

Volume 26
Issue 48
April 2017

The Pygmy Owl

The Newsletter of the
Spokane Audubon Society



Urban Rewilding on the Spokane River

Presented by Paul Lindholdt and Greg Gordon

This month's program offers a variety of perspectives on the Spokane River. Our presenters, Paul Lindholdt, professor of English at Eastern Washington University, will speak on a forthcoming book he edited on the river; and Greg Gordon, professor of Environmental Studies at Gonzaga, will join a few of his students to discuss the ecology of the river and potential for restoration.

Native American tribes harvested the river's resources for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years, managing their environment in an ecologically sustainable manner. Can we in the 21st century do the same?

One of the major challenges facing the Spokane River is the urban environment. Urbanization threatens more species in the U.S. than any other human activity, primarily through habitat loss and

replacement of native species with exotics. In the continental U.S., the total size of urban areas now exceeds that of protected areas, such as national parks and wilderness. Not only does urbanization lead to loss of biodiversity, human residents of cities suffer from "nature deficit disorder" because of loss of contact with the natural world.

The Spokane River is constrained by six dams, and humans have dramatically altered the hydrology, as well as the species composition. Nevertheless, it still remains a more or less functional ecosystem. But how can we enhance its ecological potential to build a healthier natural and human environment? While we may not be able to fully return the Spokane River to its pristine condition, we can restore and rewild many aspects. To learn more about the past, present, and future of the Spokane River attend the Spokane Audubon meeting on April 12 at 7:30pm.



Ariel view of Spokane River at Hamilton, 1951

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The Pygmy Owl, the newsletter of the Spokane Audubon Society, is published monthly, September through June.

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Owl illustrations on pg. 1 and pg. 8 © Jan Reynolds.



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Monarch Butterfly Mapper

We're excited to announce that the new Western Monarch Milkweed Mapper has now officially launched. You can visit the site here: <https://www.monarchmilkweedmapper.org/>.

This website has been created through a partnership between Xerces, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and a State Wildlife Grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

You can read more about the Mapper on our blog (<http://www.xerces.org/blog/help-researchers-track-milkweeds-and-monarchs-across-the-west/>) and in our press release (<http://www.xerces.org/2017/02/16/new-western-monarch-and-milkweed-website-launched/>).

Many thanks to all of you who have shared data, reviewed the site, and helped get this project off the ground!

Candace Fallon, Senior Conservation Biologist

Endangered Species Program



Spokane Audubon's next meeting will be:
Wednesday, April 12th at 7:30 p.m.
Social Hour 7:00

Deadline for May P.O. submissions
is April 20th.

Get Covered for Tick Season with These Eight Expert Tips

By Meaghan Lee Callaghan

Before Leaving the House

Cover up: Ticks want to latch onto your skin, so the best defense is an armor of clothing. Wear long sleeves and pants, even if it's hot out; better, wear light-colored clothing on which it's easier to spot dark-colored ticks. And don't wear clothes with holes or mesh; young ticks (known as nymphs) are around the size of a poppy seed and can easily squeeze through.

Seal your seams: Ticks are sneaky little bugs, and if there is a way for them to crawl under your clothes, they'll find it. Seal any openings in your armor, especially where your body will brush against grass or shrubs, like your lower legs. A tried-and-true trick is to tuck your pants into your socks, but be careful: stretching your socks can create tick-sized gaps in the weave.

Apply bug spray: If you choose to use insect repellent, there are many options available to you—from lightweight botanicals like citronella, which mask your scent, to heavy-duty insecticides that kill ticks and other insects on contact. Many available for use like IR3535 and DEET can be used on the skin, while others like pyrethrin can only be sprayed on clothing and gear.

When Out in the Field

Stay informed: Ticks are small; many look similar, and each species of tick carries different diseases. A tick reference guide will make it easier to know what you've encountered and what symptoms to look out for (if you've been bitten). There are many websites that feature images of the various tick species and their nymphs, which you can print out and carry with you; Tick Encounter from the University of Rhode Island is one example. There are also apps for iOS and Android, and most are free of charge.

Stick to the trail: Ticks prefer grass at roughly knee height, 12 to 18 inches tall. They don't hang from branches or jump; rather, they "quest" by extending their legs and waiting for a potential host to pass by. Sticking to the middle of the trail away from grass should lower your chances of contact.

Following Your Foray

Disinfect your clothes: Remove your shoes and socks as soon as possible. Before getting in the house or car, put them in a plastic bag to keep ticks from spreading. Put your clothes in the dryer prior to putting them in the wash; a 15-minute heat cycle should kill any ticks lingering on your clothes.

Do a tick check: Examine your skin over your entire body, feeling for unexpected bumps. Be sure to check tick hotspots like your armpits, your groin, and behind your ears. You can enlist a handheld mirror or even a friend to inspect spots you can't see. If you live in a tick-infested area, check for ticks frequently; the more familiar you are with checking, the more likely you'll know what's a freckle, what's a mole, and what's not supposed to be there.

If You Find a Tick

If it's crawling on your skin: Take a deep breath and catch that little guy. Tape can be really handy: stick the tape on the tick, fold it around so it's trapped, and throw it out. That way it won't hang out in your home. If it's bitten your skin and is lodged don't panic. Ignore the folklore remedies that claim the final word on removing lodged ticks. Don't burn it with a match or lighter, and don't apply petroleum jelly or nail polish to its head to suffocate it; these methods increase the chances of infection. Remove it quickly—without a fuss—to reduce the chances of infection. Use a good, clean pair of tweezers, grasp the tick by its tiny head, and yank it out. Focusing on the head will help you remove the whole tick and not leave its head lodged inside. Any remaining bit could cause future irritation and infection. Then swipe on some disinfectant, apply a Band-aid, and you're good to go. If you catch it quickly, you're unlikely to be infected; but keep watch for common symptoms just in case.





Thank You For the Biggest GBBC Ever

Once again participants from around the world set new records for the number of species identified during the four days of the Great Backyard Bird Count, for the number of checklists submitted, and the number of estimated participants. These numbers are based on totals taken on the afternoon of March 3 and they are impressive. The amount of increase is based on a comparison to 2016 count figures:

Total checklists: 173,826 (2016 final total: 162,052)
 Total species: 5,940 (2016 final total: 5,689)
 Estimated participants: 214,018
 (2016 final total estimate: 163,763)

Here's how the Top 10 states performed.

| State | Number of Species | Number of Checklists |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| New York | 181 | 7,191 |
| Pennsylvania | 147 | 6,983 |
| California | 370 | 6,891 |
| Florida | 309 | 6,024 |
| Texas | 360 | 5,696 |
| Virginia | 196 | 5,190 |
| Ohio | 139 | 4,584 |
| Washington | 215 | 4,252 |
| North Carolina | 213 | 4,220 |
| Michigan | 140 | 4,197 |

Data totals as of March 3, 2017

Save the Dates

April 22 (Earth Day) through April 30



Spokane Audubon Society 2017 Big Day/ Big Sit

Any day from April 22 through April 30 report on e-Bird, and to SAS, all the birds you see in The SAS area of NE WA (Big Day), or just in your back yard (Big Sit).

A new contest to promote bird reporting in NE WA.

Anyone can enter. Work alone or together. The goal is to enjoy the wonder of birding. You are encouraged to take along a novice or introduce a friend to birding!

Like the Christmas Bird Count without the snow, and with more birds!!

Details coming soon to the SAS website, at the April meeting, or call Tom Light or Joyce Alonso (509-939-0120) for further information.



The Pygmy Owl Goes Digital

Joyce Alonso

"The times...they are a'changin..." and so are organizations, their members and their ways of doing things. Spokane Audubon Society is no exception.

Our chapter's long-standing practice of compiling and mailing out a monthly newsletter appears about to change...for several reasons. Your volunteer governing board wants everyone to be informed about the issues that have contributed to this situation.

1) Cost is a factor. Printing, postage, and mailing permit amount to about \$190 per month for two hundred fifty 8-page newsletters;

2) Increasing use of technology provides an alternate way of communicating. We have a functioning website, for which we also pay fees. We need to make more use of it;

3) By converting to a digital format, we would be saving trees by using less paper and members would be able to appreciate the talents of our photographers in marvelous color.

Joanne Powell, who served as our editor years ago, kindly agreed to put the news into form for 2016-17, and is willing to continue to produce a digital edition so as long as she is sent sufficient material in a timely manner;

Meanwhile, we need to provide for the changes that will be forthcoming. It is imperative that our Pygmy Owl recipients (this means you!) communicate with us in the next few weeks so that we can keep you up to date with both the changes in the newsletter and the activities which our chapter continues to offer to its members and the public.

Please send one or the other of the following messages to: Dave Plemons (Membership) at davep_nublado@me.com and Joanne Powell jopowell39@aol.com. (Your comments also will be taken into consideration as we move through this transition).

I wish to receive my Pygmy Owl newsletter in digital form. My e-mail address is:

or

I still want my newsletter in print form sent to my current address. (If you do not have internet capabilities, please call Joyce Alonso at (509) 939-0120 to communicate your preference). _____

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

To find details go to

www.spokaneaudubon.org

April 29, 2017, Saturday West Plains Early Migrant Trip. Leader: Alan McCoy

Contact leader Alan McCoy at 448-3123 or ahm2352@gmail.com by April 23 to reserve your place.

May 8, 10, 12: Mon-Wed-Fri evenings. Bird Identification Workshops
and May 13, 2017, Saturday. Bird ID Field Trip to Turnbull NWR
Leaders Gary Blevin and Kim Thorburn

Contact Gary Blevins (863-2659 or blevins@spocom.com) by April 25 to reserve your place for the workshop.

2018 Spokane Audubon Calendar Photograph Contest Guidelines

Submission Period: May 1 - May 31, 2017

**Beginning May 1, submit photos to:
spokaneauduboncalendar@yahoo.com**

Eligibility Requirements

- Spokane Audubon Society member in good standing
- Submit electronically up to three 9.25"-wide and 6.75"-height digital photographs. The photographs shall not have the © symbol with the photographer's name or other inserted script.
- If photographer has photograph(s) selected, he/she 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.

Call for Entries

- Photographers may submit entries starting Sunday, May 1. The deadline is Tuesday, May 31.
- No entries will be accepted after the deadline.
- Unselected photographs from previous years will not be automatically submitted. The photographer may resubmit photos not previously selected for use.

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 or committee chair. It is preferred that some panel members have moderately advanced bird identification skills and experience with bird photography.
- Photographers who submit entries cannot be judges.
- The bird must be the focus of the photograph. Preference is given to unusual species and hard-to-see species or behaviors.
- Judging criteria are photo composition and quality. Submissions must comply with the size requirement.
- The panel will select 14 photographs for each calendar month and additional photographs that might be used in smaller form on the date pages.
- Following selection, 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.

On The Web

(www.spokaneaudubon.org)

Welcome to the 3rd in this series highlighting our website. One of our primary goals with our website is to provide information that is specific to our area. There are many excellent websites across the internet that concern birds, such as the website of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, or the American Birding Association. But there is only one website devoted to birds and birding in the Spokane area. When you next go to our site, click on the Birds and Birding button on the navigation pane. In the submenu you will see everything from Attracting Birds to Unwanted Bird Behavior. On these pages we relate information specific to our region and often provided by local birders. On the Feeding Birds page we have tips for where to buy food, what kinds of feeders are best, and what types of feed will work the best.

If you have a question about birds in our area, we might have an answer for you at www.spokaneaudubon.org. If we don't have what you are looking for, please contact us either through the website or directly to the webmaster – me. I will do my best to give you a hand. On the other hand we are always looking for new ideas, tips, tricks and anything that pertains to birding and conservation in the Inland Northwest.

Happy Birding!
Alan McCoy
ahm2352@gmail.com

Spokane Audubon Society Membership Form

Local Membership Dues:

Individual: \$20/year _____

Couple & Family: \$25/year _____

Student: \$10/year _____

Lifetime: \$300 _____

National Membership Dues: \$35/year _____

Individual + National Dues: \$55/year _____

Couple + National Dues: \$60/year _____

Your local membership provides you with *The Pygmy Owl* and supports your local chapter's many conservation and education activities. You will also be eligible for website privileges.

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: Dave Plemons
1224 W. Riverside #1101
Spokane, WA 99201

Current members may renew memberships from our web site::

<http://spokaneaudubon.org>

Receiving duplicate newsletters?
Errors or other changes needed on your mailing label? Contact Dave Plemons at davep_nublado@me.com, or 413-1524.



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To:

April 2017

The Spokane Audubon Society provides resources and services to educate people about birds, wildlife, and the importance of habitats, and to advocate and support public policies and actions that conserve and restore wildlife habitats.

Visit our website: <http://spokaneaudubon.org>

From Division Street go about 12 blocks East on Mission Ave. Just before the bridge over the Spokane River (by Avista), turn left (East) on Upriver Drive. Go 3 long blocks and turn left (North) on Crestline Street. Go one block. Turn right onto E. North Crescent Ave. Proceed a short way and take a left into the second of the driveways to the Community Building. The Community Building is straight ahead at the end. There are about 15 spaces to the left of the building and about 8 to the right. If these are full, you may have to park on E. North Crescent Ave



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