The Prairie Owl



VOLUME 44 ISSUE I October-November 2015

EVENT CALENDAR

October 8: Steve Kelling (Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology) Lecture on The Birder Effect

October 21: PAS Photo Contest Winners Announced

October 21 Program: Effects of Climate Change

November 18: Program: Mike Denny on Wallula Gap and Missoula Floods

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Summary of 2015 PAS Photo Contest

The Palouse Audubon Society held its second annual photo contest this year, open for submissions by amateur photographers from April 1 through July 31, 2015. The purpose of the contest was to further the mission of PAS by enhancing our awareness of the wildlife and nature that surround us and to give local amateur photographers an opportunity to share their captured images with us. Entrants were encouraged to use this opportunity to express their creativity in photographic compositions of nature.



"Easter Weekend Ruddy Ducks" 2014 entry by John Hanna

The photo entries were all wonderful and interesting. Selection of the winning photos was a difficult task for the judges. There were three categories (Birds, Other Wildlife, and Other Nature) and two age divisions (Youth under 18 years and Adult 18 and over).



"Anna's Hummingbird" 2014 submission by JJ Cebula



The Owl from Green Hollow" 2014 submission by Nels Chick.

A total of 70 photo entries were received for this year's photo contest. The entries consisted of 47 spectacular regional birds, 16 shots of other wildlife ranging from butterflies to squirrels, and 7 entries classified as "other nature" such as flowers and rolling Palouse hills. All of the photos submitted this year were in the "Adult 18 and over" age division. There were no entries for the "Youth under 18 years" age division. Youngsters really missed out on an opportunity to show off their photos and win some prize money.

This was a great opportunity to display photographic talent to be appreciated by all. The contest might also serve as a means for budding photographers to "wet their feet" for entering other photo contests. Following our pointers and guidelines for nature photography might just turn you into a great nature photographer!

Contest photos will be displayed on the photo contest web page after the winners are announced at the October 21st PAS Program Meeting. Visit the website photo contest page to see last year's 2014 photo entries and the soon -to-be-posted 2015 entries.

A special THANK YOU to everyone who shared their fantastic photographic creations with us!

Program for October 21, 2015

Sanford Eigenbrode, University Distinguished Professor in Plant, Soil, and Entomological Science at UI, will present a program on Effects of Climate Change on Shrub-Steppe and Grassland Ecosystems on the Palouse Prairie, on Wednesday, October 21, 2015, at 7:30pm in the Fiske Room of the 1912 Center, Moscow. Changing climates throughout the world are affecting agricultural systems large and small. In some instances the ongoing and projected changes will limit production and introduce a new challenge for ensuring global food security. The issue is complex because of the many ways climate can influence agriculture and the effects differ depending upon region and crop. In the Pacific Northwest, there are efforts to understand and respond to this challenge. Regional Approaches to Climate Change for Pacific Northwest Agriculture (REACCH) is a large coordinated project involving the University of Idaho, Washington State University, Oregon State University and the Agricultural Research Service of the USDA. The project focuses on wheat production systems and takes a 'transdisciplinary' approach, meaning scientists from many disciplines and stakeholders are working together to address the climatic, technological, sociological and economic dimensions of the issue. The talk will describe the project, now in its 5th year and some key activities and findings. This is the first in a series of climate change programs Palouse Audubon Society will present this year. The program is free and open to the public.

On Thursday, October 8th-Steve Kelling, the Director of Information Science at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology will be speaking at the University of Idaho on "The Birder Effect: eBird, Birding, Science and Conservation" in the Teaching-Learning Center, Room 31 from 11:30am-12:30pm. Learn more about the speaker: http://www.birds.cornell.edu/is/staff/staff_steve.html

From the Prez



Ron Force

Welcome to a new program year at the Palouse Audubon Society. This also starts a new dues year. Starting the year in September has proved to be a feature that drives our devoted volunteer treasurers bonkers. Although most members manage to renew before December, the cut-off for mailing the *Prairie Owl to non-renewing members, it's inevitable that some renewals trickle in until the following June. At that point, our treasurer asks to what year the check should be credited!*

This year Diane Weber took the initiative to send first-class letters containing renewal notices. I hope you all got them and have sent in your renewals.

Our email service had a computer crash, and our email list (PAS Notify) has not been functioning, so we've been patching together lists from various sources. Apologies if you missed an event for lack of an email. We hope to have it functioning soon..

PALOUSE A	AUDUBON	SOCIETY	MEMBERSHIP	FORM

Membership includes an annual subscription to *The Prairie Owl* newsletter. Please consider an additional donation in support of the programs and activities of Palouse Audubon Society.

Annual Membership \$15.00 Donation

	Annual Membership \$15.00		Donati	on
NAME		ADDRESS_		
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Return this form along with your check to Palouse Audubon Society, PO Box 3606, Moscow, ID 83843-1914.

Check one: I PREFER TO READ THE PRAIRIE OWL ON THE WEBSITE (notice will be sent by email when a new issue has been posted on the website)

☐ PLEASE SEND A PRINTED COPY OF THE PRAIRIE OWL

Program for November 18, 2015

Mike Denny Presents



Mike Denny-teacher, photographer, author, and naturalist from Walla Walla—will present a program on the Wallula Gap on Wednesday, November 18, at 7:30pm in the Fiske Room of the 1912 Center, Moscow. Wallula Gap is one of two great water gaps on the Columbia River: the other is Sentinel Gap near Mattawa. All the flood waters from the Missoula Floods, the great Ice Age Floods that flowed across eastern Washington, funneled through Wallula Gap. Today this area hosts an animal and native plant community that is very much like an island surrounded by a vast sea of wheat, grapes, and livestock operations. Mike will describe this place and the wildlife, plants, and geology that make it up. Three of Mike's books cover aspects of Wallula Gap: Birds of the Inland Northwest and Northern Rockies, 2008; Where the Great River Bends, 2008; and Many Waters, 2015. This program is the Palouse Audubon Society's holiday program, and it is free and open to the public.



Photographs of Wallula Gap

PAS Graduate Scholarship Winners

Each year, the Palouse Audubon Society awards two grants in support of research toward fulfilling the chapter's mission of promoting education, conservation, and restoration of natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. One grant is available for a graduate student at Washington State University and the other for a graduate student at the University of Idaho. The grants are \$500 each with no restrictions on how the grant monies may be used.

The two winners for 2014-15 are as follows:

University of Idaho; Jamie Jarolimek for *Aspen vul-nerability and effects on wildlife*. Aspen stands are biological hotspots. The study aims to evaluate the effects of climate change and drought on aspens and their associated bird populations.

Washington State University: Steven Edward Woodley for Environmental factors triggering the emergence of Eustenopus villosus and Larinus curtus within Centaurea solstitialis population on the Kramer Prairie in Southeastern Washington. The study looks at factors affecting the populations of two weevils that feed on Yellow Starthistle, a major invasive species on the Palouse.

Wing Tip

The biggest bird that ever existed on Earth is the flightless elephant bird, which is now extinct. It weighed about 1000 lb. (450 kg.). Seven ostrich eggs would fit inside one elephant bird's egg. Elephant birds died out 400 years ago, but people still find pieces of their tough-shelled eggs. Remains have been found only in Madagascar.

Wing Tip

A bird's feathers weigh more than its skeleton.

Wing Tip

Approximately 75% of wild birds live for less than a year. The larger the bird, the more likely it is to live longer. The large wandering albatross, for example, can live for up to 80 years

2014-2015 Donors

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Wing Tip

Approximately 2/3 of all the bird species are found in tropical rain forests

Wing Tip

In the continental U.S. alone, between 1.4 billion and 3.7 billion birds are killed by <u>cats</u> annually

Wing Tip

There are over 9,500 species of birds in the world. Scientists typically group them into 30 categories. Birds are the most widespread of all animals around the world



The Kea is a small parrot from New Zealand.

MEMBERSHIP

Palouse Audubon Society (PAS), PO Box 3606, Moscow ID 83843-1914, is a chapter of the National Audubon Society (NAS) with its own dues. New NAS members in our chapter area receive one year's free membership in PAS, along with the chapter newsletter and other benefits of membership.

PAS dues of \$15 are payable in September. Members may receive the chapter newsletter, The Prairie Owl, either by mail or by email notification of its posting on the chapter's website. Members are encouraged to read the newsletter online to save printing and postage expenses. PAS members who have not renewed and NAS members who have not paid dues after one year of membership are removed from the newsletter distribution list on December 31st.

General membership meetings are held at the 1912 Building, FISKE ROOM, 3rd and Adams St, Moscow ID, at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month, September through May. The board of directors meets at the 1912 Center at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month.

The Prairie Owl is published every other month, August through April. Material for the Owl should be sent to the editor, Tim Hillebrand, 857 Orchard Ave., Moscow ID 83843, 805-518-9612, tshphd@gmail.com by the 20th of the month. Subscription problems should be addressed to the membership chair, Ron Force, PO Box 3606, Moscow ID 83843-1914, 208-874-3207, ronforce@gmail.com. Visit the Palouse Audubon Society website at

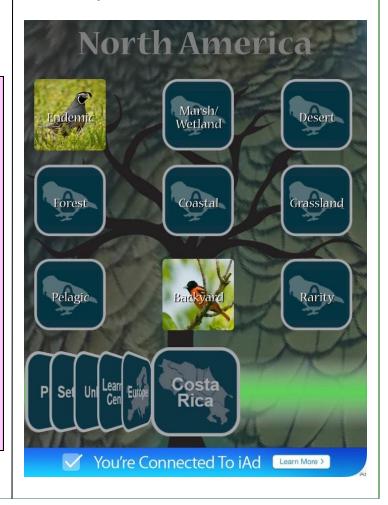
New Birding App: Kea

In our program meeting on September 16 we were introduced to a new birding app called Kea. It's named after a very intelligent little parrot from New Zealand. The developer, Chris Duke, made the presentation. He is a doctoral candidate in Washington State University. Kea is designed to make the process of learning to recognize birds faster and more fun by turning it into a game. This app is intended for birders on all levels of sophistication and expertise. Everyone will benefit.

The best way to learn anything is through play, period. Games are the foundations of our earliest learning, and we're naturally inclined towards play as a way to make sense of new information.

Kea uses several different games to build and test growing knowledge of birds with levels that group birds by their habitat or taxonomy. Anyone can play it for free, starting with the birds they are most likely to see in their own backyards.

This app is a Kickstarter project. Check it out here: https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/653016829/new-birding-app-kea-learn-birds-through-play? ref=discovery#



PALOUSE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Palouse Audubon Society PO Box 3606 Moscow ID 83843-1914



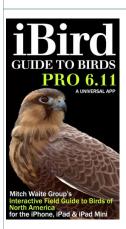
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Get to know our local owls Give a Hoot. Go Owling.

The mission of the Palouse Audubon Society is to promote education, conservation, and the restoration of natural ecosystems--focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats--for the benefit of humanity and the Earth's biological diversity

We're on the Web: www.palouseaudubon.org

and on Facebook



iBird is the best birding app on the market today. You should download it and put it on your phone to take with you on birding expeditions. It's available to both Apple and Android platforms. It costs \$14.99 for Apple. But it only costs \$4.99 on Amazon. It is optimized for tablets too.



The Audubon Birds Pro: A Field Gujide North American Birds will soon be free. It has cost as much as \$20 in the past. In fact, all Audubon apps will soon be free.

Mountain Quail (Oreortyx pictus)



Growing up in Santa Barbara county in California, I was well acquainted with Mountain Quail, which, as the name implies, were found in the higher altitudes. Since moving to Idaho, I have yet to see a Mountain Quail here, but would like to. We also had Valley Quail, which are called California Quail here. The Mountain Quail is characterized by a long, strait plume on its head. Male plumes are longer than the female's. It is the largest member of the Quail family,

and the only Quail endemic to the Northwest. The bird's average length is 10-11 inches with a wingspan of 14-16 inches. They are monogamous. The female lays 9-10 eggs, and incubation takes 21-15 days. Diet is primarily seeds. They have been introduced in mountainous regions all the way up to British Columbia, and I have also seen them in Northern Baja. They tend to migrate seasonally by altitude in a localized region. Sadly, their numbers are shrinking as the environment changes. Collective nouns for Quail: covey, bevy, battery, drift, flush, rout, and shake.