, and managed government service construction contracts. She served at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma, Osan Air Base in the Republic of South Korea, and Robins Air Force Base in Georgia.

Tina met her husband Richard Penny when they were both stationed at Osan in South Korea. After she was assigned to Georgia and he to Ramstein Air Base in Germany, she left the Air Force and worked as a civilian for the Department of Defense, managing contracts as an inspector, providing administrative support, and eventually working as a heavy equipment operator. After her husband's three tours in Germany, they lived at Lajes Field Azores in Portugal, Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, and Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana before moving to Spokane.

Tina has two daughters, ages 28 and 22, and “sadly,” like their father, they are not birders. “They are definitely not outdoorsy-type people,” she said. “They’ll hike with me, but only under stipulations like keeping it under five miles and not too steep. They’ve gotten a bit better over the years with enjoying the outdoors, but my oldest actually is afraid of birds!”

Tina travels whenever she can to photograph wildlife. Just this spring she spent ten days on a birding trip to Costa Rica where she saw and photographed Amazon Kingfisher, Crimson-collared Tanager, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Violet Sabrewing, and many more species, including mammals like Two-toed Sloth and Howler Monkey.

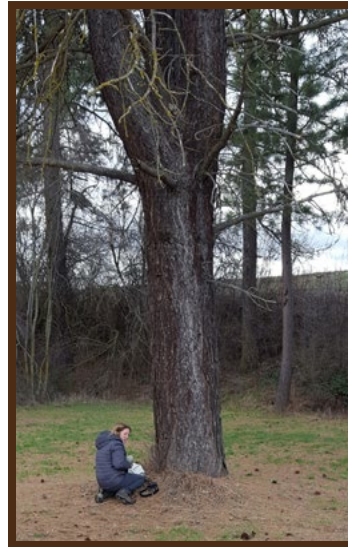
Her most memorable birding experience was the Spotted Owl survey she helped with in Oregon. She learned about the survey work from another volunteer at the West Valley Outdoor Learning Center who was doing raptor surveys for BLM and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. She invited Tina to come with her to the Medford area to lend a hand. “It was hot, long days in rough terrain,” she recalls, “but it was absolutely incredible to hear and see those rare birds!”

Tina’s favorite bird is any kind of owl. “They’ve always intrigued me,” she said. “They’re top apex predators with incredible skills and resiliency.”

Tina will be heading to Glacier National Park in western Montana this month to work as an Interpretive Park Ranger. When she returns to Spokane this fall, she plans to attend on-line classes through Oregon State University’s wildlife management program to complete her master’s work.

Her tips for new birdwatchers: Be respectful, be patient, be kind, and always be willing to learn.

This Great Gray Owl near Medical Lake unfortunately died of starvation due to a mouth tumor.



**Tina Penny with Great Horned owl**  
by Madonna Luers

**Tina renesting owl**  
by Madonna Luers



**Owlet renested**  
by Tina Penny



## Dim the Lights for Birds At Night

The theme of this year's World Migratory Bird Day on May 14 (always the second Saturday of May) is "Dim the Lights for Birds at Night."



Every year billions of birds migrate north in the spring and south in the fall, the majority of them flying at night, navigating with the night sky. However, as they pass over populated areas along their way,

they can become disoriented by bright artificial lights and sky glow, resulting in detours, energy drain and collisions with buildings or windows.

An estimated one billion birds are killed annually from direct collisions with illuminated buildings, towers, and other structures across the country. With 80% of the United States impacted by light-polluted nights, light pollution of airspace and increased urbanization pose serious threats to birds migrating at night.

Through the Migratory Bird Initiative, Audubon is partnering with organizations like the USGS Bird Banding Lab, Smithsonian, Georgetown University, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Movebank to bring together the latest and best tracking data to better understand when and where migratory birds will be and how to drive actions that protect them along their journey. A national collaboration among Audubon's Bird-Friendly Communities network and the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) is helping to build and strengthen the voluntary "Lights Out" program.

Lights Out is a national effort to reduce the problem by working with building owners, managers, and residents to turn off unnecessary lights during periods when they are most likely to affect migrating or nocturnal birds. On-going research in Chicago, where over 30,000 birds collided with a single building over

a 20-year period, is documenting the magnitude of the problem as well as an important part of the solution – turning out unnecessary lights reduced bird mortality at that problematic building by over 80%.

To date, efforts in over 40 cities plus several state and regional Lights Out entities are underway to prevent night-time collisions. Some groups advocate for legislation to ensure bird-friendly construction and lighting to avoid the problem in the future, using the fact that reducing lights has the added benefit of reducing energy use and saving money.

Here's how individuals can help night-migrating birds this month:

- Turn off exterior decorative lighting
- Extinguish spot and flood-lights
- Reduce atrium lighting wherever possible
- Turn off interior lighting, especially on upper floors
- Down-shield exterior lighting to eliminate all light directed upward and horizontal glare
- Install motion sensors and automatic controls wherever possible
- When converting to new lighting, carefully assess quality and quantity of light needed, avoiding over-lighting with newer, brighter technology.

While all unnecessary lighting should be reduced, exterior decorative lights and lighted upper stories have the greatest ability to disorient night-migrating birds, especially in inclement weather.

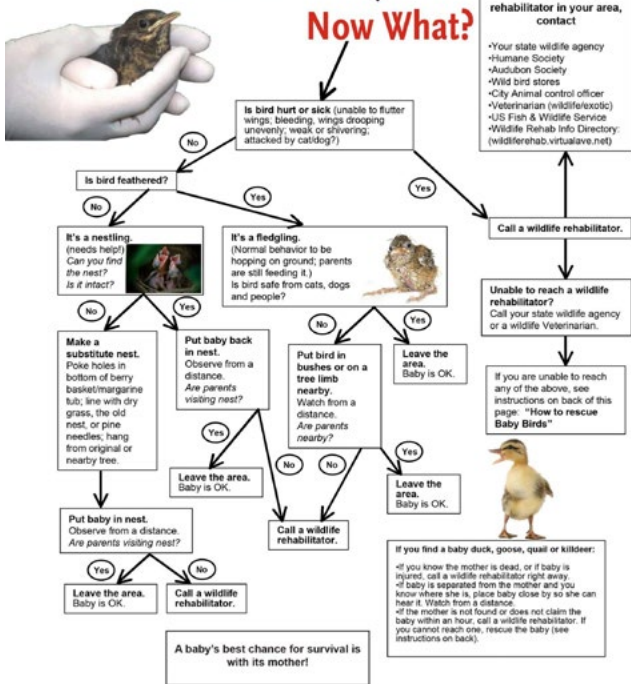
Light-induced collisions can occur at any time of the year, but they tend to peak during periods when birds are migrating through an area or, in some locations, when certain nocturnal species are present. Because migrating and nocturnal birds can be active throughout the night, lighting should be reduced or turned off for as much of the nighttime as possible during peak collision periods.

For more information, see

<https://www.audubon.org/world-migratory-bird-day-2022>  
[www.audubon.org/lights-out-program](http://www.audubon.org/lights-out-program)

# So You Found a Baby Bird

## Now What?



Sooner or later, no matter where you live, you'll come across a baby bird on the ground. You'll have to decide whether you should rescue it or leave it to fend for itself. In most cases, it is best not to interfere. The natural parents do a much better job at raising their young than we could ever do. A featherless baby bird must be fed every 15 to 20 minutes from sunrise to 10 p.m. – a significant time commitment for any foster parent.

### Feathered Fledglings

If the bird is fully or partially feathered, chances are it doesn't need your help. Fledglings, also known as "branchers," typically leave the nest and move about on the ground and on low branches for a few days before they can fly. Their parents are nearby and continue to care for the birds, answering their demanding calls with regular deliveries of food.

Unless injured, a fledgling bird should be left where it is. You can help by keeping cats, dogs, and curious children away from the bird so the mother can continue to feed it. Furthermore, removing a native bird from its environment is illegal, and deprives it of the essential care it needs from its parents.

### Naked Nestlings

If you find a baby bird with sparse feathers or none at all, it is a nestling that has likely fallen or been pushed from a nearby nest. If you can find it, you can

give the bird a helping hand by returning to the nest. It's best to wear gloves, but mostly for your own protection. Birds have a poor sense of smell, and it's not true that they will abandon their chicks if a person touches them.

If you can't find the nest or accessing it is too dangerous, put the baby bird where its parents can find it and where it will be safe from cats. Use a small plastic berry basket, margarine tub, or similar container lined with shredded paper towels (cotton products tend to tangle up in birds' feet). With a nail or wire, fasten the makeshift nest to a shady spot in a tree or tall shrub near where the bird was found. Next, place the nestling inside, tucking the feet underneath the body.

The parents usually will come back in a short time and will feed the baby in the container just as if it were the original nest. Often, you will see the mother going back and forth between each "nest," feeding both sets of babies.

### Ducklings and Goslings

If a baby duck or gosling is separated from the mother and siblings and you know where they are, place the baby close to its siblings and where the parent can hear it. Then watch from a distance to see if it rejoins its brood and is accepted by the parent. You can also try introducing the baby duck to another brood of approximately the same age.

### When to take a Baby Bird to a Wildlife Rehabilitator

Call a [permitted wildlife rehabilitator](#) right away if:

- You are certain the parents are dead or not caring for the nestling.
- The bird is sick or injured, exhibiting drooping wings, shivering, lethargy, or an attack by a cat, dog, or other predator.

There is no longer any WDFW-licensed wildlife rehabilitators in Spokane County. The closest rehabilitator that takes all species is the Washington State University (WSU) Exotics and Wildlife Ward at 100 Grimes Way in Pullman, 509-335-0711.

**Before you intervene, contact the Spokane Audubon Society's wildlife rehabilitation assistance volunteers at [spokanebirdrehab@gmail.com](mailto:spokanebirdrehab@gmail.com), or call the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife**



(WDFW) Eastern Regional Office in Spokane at 509-892-1001 or [TeamSpokane@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:TeamSpokane@dfw.wa.gov) for advice. If they confirm your belief that the animal needs help, they'll assist with getting it to a state licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

While waiting for or transporting to a wildlife rehabilitator:

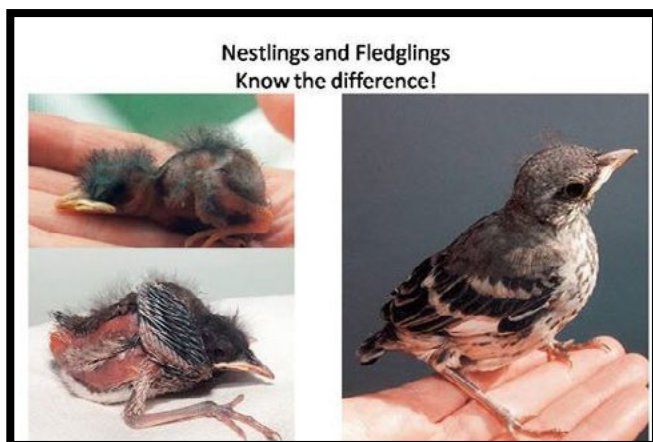
- Find a suitable and well-ventilated container and line with a clean soft cloth (not terry cloth) or paper towels.
- Gently pick the bird up with gloved hands and place it in the container.
- Keep the baby bird in a warm, quiet, and dark place. You can put one end of the container on a heating pad set on lowest setting. If a heating pad is unavailable, use a warm, not hot, rice heat pack placed inside the container next to the bird.
- Do not give the baby bird any food or water.

Wash your hands and anything that contacts the bird to prevent the spread of disease and/or parasites to you or your pets.

[WDFW Information on Injured or Orphaned Wildlife](#)

For more information:

<https://www.audubonspokane.org/i-found-a-baby-bird-1>



The Birding Store

## WOS Conference in Spokane Valley June 9-12

The Washington Ornithological Society (WOS) annual conference will be held in Spokane Valley at the CenterPlace Regional Event Center, 2426 N. Discovery Place, June 9 – 12, and help with local area field trips may still be needed.

Cindy McCormack ([nwbirder@gmail.com](mailto:nwbirder@gmail.com)) is organizing field trips for conference participants in several birding hotspots throughout the chapter area, including Pend Oreille, Stevens, Spokane, Lincoln and Whitman counties. Back-up leaders and assistants who know the local landscape may still be needed for some trips.

Registration for the conference continues through June 1. Field trip leaders/co-leaders can waive registration fees. Non-WOS members can register as non-member attendees. For more information about the conference, see <https://wos.org/annual-conference/current-year/>.



CenterPlace Regional Event Center

# Dark-eyed Darlings

By Lisa Langelier

While chickadees are often a favorite, I am fond of another dark-eyed darling, the dark-eyed junco. Their snappy appearance and perky behavior bring joy to the dark days of winter. In fact, their Latin species name, *hyemalis*, translates to “winter-flowering.” Northern migrants join our year-round junco residents during winter. Since these migrants arrive with winter across North America, they earned the name “snowbirds.”

In my winter neighborhood, the males outnumber females by about three to one. Flocks (or blizzards, as they are called) may include 30 birds flitting about the ground searching for food. Females tend to winter farther south than males because they do not fare as well as the dominant males when competing for food. Younger males winter farther north than older males, giving them a slight advantage in returning to northern breeding territories.

Male juncos are darker than females but both sexes sport gray heads, necks, and breasts, a white lower belly, white outer tail feathers, and a pink bill. Juveniles have streaked brown backs. This medium-sized sparrow has six recognizable populations. In eastern Washington the most common is the Oregon junco although slate-colored juncos are also found here.

Juncos prefer conifer forests and open woodlands where they forage for seeds, berries, and insects. You’ll often see them scratch the ground to uncover food. The female builds a cup-shaped nest on or near the ground protected by fallen logs, weeds, or some protective cover. Three to six eggs are incubated by the female for 11-13 days. Juveniles stay in the nest for 9-12 days. Their lower leg bones grow rapidly, allowing the young to run from the nest if threatened.

Many of my overwintering juncos have moved on but several are still here preparing for the breeding season. Listen for their song – a metallic trill – that sounds similar to a chipping sparrow. These dark-eyed darlings continue to delight me during summer.



Dark-eyed Junco Subspecies  
Mitch Waite Group



Dark-eyed Junco - Male  
Scott Martin

# Creating Wildlife Habitat in Your Own Backyard

by Shenandoah Marr

As members of the Audubon community, you know that bird populations are declining around the world. Anyone can help save birds; you don't need to be an expert to make some simple modifications to your own space. Here are some things anyone can do – whether you have a small patio or balcony or hundreds of acres.

## Increasing beneficial insects

Did you know that only 3% of garden insects are bad or potentially bad? The remaining 97% of insects are neutral or beneficial for pollination and/or to support wildlife, including birds. Never use pesticides, herbicides, or insecticides around your house. Let the wildlife you are attracting do the work!

## Landscaping and plants

Plants, from groundcover to trees, are what support insect life. These insects in turn support our own food crops as well as food for amphibians. Without healthy beneficial plants insects can't survive or reproduce. What are beneficial plants? Plants that provide cover, food, and opportunities for pollination. Native plants are a great place to start since they already are adapted to the conditions of your area. Native "keystone" plants are going to provide the most ecological benefit. Keystone plants are those that support a high number of diverse animal species. Having even one keystone plant will maximize the biodiversity potential of your whole garden. Keystone plants in Eastern Washington include Ponderosa and Lodgepole pines, aspen, willow, asters, sunflowers, and huckleberry. Consult the National Wildlife Federation, Master Gardener Association, or one of our native plant nurseries for a complete list of native and keystone plants in our area.

It is important to note that grass lawns provide very little ecological benefit for wildlife. Reducing the size of your lawn and replacing the area with beneficial plants will go a long way in promoting wildlife at your home. You can shrink your lawn by making attractive islands of flowering plants or increasing the border around your lawn.

What you do with those plants is equally important as what type of plants you grow. Resist the urge to clean everything up and make it look tidy. Insects and other wildlife need leaf litter and other organic

debris in order to nest, reproduce, and eat. Planting groundcover around the base of trees will keep the area looking nice and provide habitat. Caterpillars fall from trees and other plants, then bore into the dirt below to continue their lifecycle. By keeping soil under trees soft and aerated you will help caterpillars provide food for birds or morph into moths or butterflies. Grass or excessive raking makes dirt hard and compact, making it difficult for caterpillars to bore into the ground, thereby killing them.

## Lighting

Artificial lighting can be harmful to frogs, birds, and nocturnal insects. If possible, turn off outdoor lights at night. If that is not possible, install a sensor light that only comes on with motion. If neither of these options appeals to you, switch your lighting to yellow LED bulbs. Insects are not attracted to yellow bulbs the way they are to white light.

## Habitat and Shelter

Creating a habitat pile is a fun way to spend an afternoon. A habitat pile is simply a mound of different sizes of wood and other organic material that contains shelter for wildlife. You can also place old clay pots, PVC pipes, bamboo hollows, or similar items around your property to create hiding places.

Look around your property and see if you have any features that may be hazardous to wildlife. Windows may be deadly to birds. Spokane Audubon has several resources available to help prevent window strikes. Frogs and toads may fall into holes made with concrete or other hard materials and be unable to escape. Window wells are a good example of this. Cover these areas or put sticks in them so a frog can get out.

## Water Source

Consider adding a pond to your property. Ponds don't need to be elaborate or expensive to attract wildlife. You can dig a hole and place an old barrel or pool liner in it to hold water. Cold-hearted goldfish will help control mosquito larvae. A depth of at least 3 feet will keep racoons from poaching the fish. If it has steep sides be sure to provide rocks and plants so the amphibians and insects can escape – you don't want to inadvertently create a death trap.

Continued on pg. 12

## The real McCoy was on display at Earth Day weekend events

Chapter president and handyman extraordinaire Alan McCoy created a display of bird window collision prevention methods that enlightened visitors at Earth Day weekend events.

The wooden frame displays five “windows,” each with a different way to discourage birds from flying into the glass, and viewable from the “inside” and the “outside”. The display was a hit at the chapter booth set up at Spokane events Friday, April 22, through Sunday, April 24, where most visitors were unaware that window collisions are second only to cats as the highest cause of death for North American birds.

Any member who wants to use the display at an event to help spread the word can contact Alan at 509-999-9512 to make arrangements.



Lisa Langelier staffs the booth at St. Al's on Gonzaga campus on Sunday, April 24.



Madonna Luers, Peggy Goodner Tan, and Therese Nielsen staff the booth at St. John's Cathedral on Saturday, April 23



Bea and Jim Harrison staff SAS booth with window display at Riverfront Park Pavilion on Earth Day, April 22.

### Continued from pg. 11

A bird bath is a good alternative if you can't make a pond. Both birds and beneficial insects will be attracted to a bird bath. These beneficial insects may be pollinators, food sources for frogs and birds, or both. Be sure to keep your bird bath clean to prevent disease and mosquitos.



Pond built by Alan McCoy in his yard  
photo by Alan McCoy

### Activism

Be a voice for wildlife! If you live in an HOA, consider speaking to the board about landscaping techniques. If you don't have property you can modify, volunteer for a local restoration or planting project. If you enjoy writin, consider contacting your local, state, or federal legislators asking them to support legislation that supports wildlife.

## 2022 Field Trip Schedule

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

We hope to offer more field trips this spring and summer, so please check our website for more trip listings and for the details of each trip

- (1) May 8, Sunday Slavin Conservation Area  
Leader: Alan McCoy
- (2) May 14, Saturday Turnbull NWR Family Trip  
Leaders: Sandy & Richard Sollie
- (3) May 15, 2022, Sunday, West Plains Trip  
Leader: Alan McCoy
- (4) May 20, 2022, Friday Crab Creek-Rocky Ford  
Leader: Alan McCoy & Peggy Goodner-Tan
- (5) May 24-25, Tue/Wed Little Pend Oreille NWR  
Leader: Jim & Bea Harrison
- (6) June 3, 2022, Friday. Dishman Hills Natural Area  
Leader: Gary Lee
- (7) June 9, Thursday, Liberty Lake  
Leader: Joyce Alonso & Fran Haywood
- (8) June 27, Monday Little Spokane River Float  
Leader: Bea & Jim Harrison
- (9) Nov 1-2, Tue/Wed Skagit County  
Leader: Bea & Jim Harrison

### Iller Creek (Dishman Hills Natural Area)

June 3, 2022

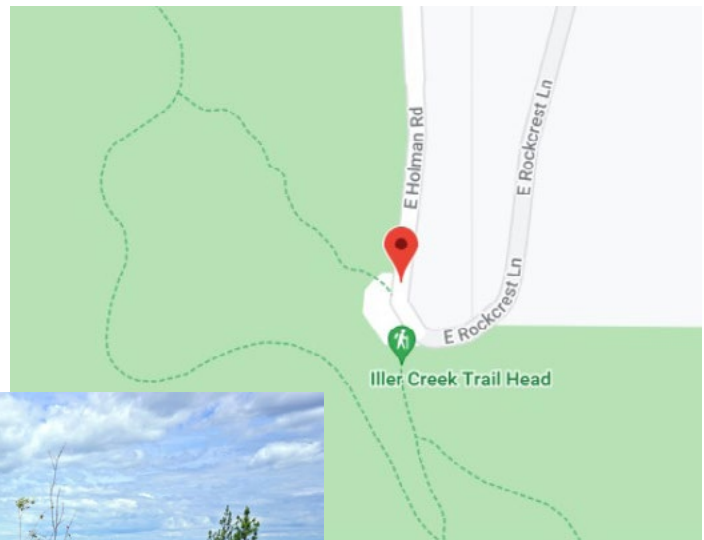
Friday 6:45 am – 11 am

Limit: 10 birders

**Contact:** leader Gary Lee - text 509-389-5474 or email [bird\\_fan@aol.com](mailto:bird_fan@aol.com) by Wednesday, June 1st to confirm your place. We will meet at the parking lot at the base of Iller Creek, 9001 E. Holman Rd, Spokane Valley. Park on right before the switchback at the entrance to the Conservation Area.

**Description:** This will be a slow hike with elevation change, covering up to 4 miles round trip and will require a moderate level of physical fitness. The hike will likely last 3-4 hours. We will search for an impressive assortment of spring and summer woodland and riparian species. This is a good time for many species as migrants are still moving through, and most breeders are back.

**Target Species:** Ruffed Grouse, Calliope Hummingbird, Red-naped Sapsucker, Dusky and Hammond's Flycatchers, Cassin's and Warbling Vireo, three nuthatch species, Veery, Swainson's Thrush, finches, sparrows, Lazuli Bunting, and a chance at all of the breeding and spring migrant warblers.



Dishman Hills, Eagle Rock  
© Mary Weathers

## 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.



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.