



# The Golden Eagle

Newsletter of the Golden Eagle Audubon Society

September/October, 2014

## Golden Eagle Launches New Roots Program for Refugee Children

By Liz Urban

In June, 11 children from around the globe took part in a program intended to serve as a way to engage children in the under-served refugee community in the process of conservation.

My goal was to expose them to special places in and around Boise, teach them about local animals and ecosystems, and have them actively participate in conservation action.

I named the project “New Roots” to reflect the goal of connecting these children with the environment and to our larger community. My goal was to make these young people into stakeholders in their new home of Boise by fostering connections with the land and community.

In June 2013, I was awarded a fellowship from National Audubon’s

Toyota TogetherGreen Program. This fellowship program provides training, support, and funds to help leaders undertake a project that will benefit wildlife and their community. The GEAS board, on which I serve, supported my application, which focused on engaging Boise’s refugee community in conservation education and action.

In June of this year the pilot New Roots Program took shape as a conservation day camp, run over five days. The program was free for the children who participated, with all food and door-to-door transportation provided. During the camp, we visited Bogus Basin, the Foothills Learning Center, Hyatt Hidden Wetlands Reserve, Lucky Peak Lake, Blacks Creek Bird Reserve, the World Center for Birds of Prey, Intermountain Bird Observatory’s World River Site and Zoo Boise.

The children met and learned from professionals from the U.S. Forest Service, Foothills Learning Center, The Ridge to

Rivers Partnership, Boise WaterShed, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Intermountain Bird Observatory, The Peregrine Fund, and of course, GEAS. They picked up garbage, helped maintain trails and planted sagebrush at Blacks Creek. They learned about many bird species and were able to participate in banding

American Kestrels at Lucky Peak Lake and several more songbird species at IBO’s Boise River Site.

In addition to the experience and learning activities, we also tapped into the arts and played many games to have fun. We had the children write in journals, invent and create a “new species” – a fun and creative activity – participate in folding passenger pigeon origami for “Fold the Flock” (see [foldtheflock.org](http://foldtheflock.org) for more on this project), and more. In part of the program that was



New Roots participants go on a field trip in the Boise Foothills.

Photo by Liz Urban

a great success each child got a digital camera to “photo-journal” their experience. I felt that this technology helped reinforce their curiosity and observational skills and also gave us a fun way to document the journey. We sent all the children home at the end of the week with art and school supplies to keep and a selection of some of our favorite pictures to remember the program.

After an action-packed week, we joined the festivities at World Refugee Day in downtown Boise – an international day of cultural celebration, and locally we welcomed new U.S. citizens as a group of refugees took their pledge. It was the first time I experienced this, and I was amazed by the beauty and diversity of this day. The New Roots children attended the event and shared their experiences and recommended places that refugee families could enjoy around Boise free of charge.

The program wasn’t only a learning experience for the children, but for me as well.

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**President's Message**

By Michele Crist

Greetings Birders!

GEAS has been very busy over the past couple of months.

Three of our board members: Leah Dunn, Steve Hanser and Liz Urban, have been working hard on designing a new GEAS website that will be released soon. This website will enable us to add new members, renew memberships, register for our annual banquet, instantly update and send news releases and changes to our calendar and track our membership database.

I would also like to thank Harold Ward for designing and working on our original website for so many years. He was instrumental in managing GEAS's membership database and website and gave a lot of his time working in this capacity. I know he is happy to have more of his time free to enjoy other activities. We hope you enjoy the new functionality this website offers.

Fall is just around the corner and we have a number of interesting monthly programs coming up along with some great birding trips. My schedule has been quite full this past year, and just lately I have had a reprieve. So I look forward to being more active in the monthly programs and birding trips and look forward to seeing you all out there.

Michele Crist,  
President

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**GEAS CALENDAR                      September-October 2014**

Field Trip: Prairie	September 6
Family Birding Walk	September 14
Field Trip: IBO	September 20
GEAS Monthly meeting	September 22
Greenbelt Litter Patrol & Birding	September 28
Field Trip: IBO	October 3
Family Birding Walk	October 5
Big Sit! Hyatt Reserve	October 11
Blacks Creek Planting Project	October 25
Greenbelt Litter Patrol & Birding	October 26
GEAS Monthly meeting	October 28
Field Trip: CJ Strike	November 1

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## OUT THE KITCHEN WINDOW

By Hilda Larson

Since the weather has cooled off some we have been hearing more fall birds at the ranch: Clark's nutcrackers, red-breasted nuthatches, and mountain chickadees to name a few. Screech owls, pygmy owls and great-horned owls have also made themselves known.

We heard at least three screech owls one evening. It sounded as if there were some young in the group. Al called back to them a few times, and they responded by flying back and forth across the yard.

The pygmy owls call from several locations, but we have not seen them so far. We have discovered, however, that they have an almost bouncing ball call at times like the screech owls. I heard the great horned owls hooting one early morning several weeks ago. Then one early evening they were calling very near the ranch house. There must have been some young involved, too, as the first calls we heard

sounded like a small dog barking. Then we heard the distinctive hoot, answered by the barking call. We heard at least three owls as they flew on down the creek, and we could hear them no more. The calls disturbed the turkeys in their roost above the house, and they let go with a loud gobble. When we raised tame turkeys at home they would roost outside on the wood shed roof, and several times great horned owls would try to catch them but never succeeded, other than scaring the daylights out of the birds and disturbing our sleep.

The canyon wren which made the yard its home for a couple of weeks has now deserted us. It is nice to hear the descending call ending with the raspy wren *Zzzzzzt*. The bird made the new shop, the wood shed, the creek in the yard, and the underside of the pickup its home, and also dusted itself in the dirt beneath the truck, calling all the while. It was very tame and

would sit and watch us walk by.

We had to take the hummingbird feeder in early because the bald-faced hornets drove the hummers away. We were feeding more nectar to the hornets that we were to the birds. Traps did not seem to help much as the critters flew out as fast as they went in.

The bluebirds have all finished their fledging, and Al has cleaned out most of the boxes so they are ready for spring. There were 805 fledged from the boxes he monitored on his trails: 700 mountain bluebirds, 105 western bluebirds, and a large number of tree and violet green swallows which remain uncounted. A few house wrens used the boxes and the mountain chickadees fledged 7 young.

September 1999



## Volunteer News

### Volunteers needed

Blacks Creek Bird Reserve Planting Party – Saturday, October 25. (Please see Page 10)

### Thank You

Liz Urban would like to thank the following for giving their time to New Roots: Dr. Megan Jones, Jillian Hanson, Kate Smith, Carolyn Volk, Mark Urban, Edna Rey-Vizgirdas, Kallen Hayes, Mikal Smith, Sean Finn, Mike Henderson, Zena Cook, Keith Hyde, Ron Cook, Tori Moroney, Josh Connell, Kelsey Montzka-Bottiger, Heidi Ware, Lindsey Lockwood, Jill Baum, Jackie Lucero, Sue Norton, Asha Oweid, Shawn Smith and Laura Hanson.

GEAS would like to thank Liz for all the preparation and follow through that it took to bring this to successful fruition. Good work, Liz.

Thanks to the folks who prepared the newsletter for distribution: Jessica Pasden, Harold Ward, Suzanne Woodcock, Susan Hazelton, Nancy McCollough and Sue Norton.

RL Rowland, Jerry Denney and Sue Norton ran the Bioblitz booth. Thank you.

Thank you Fred Bassett for the presentation on hummingbirds at our July Program meeting.

We thank the following folks for leading field trips. Al Larsen led trips to the Owyhee and Prairie Bluebird Trails as well as hosted us at the Daggett Creek Ranch field trip. Kathy Barker-McCoy led trips for the ever popular Wednesday Morning Club. RL Rowland has led many of the Boise River Bird Walk and Litter Patrol trips. Heidi Ware, Liz Urban, Sue Norton, Harold Ward, Maria Minicucci, and Pam Conley have led the Family Bird Walks this summer.

If you would like to lead a trip or have an idea for a trip, contact Pam Conley, 208-869-0337, [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com).

Thank you to the following bluebird lovers for driving Al around on the bluebird trails and helping him out: Jimmy Yorgensen, Cathy Eells, Cheryl Huizinga, Matt Podolsky, Neil Paprocki, Letty Purcfield, Jim Holcomb, Dave Hazelton, Nancy McCullough, Peggy Williams, Liz Urban, Boyd Steele, Kristin Gnojewski, Kris Albin-Stone, Joni Clapsadle, and Pam Conley. As you can see it takes a lot of folks to keep up with the Bluebird Man. We'll have an article in the November-December issue about how the season turned out.

Thank you to the following people who attended Liz Urban's education meeting

at Starbucks: Kristin Gnojewski, Matt Podolsky, Mike Morrison, Tate Mason, Barb Forderhase, Maria Minicucci and Gerrie Satz. Thanks to those folks who were unable to attend but intend to participate on the committee too.

Thank you to all the folks that brought food and desserts to our July picnic at the MK Nature Center.

Everything was delicious. And a big thank you to all the contributors of refreshments for the monthly meetings. Just a little sweet touch and you have folks hanging around after the meeting schmoozing.

Our Kokanee Day event went very well. Thank you to Maria Minicucci, Lew Ulrey, RL Rowland, Harold Ward, Suzanne Woodcock, Liz Urban, Gerrie Satz and a special thanks to Pam Conley for setting up and taking down the great tent we had which provided us protection from the sun.

As you will note, many of these names are repeated over and over for every event we do. We need more volunteers to get involved so these folks can catch a break. Try out one of our events, you'll be happy you did.

**Gerrie Satz**, Volunteer Coordinator  
[gerries@iranger.com](mailto:gerries@iranger.com)



## GEAS EVENTS for September and October

**Field trip information is subject to change.** Please check the website <http://www.goldeneagleaudubon.org> and go to the Calendar and Field Trips section for the latest information or contact Pam Conley at 869-0337 or [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com)

**Field Trip Etiquette:** We set up car pools to take as few cars as possible, while making sure everyone has a window. Please give the driver of your ride gas money and arrive 10 minutes early.

### Intermountain Bird Observatory Field Trips

A four-wheel drive, high clearance vehicle is recommended to navigate the road to the banding station at Lucky Peak. We meet at the Hilltop Station on Hwy. 21 near mile post 14 1/2 and set up carpools to drive up to the site. Bring snacks and water. Dress for wind, sun, and capricious weather. Be sure to bring a little extra cash to purchase an IBO tee-shirt or hat and support this great project. The staff appreciates healthful snacks also.

**WMC** (Wednesday Morning Club) – September and October

Time: 8 a.m.

Location: Janjou Patisserie in the strip mall northwest of State and 17th.

Contact: Kathy Barker McCoy, 384-1205, 921-1340 cell

Meet us for a cuppa java and a walk on the wild side to local destinations. We'll be out for two to four hours depending on the destination. Migration is occurring, the time of "confusing fall warblers," so we may ponder some mysteries and watch young birds learning to be grownups. This is a low key nature walk; I'll help with bird, plant, and critter identifications, but we're not on a high speed march, and we're not trying to impress anyone. Bring your binocs, some water, and your appreciation of wild Idaho. Carpooling is encouraged; let's keep our carbon footprint down. Tentative Destinations: Sept. 3 - Cottonwood Cr.; Sept. 10 - Blacks Creek Reservoir; Sept. 17 - Eagle Island State Park; Sept. 24 - Greenbelt; Oct. 1 - IBO; Oct. 8 - Hyatt Wetlands; Oct. 15 - Indian Creek Reservoir; Oct. 22 - Hulls Gulch; Oct. 29 - group choice. I reserve the right to change the destination if weather or special sightings so indicate.

### Saturday, September 6

Field Trip: Prairie

Time: 8 a.m.

Location: BLM Office, 3948 Development Ave., Boise

Trip Leader: Bill Belknap

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@Q.com](mailto:pam_conley@Q.com)

Meet at the BLM parking lot at 8 a.m. to set up carpools. Bill Belknap will show us around the lovely Prairie area, including stops at Bonneville Point and lunch at Bill & Barb's cabin in Prairie. Bring snacks, water, lunch, and dress for the weather.

### Sunday, September 14

Family Birding Walk - Especially for children or the child in you.

Time: 9 to 11 a.m.

Location: Hyatt Hidden Lakes Reserve, 5301 N. Maple Grove Rd., Boise, lower parking lot.

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com)

This Boise City Park is managed especially for wildlife. The area has a number of ponds and upland habitat, which support a diverse number of birds and other wildlife. Bring the whole family, especially the young ones. We have binoculars and field guides you can borrow and will cover their use. Sign up the kids

in our Frequent Flyer Club where they earn rewards for birding. We will finish at 11 a.m.

### Saturday, September 20

Intermountain Bird Observatory

Time: 8 a.m.

Location: Meet at Hilltop Station on Hwy 21 at mile post 14 ½ to set up car pools.

Trip Leader: TBA

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com)

All day trip to observe migrating passerines and watch the observatory staff mist netting and banding these small migrants. Pack a lunch and watch raptors moving down the ridge in the afternoon. Bring water, snacks, and a lunch. Dress for the weather.

### Tuesday, September 22

GEAS Monthly Program – Raptor Rescue in the Treasure Valley

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: MK Nature Center, 600 S Walnut, Boise.

Cathie Havlina, a certified raptor rehabilitator will talk about the Treasure Valley Raptor Rescue Program.

### Sunday, September 28

Boise River Greenbelt Bird Watching & Litter Patrol

Time: 9 a.m.

Location: Meet in the Greenbelt parking lot behind the Tavern at Bown Crossing

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com)

We will walk down river from the bridge at Bown Crossing, birding as we go, and pick up litter on our way back. We usually finish around noon. Bring gloves, water & binocs. No public restrooms available. We will have binocs to loan out.

### Friday, October 3

Owls at the Intermountain Bird Observatory

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: Meet at Hilltop Station on Hwy 21 at mile post 14 ½ to set up car pools.

Trip Leader: TBA

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com) Sign up in advance.

Spend an evening with the nocturnal crew at the IBO who will be calling, netting, and banding owls. We will leave Hilltop Station at 6 p.m. so that we have time to drive up the mountain, get oriented at the site, and eat a snack or evening meal before the activity begins. Net runs are made every two hours starting after dark, so you can decide how late you wish to stay. This date should be very close to the peak of owl migration. Bring a chair, food, water, flashlight, and warm, wind-proof clothing. You must sign up in advance for this trip by contacting Pam Conley @ 869-0337 or [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com).

### Sunday, October 5

Family Birding Walk - Especially for children or the child in you.

Time: 9 a.m.

Location: Hulls Gulch Foothills Learning Center parking lot, 3001 N. Sunset Peak Rd. (8th St.).

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com)

We will walk through the Grove and check out the pond to see

**Continued next page**

## GEAS Events, continued

what birds are around. Bring the whole family, especially the young ones. We have binoculars and field guides you can borrow and will cover their use. Sign up the kids in our Frequent Flyer Club where they earn rewards for birding. We will finish at 11 a.m.

### Saturday, October 11

Big Sit! at Hyatt Hidden Lakes Reserve

Time: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Location: Hyatt Hidden Lakes Reserve, 5301 N. Maple Grove Rd., Boise, lower parking lot.

Contact: Robert Mortensen 208-794-7906 [BirdingIsFun@gmail.com](mailto:BirdingIsFun@gmail.com)

The Big Sit! is an international bird watching event sponsored by Bird Watcher's Digest and Swarovski Optik. Originally started by the New Haven (CT) Bird Club, "The Big Sit!" has become the "tailgate party for birders." The simplicity of the concept makes The Big Sit! so appealing. Find a good spot for bird watching – preferably one with good views of a variety of habitats and lots of birds. Next, create a real or imaginary circle 17 feet in diameter and sit inside the circle for 24 hours (12 hours in our case), counting all the bird species you see and/or hear. That's it. Find a spot, sit in it, have fun! Everyone with any interest in birds is invited to join in. You don't have to be an expert. People can come and go as they please throughout the day. Local avid birders will be on site to share their knowledge and experience about identifying birds and cool bird behavior. Extra binoculars and spotting scopes will be available for guests to get close-up looks at the variety of birds at one of Boise's best birding hotspots. The Hyatt Hidden Lakes Reserve is a Boise City Park that doubles as a storm-water treatment facility, featuring sand filters, storm water piping, porous pavement parking lots, restrooms, an access bridge, pathways and educational kiosks.

### Saturday, October 25

Blacks Creek Bird Reserve Planting Project

Time: 9 a.m. at MK Nature Center to Car Pool or at Blacks Creek Bird Reserve at 10 a.m.

Contact: Sean Finn at [a.gentilis@gmail.com](mailto:a.gentilis@gmail.com), or call 371-2740 to RSVP or for more info

We will be planting sagebrush and a selection of wildflowers in a few spots that still need some TLC. The goal will be to re-vegetate all of the heavily compacted road entries from Kuna-Mora road in order to speed up the natural restoration and reduce the temptation to cut the fence. We'll have more than 200 seedlings to plant so we'll need lots of help. We start at 10 a.m. and keep working until all the seedlings are in the ground. Bring water, sunscreen, gloves, and a shovel if you have one. A hat and coat may be needed depending on the weather. We will provide drinks and snacks. Come help us make this jewel shine.

### Sunday, October 26

Boise River Greenbelt Bird Watching & Litter Patrol

Time: 9 a.m.

Location: Meet in the Greenbelt parking lot behind the Tavern at Bown Crossing

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com)

We will walk downriver from the bridge at Bown Crossing, birding as we go, and pick up litter on our way back. We usually finish around noon. Bring gloves, water & binocs. No public

restrooms available. We will have binocs to loan out. This will be our last cleanup for the season.

### Tuesday, October 28

GEAS Monthly meeting - New Roots Program

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: M.K. Nature Center, 600 S Walnut., Boise

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@Q.com](mailto:pam_conley@Q.com)

GEAS board member Liz Urban will talk about GEAS's New Roots Program. This program is designed to engage refugee children in the environment and the community through conservation action. We hosted the Boise pilot program in June this year, so please come and enjoy the successes, stories and photos of this unique program.

### Saturday, November 1

C. J. Strike East – Ted Trueblood, CJ Strike Dam, Jacks Creek WMA, & Bruneau Sand Dunes.

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Location: Meet at BLM office, 3948 Development Ave. (near the airport)

Trip Leaders: Jay Carlisle

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 [pam\\_conley@q.com](mailto:pam_conley@q.com)

Our first planned stop will be at Ted Trueblood WMA. Then we'll work our way toward C.J. Strike Dam, Jacks Creek WMA, & Bruneau Dunes if time allows. This will be an all day trip. Bring lunch, water, snacks, and wind protection. Be prepared for any kind of weather.



Kokanee Day volunteers from the left, Harold Ward, RL Rowland, Suzanne Woodcock; front, Pam Conley, Maria Minicucci and Gerrie Satz.

*Photo by Harold Ward*



## New Roots, continued from Page 1

Creating the program was a journey, and it was amazing to get to know these children. All the smiles, shared stories and enthusiasm made this an experience I'll never forget. I knew it was worth the hundreds of hours of work I and my partners had put in when I heard, "I never knew this was here" and, "I can do this for a job?" for the first time. Throughout the week the children got to know one another and made new friends, and I smiled when they all said they wanted to participate again next year.

Now that the first program is finished, I am also proud to announce that GEAS and the Boise National Forest have allied to help support New Roots for another year. We will host the program again next June and hope to expand the program by a modest amount to reach more refugee children in our community. We also will work on Boise National Forest's new "Wild Outdoor Week." This program will give high school students the opportunity to experience the out-of-doors and to gain valuable job skills and experience.

To learn more, please join me October 25 at the GEAS monthly meeting when I will share some stories from the program and where we hope to take it in the future. More of the children's photos are on the New Roots FaceBook page ([www.facebook.com/NewRootsProgram](http://www.facebook.com/NewRootsProgram)) and on the GEAS website.

I want to thank the children who came into this with open hearts and minds. I hope they will remember the week as fondly as I do.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers and community partners that participated in this pilot program. Together we created a unique program that I think was a great success. (Please see the volunteer section of this newsletter for the names of everyone who helped.)

The partners included the Boise National Forest, the Foothills Learning Center, BSU's Intermountain Bird Observatory, Be Outside Idaho, Boise Watershed, RefuSKI, the Peregrine Fund, Create Common Good, the Walla Walla District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Idaho Office for Refugees. They guided some curriculum development and taught the children on our visits to their respective sites, making this a robust and educational experience every place we went.

Of special note is Megan Jones, without whom this program would not have been possible. Jones and I met in January and she became dedicated to seeing this program succeed. She was invaluable in recruiting the children, helping to create the program's curriculum, being a leader throughout the camp and more. Jones is an English Language Learner teacher in the Boise

School District and founder of the RefuSKI program, which connects refugee youth with the outdoors through sponsoring their participation on the Bogus Basin Nordic Ski Team.



## Did You Know Betsy Baptist?

By Bruce Ackerman

We recently received a bequest from a GEAS supporter – but we didn't know her. Did you?

Betsy Baptist lived in Nampa as a young woman from about 1927 to 1943, then moved to Portland, Oregon. Her parents, Charles and Gladys, lived in Nampa until about 1984 and were GEAS Audubon members. Betsy was a supporter of the National Audubon Society and the Portland chapter. We don't know much about her. We would like to know if any of our old-timers remember her or her parents? We are very grateful for the large donation from her to GEAS.

Her mother, Gladys Baptist died 1984, her father Charles Baptist died 1978.

The following is gathered from her obituary and an oral history that she recorded in 1999.

Mary Elizabeth "Betsy" Baptist was born in 1922 and died in 2012 at the age of 89 in Portland. She was born in Missoula. She lived in Nampa as a girl from about 1927 to 1943, and described living in the small farming community of Nampa (3000 people).

She recalled the slow pace of life in the Depression. Betsy spent her childhood exploring, collecting insects and other creatures, and engaging in various adventures. She describes the farm work that provided her with pocket money during summer breaks.

She attended the College of Idaho in Caldwell for a few years and graduated with bachelor's degree in zoology from University of Montana about 1945. She moved to Portland where she completed the Medical Technology program at Oregon Health and Science University.

Upon graduation, Betsy was encouraged to remain at the University, and she worked and taught in Medical Technology in Portland for a long and successful career. She taught as a medical technologist, parasitology instructor and education coordinator before retiring in 1982 after having played a significant role in hundreds of students' lives.

She was a member of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science for 65 years and the president of the Oregon society for one year. She was a member of the Alpha Mu Tau fraternity, an honorary society for leaders in medical laboratory science for 51 years. Betsy traveled to many places of great natural beauty with her camera in hand, including Alaska, Canada, Greece, India, Kenya, New Zealand, and her own backyard. She was a member of the National Audubon Society and the Mazamas. She will be greatly missed by her many friends. "I think she loved birds and loved Idaho since she grew up here." GEAS President Michele Crist said. "Whatever we do with the bequest, we definitely should honor her name in a very big way."



Betsy Baptist



## Birders Go Online with eBird at Home, on the Road or in the Field

By Lew Ulrey

For more and more birders recording their sightings on eBird is just part of the birding experiences.

In fact on August 8, 2012, then 12-year-old Liron Gertsman of Vancouver, British Columbia, won a pair of new binoculars for having just submitted the 100 millionth eBird checklist. eBird is short for [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org), which is a website run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology since 2002. eBird is a place for you to record your bird sightings.

The way eBird has users record sightings makes the data valuable to researchers who are studying bird biology. In exchange for submitting data for scientific use, users get access to a full range of reports in which to view their own sightings as well as those of others. Those reports run from a simple life list to graphs showing seasonal trends. Anyone planning a trip out of town, may also use eBird to find out what birds they will see the area of their visit, be it Alabama or Zanzibar.

eBird users have to create an eBird account. Go to eBird and click on "sign on or create an account." Fill in fields for username and password and a button labeled "Create an Account." After the account is set up, users can click on the My eBird tab and enter more information about themselves if they desire.

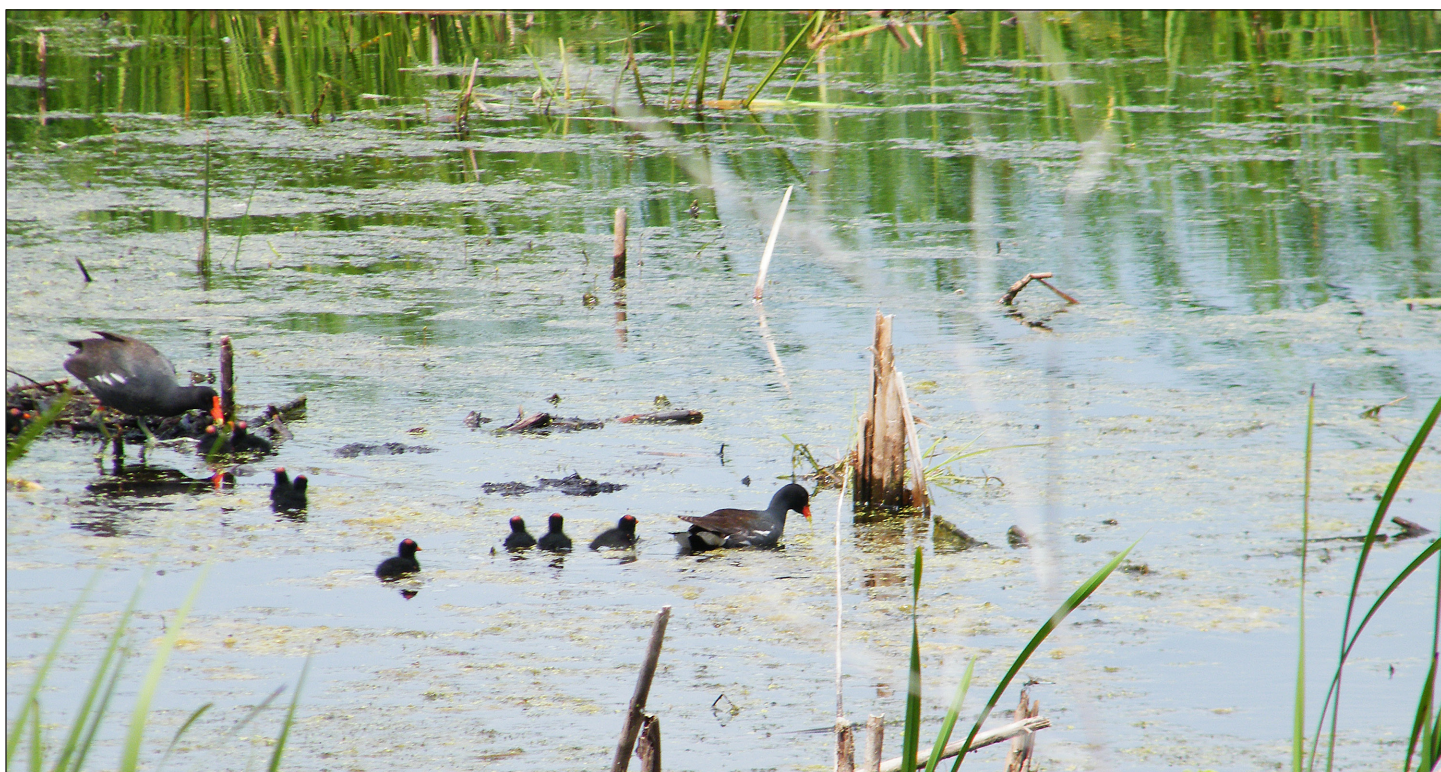
There are three ways to record bird sightings on eBird:

1. To enter a bird report on a computer go to [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) and click on Submit Observations. Enter the location. If it is new, locate it on a map. Enter the date and the type of count, the time the count started, the count, how long the count lasted, the distance traveled on the count, and the number of participants on the count. For the count type, choose one of the following:

- Stationary Count: Stay in one place or move not more than 90 feet and record birds seen or heard.
- Traveling Count: Travel a route of five miles or less. Ideally the count is plotted about at the midpoint of the route. The five mile restriction is intended to prevent data from different habitat types being reported on one checklist.
- Casual Count: To report an observation of an interesting bird found when the primary purpose was not birding. An example of an appropriate circumstance to use this protocol would be to report the cool bird found while driving to work. Next, record sightings for the outing. When entering numbers of individual birds seen for a given species, an actual count is always the best, but at times, for example when a large flock passes quickly overhead, a good estimate is acceptable. An entry of X indicating "species present" is always an option, but it is pretty meaningless. It could mean one bird or 10,000. At the end of the report eBird will ask: Are You Reporting Every Species You Were Able to Identify? The answer should usually be "yes." Answer "no" only if purposely not reporting some species.

2. With the BirdLog app, smart phone users can record sightings on eBird right in the field.
3. If birding with a friend who also uses eBird, have him or her submit the checklist and share it. When accepting the shared checklist, it gets added to your account.

Photographs of birds on a Flickr or Picasa site can be embedded in a checklist. This can be a good way to document a rarity or just to record the memory of a beautiful bird.



These moorhens were sighted recently in upstate New York.

Photo by Harold Ward



# Fledglings and the Cooper's Hawk Highlight Backyard Birding

By Crista Worthy

Each summer, the sage hills and canyons behind my Hidden Springs home become a veritable fledgling factory.

As spring moves into summer, waves of fledglings make their way into my unfenced yard to gobble everything I've put out for them.

The mourning doves seem to have a head start on everyone in the love department; by May the ground below the bird feeders is already filled with young doves, while the parents are making plans to nest again.

Western bluebirds politely share the sunflower chips with bright goldfinches in May and June. But by mid-July the bluebirds become intimidated by the vast numbers of house finch fledglings that fill the trees and inundate the feeders. Seed consumption more than doubles, as hundreds of drab young finches vie for a spot.

The goldfinches, which nest later, are tough despite their smaller size and soon learn if they just stay put that the young house finches can wait on the ground.

Last winter the quail arrived twice a day in a flock of 64 birds. By May they had long since split up into pairs and strolled through the yard all day, each male jealously guarding his mate.

By June we had our first babies; when newly hatched, the tiny quail can barely make their way through the grass and are herded by their anxious parents to all the places I've spread seed on the ground.

One pair this year has 17 offspring. By August many of them are nearly as large



California quail.

Photo by Crista Worthy

as their parents, who are still vigilant.

Four tiers of winged predators make their living off this bounty: a pair of kestrels, a sharp-shinned hawk, a Cooper's hawk, and a northern harrier. Notice I mention them in ascending order of size; that's precisely their pecking order too.

The Cooper's will beat a fast exit should the harrier cruise by, skimming the tops of the sage, but the sharp-shin will always defer to the Cooper's. I only see the kestrels fluttering in place high over the canyon when all the other raptors are absent.

"My" Cooper's hawk arrived in the fall of 2012. He wore the immature plumage of a young bird; he was as inexperienced as he was brash. From his perch in a nearby cottonwood he made endless forays through our back yard, flying about ten feet above the ground and scattering the smaller birds. He'd pursue them

under bushes, fly under our patio table, occasionally right past me, and nearly always come up empty.

Through the winter I'd often see him actually perched on the bird feeder. By spring, when young mourning doves were abundant, he had perfected his technique. Instead of perching low and flying straight he would appear from above each evening, seemingly out of nowhere and blindingly fast, and nearly always catch a dove on the ground. He also learned to drive them directly toward the kitchen window. If the panicked bird hit the window he was on it right as it touched the ground below.

One day I stood just inside the window and watched him. This dove was nearly as large as he was and struggled mightily. The hawk began pulling out feathers immediately—chest feathers to expose the dove's belly, and tail feathers so it couldn't bash him with its tail.

The hawk saw me standing only three feet away. He'd glance up and glare at me, but hunger won out and he stayed, devouring the dove until I began to worry that I'd have to go out and clean up. He obliged me by finally flying off with what was left, leaving hundreds of feathers to blow away in the wind.

It appears his success has resulted in a new generation: today a young Cooper's hawk flew into the yard. This one is probably a female. She's already larger than her dad, but she behaves as he did—charging under bushes in pursuit of house finches, whizzing through the patio, and finally, in frustration, simply sitting on the feeder.

I'm looking forward to watching her learn.



Cooper's hawk

Photo by Crista Worthy



## Liven ‘Pete’ Peterson: 1917-2014, a GEAS Co-founder Remembered

Liven “Pete” Peterson, one of the founders of Golden Eagle Audubon Society, passed away on April 12, 2014, at home in Everett, Wash., with his family and dog by his side.

Peterson grew up as an only child in Minnesota and loved exploring the wild woods and waters of the wilderness and spent many hours roving with his dogs and touring voyageur portage trails by canoe. Peterson grew up listening to the music of train horns and mill whistles from the active open-pit mines and two nearby sawmills at the end of Main Street in Virginia, Minn., but his favorite songs came from the wild birds in his yard. He found great joy in watching their habits and behaviors around his feeders.

In an interview with Lois Mohler Okraninski for the GEAS archives, Peterson told her how GEAS began when Al Larson showed up at his house in Boise one day, asked if he was a bird man, and wanted to know if he would help do a Christmas bird count in Boise. The two of them did that first bird count and went on to form GEAS. In 1972 they held the first meeting in Peterson’s living room, and the group of six included Al Larson, Levi Mohler and Bill Belknap. Peterson served as vice president and field trip leader over the years.

He described the effort to band hundred of gulls in a banding project. The banders worked at night, and Peterson said they put the bands on a pointed dowel that they stuck in the ground so they could find them. He remembers fumbling around in the dark with the gulls squawking all around them saying: “You had to be pretty devoted to do this kind of work, you know. Free! Nobody was paying us for it or anything, but we banded thousands of gulls. We had to catch them, to run them down. I remember Al and Hilda Larson were good at that.”

Peterson recalled memories of the early Christmas bird counts when he and Roger Williams would float down the Boise River

in a canoe and do their count and then get together with the other counters later in the day to compare and compile lists and tell about their adventures.

Peterson served in World War II as an artillery reconnaissance officer in the Pacific theater and was among the first troops to enter Japan in the fall of 1945. After his Army service and his education at the University of Minnesota, Peterson started his 30-year career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Billings, Montana. He was transferred to Nebraska, to Minnesota, and then to Boise where he lived until 2004.

Peterson never forgot how the Minnesota forests were logged and abandoned. Over the years he watched the gradual degradation of his favorite lakes and streams by polluted runoff. He was concerned because so many people either fail to notice this slow, insidious deterioration or don’t care. He felt it was his duty to wake them up. He wrote letters to editors and elected officials and showed up at civic meetings to get their attention.

He supported many conservation organizations both local and national. He often reminded people that “bad things happen when good men remain silent.”

Peterson and his wife, June, enjoyed a 40-year marriage until her death in 2007. They lived with her daughter in Everett, Wash., for 10 years, where they enthusiastically greeted the visiting wild birds and pesky squirrels that visited the feeder outside their bedroom window.

Peterson published many articles for magazines and newsletters over his lifetime. He published “X-Ray X-Ray: A Citizen Soldier Remembers WWII” in 2000. A collection of his short articles entitled “Lost in the Woods for Thirty Years at Government Expense” was published in 2014. His family gave two copies to GEAS, and you can borrow one by calling Sue Norton at 378-4248 or order a copy from Amazon.

## Susan Haig, 2015 GEAS Banquet Speaker, To Discuss California Condor

Susan Haig will be the speaker at the GEAS annual banquet in March, 2015.

She is a supervisory wildlife ecologist at the U.S. Geological Survey’s Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center in Corvallis, Ore.

She is also a professor of wildlife ecology at Oregon State University, a research associate of the Smithsonian Institution, and president of the American Ornithologists’ Union. She has spent more than 30 years working on species facing the brink of extinction.



Susan Haig

Haig earned a doctorate in biology at the University of North Dakota in 1987. Her research addresses the genetic and demographic factors needed to plan appropriate recovery actions for small populations.

Haig’s long-term efforts include work on piping plovers, spotted owls, red-cockaded woodpeckers, and California condors.

With Jesse D’Elia, a supervisory fish and wildlife biologist from Portland, Ore., Haig has authored “California Condors in the Pacific Northwest.” In the book, Haig and D’Elia investigate the paleontological and observational records as well as the cultural relationships between American Indian tribes and condors, providing the most complete assessment to date of the condor’s occurrence in the Pacific Northwest. They evaluate the probable causes of regional extinction and the likelihood that condors once bred in the region, and they assess factors that must be considered in determining whether they could once again thrive in Northwest skies.

Despite frequent depiction as a bird of California and the desert southwest, North America’s largest avian scavenger once graced the skies of the Pacific Northwest, from northern California to British Columbia. This important volume documents the condor’s history in the region, from prehistoric times to the early twentieth century, and explores the challenges of reintroduction.

**The link for the online calendar is:**  
<http://members.goldeneagleaudubon.org/resource?121>

# Volunteers Wanted: More Restoration Work Planned at Blacks Creek Reserve

Golden Eagle Audubon members and supporters of Blacks Creek Bird Reserve are invited to join us October 25 to plant sagebrush and wildflowers in a few spots that still need some TLC.

The goal will be to re-vegetate all of the heavily compacted road entries from Kuna-Mora Road to speed up the natural restoration and reduce the temptation to cut the fence. We'll have more than 200 seedlings so we'll need lots of help.

We start at 10 a.m. and keep working until all the seedlings are in the ground. To carpool, meet at MK Nature Center at 9 a.m., or meet us at the Reserve at 10 a.m. Bring water, sunscreen, gloves and a shovel if you have one. A hat and coat may be needed depending on the weather. We will provide drinks and snacks

Our success at protecting and restoring Blacks Creek Bird Reserve, an Audubon Important Bird Area, continues in 2014 as fence cutting and fire starts are down from previous years.

It's plain to see with even a short visit

that vegetation is reclaiming many of the user-created roads and the birds love it.

For anyone who didn't see it, we got some great coverage in the Idaho Statesman last spring: <http://www.idahostatesman.com/2014/03/27/3103395/blacks-creek-reservoir-reborn.html>.

Also GEAS members recently helped prevent establishment of a shotgun shooting range just downstream of the Reserve. We thank you for your actions.

For more information or to RSVP, please email Sean Finn at [a.gentilis@gmail.com](mailto:a.gentilis@gmail.com) or call 371-2740.



The Golden Eagle Audubon Society publishes *The Golden Eagle* six times a year.

- Please help us save paper and mailing costs; if you would like to receive your newsletter online, send your name and zip code in an e-mail to [membership@goldeneagleaudubon.org](mailto:membership@goldeneagleaudubon.org). GEAS does not share your e-mail address.
- For membership/subscription information, renewals, or change of address, e-mail [membership@goldeneagleaudubon.org](mailto:membership@goldeneagleaudubon.org).
- For newsletter submissions, send an e-mail to Niels S. Nokkentved at [sparre47@gmail.com](mailto:sparre47@gmail.com). The deadline for newsletter submissions is the second Sunday of the month.

We invite you to join our organization. Please choose **one** of the options below:

Join the National Audubon Society

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and my local chapter. I will receive the Audubon Magazine and The Golden Eagle. (National membership includes local membership.)

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

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

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

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Introductory offer for the first year: \$20

I would like to donate an additional \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to National Audubon Society and mail to: National Audubon Society, PO Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250.

Chapter Code: C4ZG000Z

Join the Golden Eagle Audubon Chapter

My membership in the local chapter includes a one-year subscription to The Golden Eagle. I understand that all my dues remain with the local chapter and support its activities.

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

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

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

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student membership \$15

Individual membership \$20

Family membership \$35

Golden Eagle Lifetime membership \$500

I would like to donate an additional \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to Golden Eagle Audubon Society. Mail to: Golden Eagle Audubon Society, PO Box 8261, Boise, ID 83707. Please contact us for information on membership scholarships.

The Golden Eagle Audubon Society is southwest Idaho's chapter of the National Audubon Society. GEAS promotes environmental awareness through field trips, local programs and volunteer work.  
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[www.goldeneagleaudubon.org](http://www.goldeneagleaudubon.org)