



Volume 42 #1 September 2008

September Program Wildlife Photography from South America and Malaysia

On September 11th, Wildlife photographer and Tahoma Audubon member Nate Chappell will present an evening of bird and wildlife photography from Ecuador, Argentina and Malaysia along with a couple of his best images from the US. The program will be at the Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center with doors opening at 7:00 pm and program beginning at 7:30.

Nate and his Ecuadorian wife, Angie travel to Ecuador every year to visit her family and record the wildlife they observe. The Ecuadorian part of the presentation will focus on the beautiful birdlife

present there, with many images of stunning hummingbirds and tanagers. The digital slide show will feature birds from the western coastal region, the Andes and the eastern Amazon region.

In September of 2007 they took a 3 week trip to Argentina and found the birds and wildlife abundant in places, particularly the Ibera Marshes, one of the most important wetlands in South America. It will be featured in their presentation. The Malaysia section focuses on the primates and birds of Borneo including images of both the Proboscis Monkey and Orangutan.

Nate Chappell has been a birder and wildlife photographer since he was 12. He and his wife Angie, lead birdwatching and nature photography trips to Ecuador, Thailand and other exotic locales. He's currently the avian gallery moderator for Naturephotographers

Online Magazine. The website for their tour company is www.trogontours.net. You can contact Nate at nchappell@trogontours.net or 253-512-1060.

Attendees are invited to join the speaker for informal discussion and refreshments following the presentation. For further information, call Mark Oswood at 662-9087.



Cattle Tyrant perched on a Capybara photographed in the Ibera Marshes of Argentina



Long-tailed Sylph, an Ecuadorian hummingbird

Editor's Note

Here it is, the end of the summer already. Baby birds are learning the ropes of flying and fending on their own. Small mammals are scurrying to put away enough food for the winter. Fawns are slowly losing their spots, when not losing the contest with the cars and roads. Even with the temperature approaching 100 as I write this, I know that fall is in the air.

September means a new year for the Audubon programs and a new volume for the Wild Phlox. Our board met recently to discuss the past and coming year and what we can change or improve. In order to better serve our membership, we will include a questionnaire in an upcoming Phlox. Please take the time to fill it out and return it with your comments. We are considering moving away from having our programs ONLY on the second Thursday of the month. In the future we may do occasional weekend events



and we hope to expand our programs to other counties in our four county region. What do you think about that? Websites are a huge deal in this day and age and we would like to make ours a portal to the entire birding community in our region. To that end, we are researching ways to accomplish this lofty goal. If you have expertise in this field, please contact our president, Mark Oswood or other board members. Additionally, we need someone who can assist with keeping track of the membership lists. Do you have some computer skills and time on your hands to help NCW Audubon? Please let us know.



Daniel S. Kilby

North Central Washington Audubon Society, a local chapter of the National Audubon Society, is dedicated to furthering the knowledge and the conservation of the environment of North Central Washington, our Nation, and the World.

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North Central Washington Audubon Society One Year Membership Form

- New Member National Audubon Society \$20
 Renewing Member National Audubon Society \$35
 NCW Audubon Wild Phlox Only \$15
 Other - donation to NCW Audubon

Membership in National Audubon includes NCW Audubon membership and Audubon magazine six times per year and The Wild Phlox nine times per year. Make check payable to Audubon; mail to Post Office Box 2934 Wenatchee, WA 98807-2934.

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Chapter Code 7XCH Y10

Monroe Swift Watch September 6 - 21

Celebrate the arrival of the second largest congregation of Vaux's Swifts in North America. At the peak of fall migration, thousands of swifts are expected at the Frank Wagner Elementary School in Monroe, Washington. Watch these small birds squeeze into a four foot square chimney in a matter of minutes. The best viewing is expected to be in the first weeks of September. On September 6, Pilchuck Audubon Society will sponsor a lecture in the Frank Wagner Auditorium with docents available from 6:00 til 8:00 pm to answer your questions.

Vaux's Swifts are four to five inch long birds and the smallest and most numerous of the swift species in Washington. They spend much of their time in the air and forage, eat, drink, court, collect nesting materials and mate all in flight. Vaux's Swifts prefer to roost in hollow old trees but frequently use brick chimneys as a substitute. Before entering the chimney, the swifts often gather in great numbers and circle it. As they begin their entrance, they change from their head first direction and go in tail first. They overlap one another

in 'shingle' fashion to conserve body heat. They often slow their metabolism to a near-dormant state to conserve energy while roosting.

The swifts begin gathering in the sky above the school in large numbers an hour or more before sunset and start to enter a half hour to an hour before sunset. If there are extraordinary numbers of swifts, they will start entering the chimney even earlier in order to get all of them in by sunset.

The Monroe Swift Watch has been organized by the Pilchuck, Seattle and Eastside Audubon Societies, Monroe School District, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and other organizations and individuals. The group hopes to learn more about the swifts, their migration and behavior, and to preserve their habitat – in this case the chimney at the Frank Wagner Elementary School.

For further information, please contact the Pilchuck Audubon Society at 425-252-0926 or www.pilchuckaudubon.org.

Environmental Film Series opens with "Celebration Sampler"

by Chris E. Rader

The Wenatchee Valley Environmental Film Series announces its eighth season of thought-provoking films for family viewing. To kick off the year, community members are invited to the 'Celebration Sampler' on Friday, Oct. 3, from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at the Wenatchee Valley Museum & Cultural Center (WVMCC). Guests will enjoy hearty hors d'oeuvres and fine local wines and sample several short environmental films from Telluride's Mountainfilm on Tour. The event is a fundraiser for the film series. Tickets are \$36 (\$70 for couples) and may be reserved by calling the museum at 888-6240.

The film series is presented by WVMCC, Chelan-Douglas Land Trust and Trust for Public Land. Other organizations, including NCW Audubon, have signed

on as sponsors for some of the monthly programs. Audubon's month is January, when the award-winning film 'Oil + Water' will be shown. It tells the story

of two world-class kayakers who embark on the world's longest petroleum-free trip (in kayaks and a truck that runs on grease and natural oil). The two friends journey through 16 countries in the Western Hemisphere for more than a year, spreading the word about sustainable energy. Along the way they enjoy some of the best whitewater paddling in the Americas. Mark your calendar for Tuesday, Jan. 20, at 7 p.m. for that special Audubon program.

The complete 2008-09 schedule includes:
10/21: True Adventures of the Ultimate Spider Hunter
11/18: Return of the Cuyahoga
1/20: Oil + Water
2/17: Edge of Eden
3/17: Good Food
4/21: The 11th Hour

The museum is located at 127 South Mission Street in Wenatchee. For more information call 888-6240.

Wolves Return to the Methow Valley

Olympia - Genetic tests have confirmed two adult animals radio-collared July 18 in western Okanogan County are wild, gray wolves. The finding marks the first documented, resident wolf pack in Washington since the 1930s. "The re-appearance of a resident wolf pack in Washington is evidence of a functioning ecosystem and good news for those working to preserve the state's biodiversity," said WDFW Director Jeff Koenings, Ph.D. "At the same time, we recognize some residents have concerns about the re-entry of wolves in Washington. This discovery demonstrates the need to continue our efforts to finalize a state wolf conservation and management plan," Koenings said.

The two wolves, a male and female, were temporarily captured and radio-collared by wolf experts from Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the Nez Perce tribe, assisted by biologists with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and U.S. Forest Service. Tissue and hair samples were collected from the two animals and submitted for DNA testing to confirm that the animals were pure wolves. Preliminary results from additional genetic testing indicate the two wolves likely originated from British Columbia-Alberta populations. Radio tracking collars placed on the wolves allow biologists to monitor the animals' location and activity.

In a separate effort by Conservation Northwest, a private, non-governmental organization, the radio-collared male wolf was photographed by a remote camera at a location where six pups also were photographed. Conservation Northwest is conducting an on-going, volunteer effort to place remote cameras in various locations in the North Cascades to record wildlife.

The radio-collaring effort followed a July 8 howling survey that brought multiple responses from both adult and juvenile animals, indicating a pack was present in the area. The howling survey was initiated in response to reports of wolf sightings, reports of howling and remote-camera photos of possible wolves.

The gray wolf is federally protected as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). A U.S. District Court judge in Montana recently over-turned a federal action to remove Rocky Mountain gray wolves from the endangered-species list including in the eastern third of Washington. The wolves found in the Okanogan are well within the remaining federal protection area, under the previous federal de-listing action. Gray wolves also are protected as a state endangered species throughout Washington. It is illegal to harm or harass a federally protected endangered species.

WDFW is working with a citizen group to develop a wolf conservation and management plan in anticipation of wolves re-entering Washington from other states or Canada. The draft plan will be subject to scientific peer review later this year and a 90-day public-review process next year. The final plan will be presented to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission for consideration in 2009.

Anyone wishing to report a possible wolf sighting or activity should call the toll-free wolf reporting hotline at 1-888-584-9038. Those with concerns about possible wolf-caused livestock depredation should call the USDA Wildlife Services in Olympia at (360) 753-9884 or the USFWS in Spokane at (509) 891-6839.

Upcoming Events at Barn Beach Reserve

Barn Beach Reserve, the home of a nature center, Icicle Arts, and the Upper Valley Museum, is located at 347 Division Street in Leavenworth. The Reserve provides exhibits and programming that connect science and nature, the arts and cultural history in the Greater Wenatchee Valley. Programs are held in the new "green" design, multi-purpose education center named The Barn. The building is a model of energy efficiency that provides space for everything from science labs and art classes to lectures, films, and acoustic music performances.

September brings two exciting programs to The Barn: Friday, Sept. 12, 7-9 PM. **Reptiles and Amphibians of Central Washington.** Learn about the animals that

by Gail Roberts, Barn Beach Reserve Naturalist slither and hop, and why amphibians are on the decline around the world. Presented by Dr David Darda, Biology Professor, CWU. Follow-up field trip on Sept. 13 to search for species.

Friday, Oct. 10, 7-9 PM. **Gray Ghosts in the North Cascades.** They're back! Gray wolves were recently confirmed to have returned to Okanogan County. Dr. Bill Gaines, USFS District Wildlife Biologist, presents a fun, informative, multi-media program about this endangered species. Come howl with us!

Learn more about these events at www.barnbeachreserve.org or us: 509-548-0181 or 509-548-7584, or info@barnbeachreserve.org.

Methow River Rich Riparian Habitat and Floodplain Protected

The Methow Conservancy's 67th conservation easement, recently completed with landowner Stephen MacDonald, protects an active floodplain of the dynamic Methow River, upland and riparian forest, beaver pond wetlands, agricultural lands and open space.

The easement property is south of the Weeman Bridge along the upper Methow River. Much of the 69-acre conservation easement property is visible from Wolf Creek Road, the Methow Community Trail, the Methow River as well as surrounding public lands. The property is situated in a corridor of both public protected land and private properties with Methow Conservancy conservation easements, so that the riparian habitats and undeveloped character of the property support a huge variety of fish and wildlife populations.

Upper Columbia River spring Chinook salmon, Upper Columbia summer steelhead trout, and bull trout (all either Federally Endangered or Threatened) utilize this part of the Methow River that includes the MacDonald property for spawning, rearing, and/or migration habitat. Mapping data demonstrates that the river through this

by Mary Kiesau, Program Director, The Methow Conservancy property has one of the highest concentrations of spring Chinook salmon spawning grounds of any stretch of the Methow River.

The numerous side channels and deep pools, spring fed creeks, and beaver pond wetlands as well as incredibly healthy and structurally complex riparian vegetation, combine to create one of the most productive stretches of the river for fisheries. Aquatic species specifically require protected corridors in order to move between various habitats including pools, riffles, and side channels. The continued health of the stretch of river through the conservation easement property is critical to the productivity of this riparian habitat, and we thank Stephen MacDonald for his thoughtfulness and partnership in protecting it.

For more information on the Methow Conservancy please see <http://www.methowconservancy.org/>

The Methow Conservancy's Mission is: To inspire people to care for and conserve the land of the Methow Valley, ensuring it will remain a place where future generations can enjoy the rural character and natural beauty we cherish today.

Book Review

"The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw: One Women's Fight to Save the World's Most Beautiful Bird"

by Bruce Barcott. Random House, New York.

Bruce Barcott's book "The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw" is an example of muscular (as opposed to armchair) science journalism. As befitting a contributing editor of Outside magazine, Barcott embeds himself in the life of an expat American in Belize. Sharon Matola has one of those improbable life histories (tiger tamer, mycologist, jungle survivalist) that settles into what is so obviously her true calling — starting a zoo, housing only native animals, in the small Central American country of Belize. Matola becomes "The Zoo Lady", providing many Belizeans with a first close look at the emblematic animals of their own country.

The Scarlet Macaw is a large bird, colored (as Barcott word-paints) in "... the yellow of a rain slicker, the

blue of indigo dye, the red of an Irish pub door." As is so often the case for large animals with sizable home ranges, populations of the Scarlet Macaw in Central America have shrunk to the edge of extirpation. The Belizean government proposes to build a dam that will flood the nesting sites of the Scarlett Macaw, setting in motion a Dickens story of shady politicians, money-grubbing corporations, motley crusaders — and even the Belizean Audubon Society.

What can Auduboners learn from reading this book? At the least we can learn something about Scarlet Macaws (and jaguars, Harpy Eagles, and tapirs), about the difficult coming-of-age of countries transiting from colony to independence, and about the terrible triage of trying to save too many organisms from

extinction. But perhaps the most important lesson for Auduboners is Sharon Matola's role model as a peaceful warrior: "You don't stop. If you lose a battle, that doesn't mean you stop. You keep fighting. You find other battles. The work to save what is left of nature is endless. You can really get down and depressed. But you can't stop and stand aside and let the wheels keep rolling in the wrong direction."

We all cobble our lives together from role models. Sharon Matola would be a good one to add to anyone's collection. Barcott has written a book that is the sister to Tracy Kidder's "Mountains Beyond Mountains", the story of crusading physician Paul Farmer. Reading both of these books will make you feel simultaneously inadequate and energized.

by Mark Oswood

Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee Report

The committee of representatives of all of Washington's 26 Chapters met July 25 in Seattle. Nina Carter, director of Audubon Washington reported that the move back to Olympia has been a good one for the organization. People are happier and the organization is saving \$4000 a month having left Seattle. They are \$20,000 in the black for the most recent fiscal year! They had a very successful Bird-A-Thon fund raiser and all Washington Chapters are supporting Audubon Washington.

Sarah Griffith from the Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry Program reported on implementation of the Evergreen Cities bill that passed in the last legislative session. This bill helps retain and expand communities' trees and vegetation by launching a program to assist local governments with urban forest planning and management. Unfortunately, while the bill was supported, no funding was allocated for implementation. In the next session funding will be requested but it will be a challenge to find the money for these programs. An additional \$2.8 million is needed to implement a model ordinance to begin tree inventories in towns around the state. The Urban Forestry Program primarily focuses on technical assistance for communities' tree programs. Many communities are embarking on ambitious projects to inventory all of their trees while others have not even considered the possibility. Sarah's biggest suggestion for Chapter folks was to meet with their city council members and make suggestions about the importance of trees in the community and urge them to have an active program to plant more trees and take care of existing ones. Additionally it must be stressed to these people in elected positions the importance of trees to the community. To learn more about the Evergreen Cities Act please see <http://wa.audubon.org/PDFs/2008-bev-issue4.pdf>.

Rob Johnson from the organization Transportation Choices, made a presentation about Tim Eyman's Initiative I-985, to Reduce Traffic Congestion. Rob told us that it doesn't actually decrease congestion; eliminates \$127 million annually in funding for health care and education; takes any future revenue from tolling and puts it into a separate account to be used for highway projects only, no public transportation; increases the burden on local governments and creates a possible unfunded mandate and only enacts one of the state auditor's 25 transportation recommendations. He also talked about SoundTransit's 15 year mass transit expansion package, a plan to extend rail service and add bus service across the central Puget Sound region between 2009 and 2023. For

more information on these issues

by Teri J Pieper

please see www.transportationchoices.org.

Two resolutions were brought to the committee and both passed. The first one concerned Northern Spotted Owls. It reads:

Therefore be it Resolved: That Audubon Washington and the 26 Washington State Audubon Chapters believe that given all current information, the primary emphasis for Northern Spotted Owl recovery should continue to be on habitat management, preservation, and enhancement. In particular, we continue to believe that there is a need to change industrial forest practices on both public and private lands to preserve and foster sustainable mixed species with multiple canopy layers, large trees, horizontal patchiness, and understories of native shrubs and forbs. These 'new' forest management practices should be implemented as soon as possible and should ideally be monitored through an independent certification entity like the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Such a comprehensive approach would promote structural and functional diversity, conferring ecological resilience. Such resilience provides benefits to multiple wildlife species and a robust flow of ecosystem services - both of which are important overall conservation objectives beyond the preservation of the Northern Spotted Owl. Be it further Resolved: That Audubon Washington and the 26 Washington State Audubon Chapters do not believe there is sufficient scientific evidence to support or justify lethal control, removal, or reproductive controls of Barred Owls as management techniques to benefit Northern Spotted Owls. Audubon Washington and the 26 Washington State Audubon Chapters do support the implementation and continuation of statistically rigorous research studies on Barred Owl ecology and Barred Owl-Northern Spotted Owl interactions in order to inform future management decisions. A panel of diverse and independent scientists should be convened to design research activities to be implemented as soon as possible.

The second resolution, while it seems unrelated to the first, actually is quite closely related. Olympic Peninsula Audubon asked us to NOT support the rebuilding of the washed out Dosewallips Road on the east side of the Olympic Peninsula. The reasoning is that this road could washout in another flooding incident, the repositioning of the road could cause loss of salmon habitat AND it would fragment a small area of potential Northern Spotted Owl habitat.

Wind Power Project Planned for the Waterville Plateau

by Teri J Pieper

The Douglas County PUD is planning a project to generate wind energy near Withrow. The proposal under consideration is for 100 or more turbines on an area of about 15,000 acres. This area is a prime location for the Greater Sage – Grouse, a bird listed as threatened by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. These birds were formerly found throughout the central Columbia Basin in areas of healthy sagebrush; however much of this shrub steppe habitat has been converted to agriculture or development or degraded by overgrazing. Greater Sage – Grouse have disappeared from much of the landscape, currently occupying only 8 to 10% of their historic range.

Wind power has been touted as the next great green energy source but many people and institutions are beginning to reconsider this ‘fact’. Because its output is highly variable, due to the nature of wind, and it doesn’t correlate with demand, other sources of energy cannot be taken off line. Denmark claims that wind turbines produce 20% of its electricity but it has not reduced its use of other fuels. For each ‘wind farm’ consisting of acres of towers that can be over 400 feet tall, miles of road need to be constructed and new transmission lines

built to move the power into the grid. Wildlife habitat is fragmented. Towers are required to have strobe lights for safety. These can be seen from many miles away. Currently on a clear night, driving on Highway 2 along the Waterville Plateau, lights from the wind towers near Ellensburg can be seen blinking in the distance. Many other negative factors for wind power have been documented including bird and bat mortality and disturbance to other wildlife.

So why are there so many new wind power projects in the works? Wind power is profitable. Taxpayers cover two thirds to three quarters of the cost of construction. Governments require utilities to buy the energy even though it does not effectively displace other sources. Additionally, wind companies can sell ‘renewable energy credits’ so they are able to sell the same energy twice.

Douglas PUD is currently a partner with other utilities in Energy Northwest, formerly known as Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS). This group developed a wind farm called Nine Canyon near Kennewick and Douglas PUD receives 15.4% of the output of the 63.7 megawatt rated project.

Volunteer with The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy’s North Central Washington Field Office needs some help completing projects this fall. The Conservancy’s largest preserves in Washington are on the spectacular Columbia Plateau. Here they are protecting and restoring the fabled sagebrush country of wide-open skies, dramatic geology and amazing desert species.

September 5 and 6: Spotted Bat Surveys, Moses Coulee
September 20: Russian Olive Control, McCartney Creek Preserve
Help needed in Beezley Hills ASAP: Signage and fencing for newly acquired property; Well cover construction and placement (carpentry skills most useful here); Welded grate to cover cistern (welding expertise needed).
Sonia Hall, shrub steppe ecologist, could also really use some research

based assistance on the topic of wildlife conservation. This volunteer would need to be someone with access to university based literature resources and databases. Though not required, this could be an opportunity for someone who would love to help out the North Central Washington program, but is limited in availability due to travel distance or other inability to work in the field.
Contact Liz Johnson at 509-665-9737 or liz_johnson@tnc.org

Wenatchee River Salmon Festival

The 2008 Wenatchee River Salmon Festival will be September 18 - 21. It is a four-day natural resource education event held each fall to celebrate the return of the salmon to the Wenatchee River. The Festival is held on the grounds of the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery, located at the mouth of the scenic Icicle Canyon near

Leavenworth, Washington. An exciting menu of hands-on activities and “edutainment” gives visitors a unique opportunity to discover and appreciate the complexities of the natural world and the significance of salmon to people of the northwest. Students from schools throughout north central Washington visit the Festival during the two special school days. NCWAS will partner with Barn Beach Reserve on

Saturday and Sunday, providing kids and families with our trademark “What’s That Bird?” We need volunteers to help – please see the enclosed form. The Festival brings people, natural resources, education, entertainment and science together in a non-commercial, non-political package that benefits many. For more information call 509.548.6662 x271 or see <http://www.salmonfest.org>

September 2008 Wild Phlox

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North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

September 5 & 6	Spotted Bat Surveys	The Nature Conservancy. See page 7 for details
September 6-21	Monroe Swift Watch	Vaux's Swifts return. See page 3 for details
September 11	NCW Audubon Program	Wildlife Photography from South America and Malaysia See page 1 for details
September 12	Barn Beach Reserve	Reptiles and Amphibians. See page 4 for details
September 18-21	Wenatchee River Salmon Festival	Something for Everyone. See page 7 for details
September 28	Methow Conservancy Fall Get Together	5th Annual Cider Squeeze and Social Contact info@methowconservancy.org or call 509-996-2870
October 3	Wenatchee Valley Film Fest Celebration Sampler	At the Museum. See page 3 for details
October 10	Barn Beach Reserve	Gray Wolves in the Cascades. See page 4 for details



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Visit the NCW Audubon Society website for updates on these and other events
www.ncwaudubon.org