



# The Golden Eagle

Newsletter of the Golden Eagle Audubon Society

May-June, 2014

## In Memoriam: Hilda Larson, a Collection of Memories

Hilda Mae Larson, 87, passed away peacefully of natural causes at her daughter's home in Boise on February 17, 2014.

She was born in Boise on April 7, 1926, to Forest E. and Hilda Nelson McAfee. Hilda, an only child, grew up on her parents' ranch in Boise County, now known as Wilderness Ranch. The ranch was adjacent to her grandparents' ranch at the end of Daggett Creek, still owned by the family. She enjoyed working on the ranch, haying, milking the cows and feeding livestock. Although she preferred working outdoors, she could cook tasty meals over a wood burning range. Hilda attended grade school at the Clear Creek School near Grimes Creek and the Daggett Creek School near the mouth of Daggett Creek.

Hilda married Clarence Henry Bryant on December 24, 1949, in her mother's log home at Wilderness Ranch. They moved to Boise and were blessed with three loving children, James, Terry and Jeannie. Hilda was content to be a stay-at-home mom, raising her children. The family spent much time at the Daggett Creek ranch, hunting, fishing, cutting wood, shoveling trails, sledding and everything in between. Clarence passed away in 1970 and afterwards, Hilda maintained a close relationship with his extended family.

Hilda met Al Larson in the Idaho Gem Club. They were married July 5, 1974. After Al had discussed the idea of a local Audubon Society with Pete Peterson in 1971, a formal charter for the Golden Eagle Audubon Society was granted in 1973. In 1979, Al volunteered to serve as newsletter editor, since many of his ideas for articles had been rejected. When Al was newsletter editor, Hilda did the typing and illustrations. Together they wrote and edited the newsletter for eight years and 100 issues. In 1981, Hilda began her column "Observations from my Kitchen Window." The column continued until her death. In the early 1990s, Al and Hilda helped develop the Southwestern Idaho Birder's Association. For both GEAS and SIBA, Al and Hilda have led innumerable field trips, participated in Christmas Bird Counts and introduced many birders to young bluebirds in the nest. Hilda also spent several years as board secretary for GEAS.

One of the most popular Larson field trips takes place every June. Birders meet at the Daggett Creek Bridge. With Al, birders hike along Mores Creek and then up Dunnigan Creek. For many years, Hilda remained at the bridge, often with birders who kept her company. When the hikers returned to Hilda at the bridge, they often found that she had seen more birds from her chair than they had seen on their hike.

In 1980, Al and Hilda began hosting a picnic on the lawn of their home at Daggett Creek, and they continued this tradition for almost 35 years. Their many hummingbird feeders attracted

several species and offered close up views of the birds. During the picnic, Hilda would show off her bird friendly plants. She was generous with seeds. Several birders have flower beds of columbines from her plants. Hilda guaranteed the flowers to attract hummingbirds.

After the picnic, the hardy birders hiked up the mountain path looking for elusive white-headed woodpeckers. After many summers of enjoying the trek up the mountain, several people discovered the pleasure of staying with Hilda in a shady spot on the lawn, eating chocolate chip cookies and watching birds fly into the yard. Hilda taught her companions the value of sitting still and waiting for birds. Their patience was always rewarded, with views of hummingbirds, orioles, tanagers, bluebirds, turkeys, pine siskins and an occasional cougar or bear. They were perfect afternoons when birders enjoyed Hilda's company, her laughter



Hilda Mae Larson

and her generous spirit.

Hilda taught us so much about observing and appreciating the natural world. We will miss hearing about pesky squirrels and migrating tanagers. And we will remember Hilda when we take time to plant some seeds, eat a picnic with friends, and watch juncos and nuthatches, and even those obnoxious squirrels, out the kitchen window.

After discussions with Al, GEAS has renamed the Prairie bluebird trail the Hilda Larson Bluebird Trail. If you would like to donate to the maintenance of the trail, send your check to GEAS, PO Box 8261, Boise ID 83707.

**President's Message**

By Michele Crist

Greetings GEAS!

Spring is here, and it has been an especially beautiful one. I hope all of you are enjoying the warmer weather and are out and about seeing lots of migrating birds coming back to Idaho.

A lot has happened at GEAS over the past few months. We were all caught by surprise with Hilda Larson's passing and I know we all miss her. She was a great lady who founded GEAS with her husband Al. She continued to contribute much to GEAS over many years. To honor Hilda, we will be publishing many of her past "Out the Kitchen Window" columns and artwork in The Golden Eagle over the coming year. I hope you enjoy all of these, I know I am looking forward to reading all of them.

We are about finished with our new strategic plan. As soon as we finish with the final edits, we will be posting it on the website and would love to have your feedback. In addition, we've been quite busy leading birding trips, monthly programs and family bird walks. I hope you all find the time to take advantage of these great trips and monthly programs. Please give a big thank you to Pam Conley and Bruce Ackerman for organizing all of these events every month. I hope to see you all soon on one of the trips or one of the programs very soon.

Thank you for your support!

Michele

**Banquet Lost and Found**

2013 woman's wrist watch.

2014 nine-inch bottom of a spring form pan.

Call Sue Norton at 378-4248 to claim either of these items

**GEAS CALENDAR**

**May-June 2014**

Field Trip: Sagehen, Montour	May 3
Family Birding Walk	May 4
Monday Morning Bird Walk	May 5, 19, June 2
Migratory Bird Day	May 10
Greenbelt Litter Patrol & Birding	May 18
Avimor Bird Walk	May 24, June 14
GEAS Monthly meeting	May 27
Family Birding Walk	June 8
Daggett Creek Bird Walk and Picnic	June 21
Monthly Meeting/Annual Picnic	June 24
Field Trip: Owyhee Bluebird Trail	June 28
Greenbelt Litter Patrol & Birding	June 29

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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## OUT THE KITCHEN WINDOW

By Hilda Larson

*Several people have commented about how much they are going to miss reading Hilda Larson's column, so the board decided to run some of her past columns for a year, and then we will look for one or more of our GEAS members who would like to continue the tradition and write a backyard birding column. Let us know if you think of someone who writes well and has an interesting backyard.*

*This column from November 1981 in which Hilda reflects on birds from the summer and fall is the beginning of many years of columns that have given pleasure to her readers. We hope you enjoy these reruns.*

### Observations from My Kitchen Window by Hilda Larson

The past summer there were only house finches and house sparrows at the feeders. Though they are interesting to watch, (what bird isn't?) I was thrilled to get up one morning recently and see several American goldfinches working the sunflower heads. Next day an Oregon junco came to check

out the feeders, and an Audubon warbler made a fast stop in the plum tree.

I heard a "chick-a-dee-dee" in the neighbor's lilac bushes. The next day a mountain chickadee took a sunflower seed from the can feeder, making off with it like a small masked bandit. This occurred regularly for several days. Now, he comes no more.

One day I opened the side door to go out to the garden, and a sharp-shinned hawk flew away. He had come to feed, also. Not on our menu, but on the diners we had attracted by putting out the food.

When the grand kids spilled dry cubes from the dog food sack, we gathered them up and put some on the table feeder. Now a couple of magpies come each day, stuff one cube in the back of their throats, pick up another and fly off, to hide them away in the grass, in the trees, and places we aren't aware of. Do you suppose they will ever return to eat them?

California quail come occasionally. One day they became frightened and flew in all directions. Later, we heard one calling the flock together, and it was sitting on top of our chimney. Al has a nice new slide to show.

On October 12, there were 10 species including pine siskin, Cassin's finch on the sunflowers, and evening grosbeak feeding on the bit-



sweet berries. Next day the grosbeaks were at the sunflowers, all the feeders, and the window sill, gobbling striped sunflower seeds like mad. The sound of their cracking seeds is like someone walking on gravel. We have opened the window and if we are very still, they will come inside to eat.

Maybe we will get one to eat out of our hands.

There are squirrels who go through contortions trying to figure out how to climb down the long wire to the feeders. When they reach too far and fall, I enjoy the silly look and the way they try to hop off to the neighbor's tree acting as if nothing had happened.

I guess that's all for now, but if more feathered and furry friends appear, I'll be writing again.

*November, 1981*

## Volunteer News

By Pam Conley

### GEAS Thanks You for Your Help

Thank you to Gerrie Satz, Danette Henderson, Liz Urban, Louise Maley and Sue Norton for helping to get the newsletter out.

A big thanks goes to all those who helped with the Banquet this year. Sue Norton and Susan Hazelton do a wonderful job of organizing that event, year after year, and we dearly appreciate them.

Thank you Jennifer Struthers, Idaho Fish and Game wolf researcher, for presenting a program on wolf ecology and management in Idaho at our March Monthly Program meeting. With wolves being in the news lately, it was good to get updated on what Idaho is doing to manage wolves.

We thank the following folks for leading field trips this spring. Leanne Lloyd Fairy led a trip to Wilson Spring Ponds, John Shortis led a trip to the Fort Boise Wildlife Management Area, and Dave Hazelton led a Washington County sage-grouse trip. If you'd like to lead a trip or have an idea for a trip, contact Pam Conley, 208-869-0337, pam\_conley@q.com.

Thank you to the folks that brought treats to our Monthly Program meetings. They are a nice touch and are greatly appreciated.

Blacks Creek Bird Reserve got a little TLC on Sunday, April 6. A small crew worked all morning repairing fence and planting about 50 native plants (silver sagebrush and showy fleabane). We appreciate the hard work of volunteers Kristin Araki, Colter Crist-Harm, Michele Crist, Michael Henderson, Mark Urban, Liz Urban and Sean Finn.

### Volunteers are needed for the following events:

International Migratory Bird Day – 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 10, at the MK Nature Center. We need eight volunteers to take shifts at our table.

Bio Blitz – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, June 14, at the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge. We need 4 volunteers to work in our booth.

North American Bluebird Society Annual Conference – 3 to 9 p.m., Friday, June 13, at the Boise Center on the Grove. Need volunteers to help with registration, etc.

### Bluebird Trail Drivers-helpers Needed

Pam Conley, the bluebird dispatcher, is looking for volunteers to drive Al Larson around on his bluebird trails this season. A vehicle with good clearance is preferable.

GEAS will reimburse you for your fuel costs or you can donate it to the cause. Drivers are needed one or two days a week, especially when the little bluebirds are close to fledging. Contact Pam at 208-869-0337 or pam\_conley@q.com, and she will add you to her contact list. She will send out an e-mail the week prior to line up drivers for the following week.

If you aren't receiving the newsletter make sure we have your correct e-mail address by sending it to membership@goldeneagleaudubon.org. If you'd rather get a copy in the mail send us a note to the PO Box address to let us know.

**Gerrie Satz**, Volunteer Coordinator, gerries@comcast.net



*Photo by Jennifer Robbins-Smith*  
Pam Conley emcees the annual GEAS banquet.

## GEAS EVENTS for May and June

**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.

### Wednesday Morning Club – May & June

Time: 8 a.m.

Location: Janjou Patisserie (best croissants in Boise, the old Moxie Java in the strip mall northwest of State and 17th).

Contact: Kathy Barker McCoy, h- 384-1205 c- 921-1340

Wednesday Morning Club continues into the spring and summer. Come join us for some great nature adventures. Check our online calendar for potential destinations.

### IBO Hummingbird Banding Project

Dates: May 31, June 14, June 28, July 12, July 26, August 9, August 23

Time: approximately 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Location: Idaho City area

Contact: Jessica Pollock [jessicapollock@boisestate.edu](mailto:jessicapollock@boisestate.edu) 208-426-2225 (office)

To attend one of these hummingbird banding sessions please contact Jessica. Space is limited.

### Monday, April 28

Crane Creek Country Club Monday Morning Bird Walk

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Location: Meet at the entrance to the tennis facility off Curling Dr. right before the intersection with Braemere. The parking area is SE of the tennis courts. Crane Creek Country Club is located at 500 W. Curling Dr., Boise, one block south of the intersection of Bogus Basin Road and Curling Dr.

Leader: Scott Tuthill

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

We will take a short walk up the canyon on the back nine holes going as far as time will allow. Covering two to three miles is possible. Bring binoculars and birding field guide if you have them. No registration is required, just show up. Wear comfortable walking shoes. We will bird for two to four hours.

### Saturday, May 3

Field Trip: Sagehen Reservoir and Montour WMA

Time: 7:45 a.m. at Park & Ride on State & Riverside Dr. in Eagle or at 9 a.m. at Sweet/Montour junction on Hwy 52 between Emmett and Horseshoe Bend, about 45 minutes from Boise.

Trip Leader: Al Larson

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

We will make a brief trip to the Montour wildlife management area and then head for Sagehen reservoir. We hope our lunch stop will be in the forest at nest box No.1. We will continue on to the reservoir and hope it is not snowed in. This is a great opportunity to observe wild flowers as well as birds. Dress for the weather and bring water, lunch and snacks. This is an all day trip.

### Sunday, May 4

Family Birding Walk - Especially for children or the child in you.  
Time: 9 a.m.

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

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

A highlight of this walk will be seeing the nesting great-horned owls that live in Hulls Gulch. We hope to be there in time to see their fuzzy fledgling babies. We will also look for the beautiful warblers and lazuli buntings that are returning to Boise for the spring and learn about migration. Bring the whole family, especially the young ones. We have binoculars and field guides you can borrow. Sign up the kids in our Frequent Flier Club where they earn rewards for birding. We will finish at 11 a.m.

### Monday, May 5

Crane Creek Country Club Monday Morning Bird Walk

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Location: Meet at the entrance to the tennis facility off Curling Dr. right before the intersection with Braemere. The parking area is SE of the tennis courts. Crane Creek Country Club is located at 500 W. Curling Dr., Boise, one block south of the intersection of Bogus Basin Road and Curling Dr.

Leader: Scott Tuthill

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

We will take a short walk up the canyon on the back nine holes going as far as time will allow. Covering two to three miles is possible. Bring binoculars and birding field guide if you have them. No registration is required, just show up. Wear comfortable walking shoes. We will bird for two to four hours.

### Saturday, May 10

International Migratory Bird Day- Why Birds Matter

Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337

This year's theme is – "Why Birds Matter" – Some bird species provide practical solutions to problems, such as the need for insect and rodent control. Others disperse seeds, helping to revegetate disturbed areas. Others are pollinators, ensuring that we are graced with flowering plants, trees, and shrubs. Beyond the utilitarian, birds are inspirations for the arts. Come learn more about why birds matter and enjoy bird walks, bird banding, live birds, plant sale and more.

### Sunday, May 18

Boise River Greenbelt Bird Watching & Litter Patrol

Time: 9 a.m.

Location: Meet in the Greenbelt parking lot behind the Tavern at Bown Crossing (near east end of Park Center Blvd.)

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 and binoculars. No public restrooms available.

### Monday, May 19

Crane Creek Country Club Monday Morning Bird Walk

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Location: Meet at the entrance to the tennis facility off Curling Dr. right before the intersection with Braemere. The parking area is SE of the tennis courts. Crane Creek Country Club is located at 500 W. Curling Dr., Boise, one block south of the intersection of

**Events continued . . .**

Bogus Basin Road and Curling Dr.

Leader: Scott Tuthill

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

We will take a short walk up the canyon on the back nine holes going as far as time will allow. Covering two to three miles is possible. Bring binoculars and birding field guide if you have them. No registration is required, just show up. Wear comfortable walking shoes. We will bird for two to four hours.

**Saturday, May 24**

Avimor Bird Walk followed by a Backyard Birding Class

Time: 8 a.m. - noon

Location: Meet on Avimor Dr off Hwy 55 - Backyard Birding class at 10:30 a.m. in Avimor Conference Rm.

Contact: Robert Mortensen [birdingisfun@gmail.com](mailto:birdingisfun@gmail.com)

Photo presentation of which birds you might expect at your feeder in spring and summer and how to attract a greater variety of birds to your yard. Future Avimor Bird Walk dates: May 24 - 8 a.m.; June 14 - 8 a.m.; July 19 - 8 a.m.; August 23 - 9 a.m.

**Tuesday, May 27**

GEAS Monthly meeting- Terry Rich- Birding Namibia- Africa and Board Election

Time: 7 p.m.

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

Terry Rich, GEAS board member and Fish & Wildlife Services' Partners in Flight program lead will give a presentation on his trip to Namibia last year. We will also be voting for new GEAS board members and officers.

**Monday, June 2**

Crane Creek Country Club Monday Morning Bird Walk

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Location: Meet at the entrance to the tennis facility off Curling Dr. right before the intersection with Braemere. The parking area is SE of the tennis courts. Crane Creek Country Club is located at 500 W. Curling Dr., Boise, one block south of the intersection of Bogus Basin Road and Curling Dr.

Leader: Scott Tuthill

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

We will take a short walk up the canyon on the back nine holes going as far as time will allow. Covering two to three miles is possible. Bring binoculars and birding field guide if you have them. No registration is required, just show up. Wear comfortable walking shoes. We will bird for two to four hours.

**Sunday, June 8**

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

Time: 9 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. Sign up the kids in our Frequent Flier Club where they earn rewards for birding. We finish at 11 a.m.

**Friday-Sunday, June 13-15**

North American Bluebird Society Annual Conference

Go to <http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org/conventions/2014/NABS2014.pdf> for more info and registration forms. This event is hosted by Wild Lens, Inc., creators of "Bluebird Man," the documentary about Al Larson and his bluebird trails. The film will be shown on Friday evening with a field trip to the Prairie Bluebird Trail on Saturday and the Owyhee Bluebird Trail on Sunday. Advanced Registration is required. **Deadline for field trips, conference, meals and hotel reservations is May 22.**

**Saturday, June 14**

Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge's BioBlitz

Time: Festival is 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Location: Deer Flat NWR 13751 Upper Embankment Rd., Nampa.

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

A BioBlitz is a 24-hour rapid survey of biological diversity, and to celebrate this biodiversity we host a public festival. On June 13 and 14, local scientists, naturalists, and volunteers will comb Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge to find and identify as many different species of plants and animals as possible. Everyone is welcome to attend and lend a helping hand as we all celebrate the biodiversity at Deer Flat. The Festival on Saturday is free and includes all kinds of fun activities for the family. GEAS will have our booth.

**Saturday, June 14**

Avimor Bird Walk followed by a Backyard Birding Class

Time: 8 a.m. - noon

Location: Meet on Avimor Dr off Hwy 55 - Backyard Birding class at 10:30 a.m. in Avimor Conference Rm.

Contact: Robert Mortensen [birdingisfun@gmail.com](mailto:birdingisfun@gmail.com)

Photo presentation of which birds you might expect at your feeder in spring and summer and how to attract a greater variety of birds to your yard. Future Avimor Bird Walk dates: July 19 - 8 a.m.; August 23 - 9 a.m.

**Saturday, June 21**

Daggett Creek Bird Walk & Picnic with Al Larson

Time: 7 a.m.

Location: Meet at MK Nature Center, 600 S Walnut., Boise, to set up car pools or Meet at mile marker 24 on Highway 21 east of Boise (bridge at the mouth of Daggett Creek) at 8 a.m.

Trip Leader: Al Larson

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

We will bird on foot along Mores Creek and a short way up Dunnigan Creek. Bring your lunch for a picnic in Larson's yard and enjoy close encounters with humming birds. After lunch there may be a two-mile hike along a logging road in search of whatever may be out and about.

**Tuesday, June 24**

Monthly meeting is GEAS Annual Picnic & New Board Member Induction

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: Municipal Park, north of Fish and Game office, 500 S Walnut, Boise. If it rains - MKNC.

GEAS will provide chicken, soft drinks, and plates and silverware. You bring a side dish or dessert to share. We will be inducting the new board members and officers.

**Events continued from Page 5**

**Saturday, June 28**

Field Trip: Owyhee Bluebird Trail

Time: 7 a.m.

Location: Meet at Eagle/Overland Park & Ride at 7:00 a.m. or Walters Ferry Bridge, S. of Nampa on Hwy #45 (12 Ave S.) on west side of the Snake River at 8 a.m.

Trip Leader: Al Larson

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 pam\_conley@Q.com

We will set up car pools. We will make brief stops at Murphy, Oreana and other points of interest. There should still be a few active bluebird nests to visit. After lunch we will continue on to Spencer Reservoir. Bring lunch, snacks, water and dress for the weather.

**Sunday, June 29**

Boise River Greenbelt Bird Watching & Litter Patrol

Time: 9 a.m.

Location: Meet in the Greenbelt parking lot behind the Tavern at Bown Crossing (near east end of Park Center Blvd.)

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 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 and binocs. No public restrooms available.

**Saturday, July 12**

Prairie Bluebird Trail

Time: 7:45 a.m.

Location: BLM Office, 3948 Development Ave., Boise

Trip Leader: Al Larson

Contact: Pam Conley 869-0337 pam\_conley@Q.com

Meet at the BLM parking lot at 7:45 a.m. to set up carpools. Al will share with us his expertise and love for the Bluebirds along his trail. This should also be a good time for finding the bobolinks near Prairie. Varied habitats, beautiful scenery and many of Idaho's breeding birds – all in one trip. Bring lunch, water, a lawn chair (for lunch), and sun protection for an all day trip. Restrooms are available at Willow Creek and Prairie.



Varied thrush

Photo by Bob Ellis

**Hummingbirds at Home:  
Audubon's Newest Citizen Science Program**

Watching hummingbirds is a favorite pastime for many birders and gardeners alike.

These aerial wonders are fascinating and endearing as they flit about and feed on flowers and at feeders, visiting our yards and parks on their migration journeys during the spring.

Their small size belies their toughness – many hummingbirds migrate long distances and must eat several times their weight in nectar daily to stay alive. Their accelerated metabolism may keep hummingbirds moving at impressive speeds, but also means they live on the edge, consistently within hours of starving to death if they don't find food.

To live such high energy lifestyles hummingbirds must sync their migration and nesting times with the flowering of nectar-bearing plants. Climate change threatens to throw off this delicate balance, with unknown repercussions for hummingbirds. We know that scientific research will be essential for helping us understand how climate change is affecting hummingbirds and for learning what we can do about it. But it's not that simple. Collecting the necessary scientific data across large areas is difficult and

Since the more than 9,200 shared more observations hummingbirds through our science program, at Home. The this innovative gather data that better understand flowering supplemental people relate to hummingbird and breeding



Photo by Mike Morrison  
Calliope hummingbird

costly. spring of 2013, volunteers have than 26,000 of feeding with Audubon newest citizen Hummingbirds purpose of program is to will help us how changing patterns and feeding by the timing of migration success, and

how hummingbirds are impacted by feeders, non-native nectar sources in gardens, shifting flowering times and climate change.

Since nectar is a critical resource for hummingbirds, fueling their ability to breed after migration, Audubon's Hummingbirds at Home program asks people to document what flowering plants the hummingbirds are feeding on in their backyards as well as whether hummingbird feeders are supplied and used. The ultimate goal of Hummingbirds at Home will be to develop a series of region-specific recommendations to help hummingbird lovers make their gardens and "patches" better stocked with nutrient-rich nectar sources, especially during the critical post-migration and breeding seasons.

In this family-friendly program, participants log hummingbird sightings and the flowering plants or feeders they visit online and with free mobile technology or via desktop computers. Participants can record surveys of their yards, as well as logging how often hummingbirds visit their nectar foods. As sightings are reported, participants can also view hummingbird sightings on the website in near real time.

To learn more about this exciting citizen science project, go to [www.hummingbirdsathome.org](http://www.hummingbirdsathome.org).

## 2014 Banquet: Fun and Successful Thanks to GEAS Volunteers

By Sue Norton

This year's banquet was our most successful ever. We settled into our new location with very little fuss and enjoyed having everything in the one big room. People laughed and talked as they made bids at the silent auction and wandered around greeting friends and buying tempting desserts.

Pam Conley served as master of ceremonies and guided us through the evening's events with gracious good humor. GEAS President Michele Crist started the program with a presentation about the year's activities and achievements.

Our speaker, Kurt Burnham, talked with us about his work with the High Arctic Institute. He described his research in Greenland and his work with gyrfalcons and other birds that spend time in the Arctic. He also talked about the effects of global warming on that icy island. He showed photographs of gyrfalcons and huge ice fields and gave us a greater understanding of an area few of us have visited.



Photo by Jennifer Robbins-Smith

Featured speaker Kurt Bernham talks about his falcon research in Greenland at the 2014 GEAS annual banquet.

Matthew Podolsky and Neil Paprocki showed a film tribute to Hilda Larson in memory and appreciation for all she has given to GEAS over the years from serving on the board to hosting picnics on the lawn at the ranch.

The auction, dessert sales, book sales, and raffle tickets yielded funds for children's programs, Idaho Bird Observatory, bluebird trails, and other bird and habitat-related projects that we plan to support for another year.

We honored Susan Hazelton as volunteer of the year for her dedication, hard work, and good humor. Susan has worked on the banquet as chair or co-chair for many years as the banquet has grown and evolved. Susan often works behind the scenes; when she sees something that needs doing, she steps in and does it. She asks others if they need help with projects and lends a hand when it is needed. She is generous with her time, her creativity, her insight and her dedication to birds and the people who care about them. She shows up for programs, picnics, field trips, committee meetings, newsletter folding, and bird surveys, and bakes cookies for volunteers. She shows deep faith in others and great appreciation for volunteers. People like Susan form the heart and soul of organizations run by volunteers, and we grow stronger because of their dedication.

We also honored Liz Urban and Heidi Ware as educators of the year for all the work they have done to help GEAS move

toward our goal of reaching out to children and families. They have planned children's bird counts, led bird walks for children and their families, spent time with children in classrooms, and worked at IBO helping children see and hold birds and gain an understanding of migration. They have been willing to invest their time, creativity, and energy in guiding GEAS as we move into this new area of outreach. Liz and Heidi give us hope for the future of our organization.

The event could not have happened without our wonderful, generous, and energetic volunteers whose good cheer makes the work fun. The banquet committee composed of Sue Norton, Susan Hazelton, Hope Denney, Suzanne Woodcock, Louise Maley, Teresa Sabala, Danette Henderson and Stephany Erwin worked through the year to plan the event.

I also want to thank the following volunteers for their help:

- Teresa Sabala, Diana Dicus and Ben Dicus handled the registration table and greeted members as they arrived.
- Louise Maley, Bessie Skinner, Beth Jones and Velma Vance arranged the table decorations.
- Hope Denney, Leslie Harrison, Allie Anderson and Gerrie Satz sold desserts.
- Leslie Harrison, Ingrid Brudenell, Judy Baker, Barbara Balance, Kathy Barker-McCoy Pam Conley, Michelle Crist, Ann Debolt, Leah Dunn, Liz Finn, Susan Lowman-Thomas, Susan Hazelton, Jo Henderson, Charley Raines, Barbara Roberts, Jennifer Robbins-Smith, Susan Stacy, Dee Toweill, Leanna Toweill and Velma Vance baked desserts for the sale.
- Jennifer Robbins-Smith and Rod Smith took photographs.
- RL Rowland, Heidi Ware and Jay Carlisle sold raffle tickets.
- Bessie Skinner, Matt Henderson, Bruce Ackerman, Dave Hazelton, Sean Finn, Maril McCord, Steve Hanser, Iris Henderson, Allie Anderson, Heidi Ware, Harold Ward, Pam Conley, Maria Minicucci, Ann Swanson, Liz Urban and Bryce Robinson helped with set up, clean up and everything in between.
- Pam Conley was our master of ceremonies, and GEAS President Michele Crist talked about Golden Eagle Audubon's projects and achievements during the year.
- Neil Paprocki and Matthew Podolsky presented a film to honor Hilda Larson.

I want to thank all our members who donated and recruited items for the auction as well as all of you who showed up to support GEAS by buying desserts and raffle tickets. I am always pleased and amazed by what can be accomplished with a group of dedicated volunteers.

Thanks to everyone who helped in ways large and small.

### Banquet Volunteers Sought

Sue Norton and Susan Hazelton are retiring from the banquet committee effective March 15, 2015. The year's notice gives anyone interested a chance to "intern" with the committee for the upcoming year. They will share all minutes, donor contact information, and other relevant information to new members. Anyone interested may contact Sue Norton at [nortonsu@msn.com](mailto:nortonsu@msn.com), or Susan Hazelton at [suehazel@cableone.net](mailto:suehazel@cableone.net).

# NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY

## 37th Annual Conference



Hosted by Wild Lens, Inc.



June 13 - 15, 2014  
The Boise Centre and Grove Hotel, Boise ID

Full conference information and registration forms can be found on the North American Bluebird Society website by following this link:

<http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org/conventions/2014/NABS2014.pdf>

Join us in beautiful **Boise, Idaho** for the **37th Annual Convention** of the **North American Bluebird Society** at the Boise Centre and Grove Hotel in downtown Boise, Idaho. As producers of the forthcoming film *Bluebird Man* we welcome you to this year's opportunity to "**Continue the Legacy of our Founding Members.**"

Please join us for this unique annual event to experience bluebirds on the big screen, great trips to local bluebird trails, and other fantastic field trips. Wild Lens is proud to be hosting this event with special help from members of the Golden Eagle Audubon Society.

**Wild Lens, Inc.** is a not-for-profit video production company focused on addressing wildlife conservation issues through film and media. Our forthcoming documentary film *Bluebird Man* documents one citizen scientist's effort to increase bluebird populations in southwest Idaho and looks to inspire the next generation of bluebird conservationists across North America. We hope this film helps continue the great legacy of citizen science-based conservation started by the **North American Bluebird Society** decades earlier.

The conference will feature a banquet dinner followed by a screening of *Bluebird Man* on Friday, June 13 at the Boise Centre on the Grove in downtown Boise. Saturday and Sunday, June 14 and 15 are reserved for field trips to the Prairie and Owyhee Bluebird Trails, respectively. Registration is *not* required to attend the film screening Friday night, but is required for attendance of the banquet dinner or any of the field trips.



# Killing Ravens to Protect Sage-Grouse? Really?

By Michele Crist

Between 1.6 million and 16 million greater sage-grouse populated the sagebrush lands of 13 U.S. states and three Canadian provinces in the 19th century.

Today, populations are estimated between 100,000 and 500,000. Scientists and managers widely agree that habitat destruction and fragmentation linked to human activities are the primary reason for sage-grouse decline. Populations continue to decline to such an extent that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will decide next year whether sage-grouse must be protected under the Endangered Species Act. A listing could hamper activities such as the development of new wind farms, utility lines and roads. It also might result in restrictions on ranchers with permits to graze livestock on public lands in sage-grouse habitat. To minimize the possibility of a listing, core sage-grouse states like Idaho have scrambled to craft plans intended to increase populations and restore habitat. One proposed strategy to protect sage-grouse is to kill predators such as common ravens as a means to reduce nest and egg destruction.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act protects ravens, but despite its own federal law, the Fish and Wildlife Service recently

granted Idaho a permit to kill 4,000 ravens in four areas of the state over two years. The premise behind this project is that increasing raven populations will increase their predation on sage-grouse eggs and chicks thus resulting in further population decline. Yet, the science to support this premise is entirely anecdotal. Furthermore, Idaho wildlife officials themselves state that raven control will likely be ineffective because other ravens will quickly replace those that were killed. According to a comprehensive report by Fish and Wildlife, 19 factors including habitat fragmentation, mining and energy development, livestock grazing, power lines, drought and hunting have been identified as contributing to the sage-grouse's declining numbers. Predation by other wildlife, such as ravens, comes in at No. 12; there are no firm numbers that estimate how many sage-grouse ravens kill in Idaho or anywhere across the west. The irony is that hunters have killed 83,769 sage grouse since 2000, according to Idaho Fish and Game estimates. Over the past three years, they've shot an average of 2,317 sage grouse a year.

This pilot project, developed by the state Legislature and budgeted at \$100,000 a year, is proposed to begin in April and

end in June, with a second round planned for next year. The proposed raven control project is a coordinated effort between Idaho Fish and Game and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services. The plan is to kill 4,000 ravens by shooting them, destroying a number of their eggs and nests, and baiting them with poisoned chicken eggs, using a poison called DRC-1339. The list of nontarget species killed by DRC-1339 includes scores of birds and other wildlife species as they eat the poisoned eggs directly or eat the first victims. For example, the Fish and Wildlife documented in 1995 that a peregrine falcon died from secondary toxicity after eating starlings near a DRC-1339-baited site.

GEAS's comments on Wildlife Services' Supplemental Environmental Assessment opposed raven control as a means for protecting sage-grouse. The American Bird Conservancy viewed our comments, and they joined us in opposition. The Bird Conservancy posted the raven petition on its Facebook page. This post on the raven control and corresponding petition received more than 500,000 hits and became a record-breaker for the conservancy. At the time of this writing, about 19,000 people have signed this



Ravens are passerines, the order of birds that includes songbirds. Ravens are known as advisors to the Viking god, Odin. They inspire laughter and reveal truth; they are tricksters who bring wisdom, healing and acts of creativity.

Photo by Heidi Ware

petition in 112 countries worldwide, and signatures continue to be added every minute. We received such a large response supporting our position from GEAS members and the broader public that we decided to share our comments in the newsletter. We want to say thank you to all of our members for your support and for signing the petition. If you have not acted now is the time. Sign the petition.

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/114/241/939/state-of-idaho-to-kill-4000-ravens/>

Contact your state representatives! Contact the GEAS board to find out what else you can do! The GEAS Board will continue to work with ABC and National Audubon on this issue and we will keep members informed of our progress. If you love ravens as much as we do, please help us protect them.

### **Supplement to the Environmental Assessment: Predator Damage Management in Southern Idaho – GEAS Comments – April 7, 2014**

To: State Director, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services

From: Golden Eagle Audubon Society

Re: Comments on the Supplemental Environmental Assessment: Predator Damage Management in Southern Idaho (dated 3/2014)

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Wildlife Services' Supplement to the Environmental Assessment: Predator Damage Management in Southern Idaho. We, the Board of Directors, write these comments on behalf of members of Golden Eagle Audubon Society (GEAS). GEAS constitutes some 1,500 members primarily residing in southwest Idaho. Our strategic focus is the conservation of birds, wildlife, and their habitats and promotion of wildlife appreciation by SW Idaho residents. GEAS has thoroughly reviewed Wildlife Services' Supplement to the Environmental Assessment: Predator Damage Management in Southern Idaho, as well as appropriate scientific papers. The primary theme of our comments is based on the EA's premise that the proposed Common Raven control is a viable means to protect sage-grouse.

**Golden Eagle Audubon Society adamantly opposes raven control as a means to protect greater sage-grouse.**

### **General Comments**

The entire premise for controlling Common Ravens (*Corvus corax*; hereafter "raven") to increase populations of Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*; hereafter "sage-grouse") is seriously flawed since, according to the Supplement itself, predation is not a priority threat. According to the Supplement (p.2), USFWS (2010) "... concluded that while mortality due to predation by ravens and other human-subsidized predators was increasing in some areas, predation was not a significant range-wide threat to the species warranting listing as T/E." Further, on p.2 of the Supplement, "... the Idaho sage-grouse science panel did not rank predation as a priority threat to sage-grouse statewide, but also recognized predation may be a greater concern in local areas with limited or poor-quality habitat" (Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee 2006). This statement indicates that Idaho Fish and Game's primary goal for managing sage-grouse populations should be to improve the quantity and quality of habitat, which is widely acknowledged as the primary cause for sage-grouse population declines. However, the EA presents no evidence that eliminates other predators or other causes (habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation) as being involved in the declines in sage-grouse counted on leks in Idaho.

The proposed common raven control action is not well designed nor scientifically supported, especially because the project lacks well-defined scientific controls and measures of success. Due to the failures in the design of this project, no tenable scientific data will be gathered. The proposed effort to increase protection (recruitment) of sage-grouse as measured by counts of males on leks through improved nest success and chick survival of sage-grouse over a two-year interval (2014-2015) is without merit as no benefit to recruitment of breeding populations of the species is expected and none will be able to be demonstrated. Furthermore, such benefit has not been demonstrated for any wild population of Galliformes (*Phasianidae: Tetraoninae*).

### **Specific Comments**

#### **1. Inadequate premise that raven control is a viable for sage-grouse.**

- a) The goal of the proposed action is to assess the efficacy of common

raven removal to aid in protection and restoration of sage-grouse populations. No data are presented that raven predation of eggs or young of sage-grouse are related to the decline in the long-term trend in sage-grouse counted on leks in Idaho. No data are presented that removal of ravens will increase numbers of sage-grouse counted on leks in Idaho nor are data presented to indicate that removal of ravens has increased the numbers of sage-grouse counted on leks anywhere. Please present all data supporting Wildlife Services' underlying premise that raven predation of sage-grouse eggs or young is related to the decline of sage-grouse in Idaho.

- b) The Idaho Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-grouse (Appendix A) does not recommend predator control unless nest success of sage-grouse is less than 25% or survival of adult hens is less than 45%. Their data suggests that sage-grouse nest success and survival of adult hens currently exceeds these rates, and Wildlife Services provides no rationale or reason to undertake predator control in this situation. The USFWS in their 2010 ruling did not find that predation was a major threat to stability of sage-grouse populations. The USFWS ruling found the most immediate threats to sage-grouse were (1) inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms, and (2) present or threatened destruction, modification or curtailment of habitat of the species.
- c) Despite the EA's assertion that predator control is a viable part of wildlife management, a more recent reading of the scientific literature (i.e., Cote and Sutherland 1997 reviewed by Hagen 2011; Dinkins 2013) has discredited the premise that predators adversely affect bird populations including sage-grouse nesting success and recruitment. Again, Wildlife Services never examines this kind of specific scientific information in its environmental assessment, but instead cites a 20 year old publication. An Environmental Assessment based on an outdated and falsified premise is invalid.

- d) Common ravens and many other species have been documented to eat sage-grouse eggs. The specific impact of common raven predation on sage-grouse nest success and survival of chicks is unknown, despite a modeling study in Nevada. The available data do not suggest that removal of common ravens will increase counts of sage-grouse on leks in year 1 (2014) or year 2 (2015). The recent paper by Robinson and Messmer (2013, *Human-Wildlife Interactions*) indicated that sage-grouse survival rates, nest success, and brood success were greater in an area receiving less intense predator control and no raven control compared to an area with more overall predator control and raven removal. Dinkins' dissertation (2013, Utah State University) did not detect a significant increase in sage grouse nesting success due to a 61% reduction of a raven population by Wildlife Services in Wyoming. Dinkins found that nesting success was positively correlated with the selection of rugged habitat. He did find that sage-grouse nesting success was 22% when ravens were detected within 550 m of a sage-grouse nest, and 41% when no ravens were detected within 550 m of a nest; but again, he did not find a significant increase in nesting success when raven populations were reduced.
- e) Dinkins (2013) found that sage grouse, generally, select nesting sites away from predators and human activities whereas ravens prefer fragmented habitats and human activities (e.g. garbage dumps, transmission corridors/lines/towers, roads, etc.). Knick et al (2013) also reports that sage-grouse avoid even moderate level of human land use for lek sites (nest sites are typically within 2 miles of lek sites, see Holloran 2005). The premise of the EA does not adequately address if the raven control will have a significant impact on sage grouse nesting success at the landscape or population scale, especially if the two species are, in general, selecting opposite habitat conditions.
- f) The EA strongly relies on results from Coates' study (Coates and Delehanty 2004, cited in the EA). However, Coates did not evaluate sage-grouse nesting success before and after raven removal in his study area. Instead, he compared sage-grouse nesting success, after raven removal, to an average of sage grouse nesting success across a western region. This west-wide average incorporates a multitude of factors including variable habitat conditions, other predators, raven absence and presence. Thus, it is impossible to determine that the removal of ravens in his study area resulted in a higher nesting success for sage-grouse.
- g) The data that suggest that numbers of common ravens are increasing are based on estimates and not on replicated distance sampling. Thus, the estimated common raven densities are likely biased high. Further, the EA itself states that the methodologies used to estimate raven populations likely over-estimate and that other species depredating on sage grouse eggs are likely under-estimated.
- ## 2. Inadequate study design
- a) Inadequate approach to monitoring raven populations and sage-grouse populations. According to the Supplement on p. 6, "IDFG will continue to monitor sage-grouse lek routes in the three raven control areas and on all lek routes throughout the state. Trend analyses will be used to compare changes in lek route numbers in the raven control areas compared to adjacent populations and statewide." It is well known that sage-grouse lek attendance is affected by many factors, both short term and long term. This monitoring protocol will fail to demonstrate any relationship whatsoever between raven numbers and sage-grouse numbers. This raven control proposal demands a demonstration of cause and effect, and there is no chance of this being demonstrated in the proposed study design. To demonstrate effect, all other factors affecting lek attendance must be assessed and accounted for, and there is no mention of these many complicating factors in the EA.
- b) Thus, to say that the "The program will be considered successful if either 1) sage-grouse declines in these areas are reversed or 2) sage-grouse population trends in each of the 3 raven control areas are within -5% or greater of the statewide trend," is not scientifically defensible. GEAS is shocked to see Wildlife Services and Idaho Department of Fish and Game biologists propose this assertion and we strongly disagree that such precision is possible.
- c) The raven monitoring protocol is not defined. According to the Supplement (p.6), "IDFG is also planning to conduct pre- and post-treatment raven population monitoring each year on the 3 proposed raven control areas..." As with sage-grouse monitoring, we expect to see a sound monitoring protocol that assesses the cause-effect relationship between control methods and raven populations. Further complicating the monitoring aspect of this proposal is that, according to the Supplement (p.23), "The slow-acting nature of the toxicant also means that birds usually do not die at the treatment site. This makes it necessary for the attending Wildlife Specialist to estimate the number of ravens killed." Thus, not even the number of ravens killed can be known with certainty. Finally, according to the Supplement (p.27), "However, given the small size of the treatment areas relative to the mobility of ravens and statewide raven population increases, immigration from surrounding areas is expected. Reproduction by ravens remaining in the project area will also moderate program impacts." Given the increase in raven populations in the West, the potential swamping effects are not only serious, but guaranteed.
- d) The EA fails to state what sage-grouse nesting success currently is in the proposed raven removal "treatment areas." Furthermore, the "control areas" are not adequately described: do the control areas exhibit the same habitat conditions and degree of landscape fragmentation as the treatment areas? How

many control areas will be used in the study? Where are they located? And how could WS or IDFG determine the efficacy of raven control without this?

- e) The proposed study design only measures the effects of raven removal and does not measure any other contributing factors to nesting success during the proposed study. There are a multitude of factors affecting sage-grouse nesting success and this EA fails to incorporate these other factors. What are the relative grazing pressures and how will this be controlled? What are the relative contributions of wild-fire? Exotic annual grass invasion? Not including these other factors will lead to erroneous results.

### 3. Inadequate science in support of using DRC-1339

- a) Elevated platforms are suggested as a method to make eggs containing DRC-1339 available to common ravens. This methodology may also make the avicide available to non-target avian species, and Wildlife Services never examined this potential cumulative impact in its environmental assessment. Moreover, it appears that Wildlife Services intends to use DRC-1339 in direct contravention of the limitations including in the pesticide registration label.
- b) The EA fails to address the impacts on the use of DRC-1339 on other species that are vulnerable to this type of poison and egg baiting methodology. The list of non-target species killed by DRC-1339 includes: savannah sparrows, kill-deers, mourning doves, meadow-larks, American pipits, northern cardinals, horned larks, herring gulls, ring-necked pheasants, American robins, American tree sparrows, Canada geese, mallards, northern flickers, downy woodpeckers, dark-eyed juncos, green-winged teals, song sparrows, vesper sparrows, grasshopper sparrows, field sparrows, and rock doves. The FWS documented in 1995 that a peregrine falcon died from secondary toxicity after eating starlings near a DRC-1339-baited site; FWS also

had concerns about bald eagles succumbing to secondary poisoning. Were this to occur, WS would be in direct violation of federal law.

- c) The EA fails to provide any science in support of using this poison and baiting methodology. This poison is also a slow-acting poison and the EA does not provide any information on how long it takes for a raven to die after poisoning and what are the effects.

### 4. Inadequate consideration of other alternatives

- a) In the proposed raven reduction areas where hunting of sage grouse occurs, male sage grouse have declined significantly in the past 7 years (by approximately 50%). Why not try elimination of hunting in these areas? Male sage grouse are declining significantly in these areas, and a higher number of males is needed for nesting success. The EA did not adequately address an alternative for elimination of hunting in these areas, Wildlife Services decided against fully analyzing the impact on decreasing number of males due to hunting.

### Conclusions

The Wildlife Services' proposed raven control fails to meet the most basic elements of scientific investigation, and will produce no reliable, informed, or replicable data on the impacts of raven populations on sage-grouse nests and recruitment. Moreover, the proposed protection effort will not be able to demonstrate any benefits to sage-grouse, it is controversial in terms of use of DRC-1339 because of potential effects on nontarget avian species, and the entire project requires a more complete and comprehensive review. This project is scientifically indefensible and any results will not be credible, and there is no real science involved. No benefits to sage-grouse will be documented based on science, as there is no science.

**The members of Golden Eagle Audubon Society vehemently oppose this project and implore IDFG and WS to reconsider this short-sighted and scientifically indefensible proposal.**

Thank you.

On behalf of the Golden Eagle Audubon

Society Membership and Board of Directors,

Michele Crist, President,  
Golden Eagle Audubon Society  
Boise, ID  
mrcgoldeneagle@gmail.com  
208-863-1918

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## GEAS 2014/15 Board of Directors and Officer Election Candidates

The election for officers and board members for the next year will occur in June. Officers serve one-year terms and board members serve three-year terms. Ballots may be returned by mail or in person at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting in May. Candidates are accepted until the conclusion of the May meeting, when voting officially closes. The ballot can be found on Page 14. If you are a current GEAS member, please take a moment to consider the candidates.

### Candidates for office:

**Michele Crist, candidate for president**  
**Bruce Ackerman, candidate for vice president**  
**Suzanne Woodcock, candidate for treasurer**  
**Sue Norton, candidate for secretary**

### Candidates for four open Board seats, in alphabetical order:

#### Maria Minicucci

My interest in birds was intensified and focused during an extended camping trip around the country in 1989. It was the first time that I saw birds that I didn't know. I don't have the expertise to call myself a birder, but the other night I stepped outside to the sound and then the sight of snow geese flying overhead on their centuries-old journey. There's something about birds, and I'm happy for the opportunity to contribute to their well-being.

#### Lindsay Reynolds

Originally from New Hampshire, I came to Idaho with my husband in 2004. We had met a year earlier on Bonney Butte in Oregon, while working for Hawkwatch International. We spent that year hopping all over the western United States, conducting bird surveys or monitoring projects. When the time came to "settle down" we headed for Boise and are now happy to call it our home. I hold a very special place in my heart for this part of the country, and engrained in that is my passion to protect and restore the diverse landscape outside my door. As an avian biologist, I have many ideas and skills to help the bird species and communities found in the intermountain west. These projects could restore priority habitat to create urban bird habitat. I feel like being a GEAS board member will allow me to work with other people who have a similar passion and are already doing meaningful, lasting work for the bird communities we love.

#### Gerrie Satz

Even though I've been involved with GEAS only one year it feels very comfortable to be with this organization. In my former life, I was president of Atlantic Audubon Society in Absecon, N.J. I was also vice-president before that. Though I had no official duties, I participated and led field trips, wrote

articles for the newsletter and was on the conservation committee. As president, I attended meetings of the Garden State Audubon Council, which was a group of five to six Audubon groups within the state. We then reported back to our group. I'd like to be on the board because I think I would be valuable to them, helping reach the goals they (we) strive for.

#### Jason Sutter

Jason Sutter has more than 20 years of experience as a wildlife biologist in the public and private sectors. His involvement with natural resource issues has focused on raptors, sage-grouse, migratory birds and other special status species. In addition to extensive research and resource management experience, Jason has acquired additional expertise as a GIS specialist and an ecologist that have complemented his broad natural resources knowledge. Jason received his bachelor's degree in anthropology from UCLA and his master's in raptor biology from Boise State University. Jason would like to serve on the Golden Eagle Audubon Society board of directors to help promote local bird conservation and education as well as increase his involvement with the local birding community.

#### Lew Ulrey

My values and interests coincide with those of GEAS. I have been interested in birds since I was a child and I have always valued the beauty of the natural world. GEAS is a very active Audubon chapter and that level of activity requires a constant flow of new volunteers, which I would be happy to be one of. My work life was spent in finance and since retiring I have volunteered for several environmental groups. I hope from those experiences I have gained some skills that will be of value.



Volunteers work on fencing at the Blacks Creek Bird Reserve.

Photo by Liz Urban

# Ballot

## 2014/15 GEAS Board of Directors & Officers Election

If you are a current GEAS member, please take a moment to vote for this year's candidates for the Board of Directors and Officer positions. Board members serve three-year terms while Officers are elected every year.

Ballots may be mailed to GEAS, P.O. Box 8261, Boise, ID 83707. Mailed ballots must be received no later than Tuesday, May 27th to be counted. Alternatively, members may vote in person at the May monthly meeting, held at 7 p.m. May 27th at the MK Nature Center.

### President (Vote for one)

Michele Crist

Other (write in name)

### Vice President (Vote for one)

Bruce Ackerman

Other (write in name)

### Secretary (Vote for one)

Sue Norton

Other (write in name)

### Treasurer (Vote for one)

Suzanne Woodcock

Other (write in name)

### Board of Directors (Vote for four)

Maria Minicucci

Lindsay Reynolds

Gerrie Satz

Jason Sutter

Lew Ulrey

Other (write in name)

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).
- 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

Senior or student offer for first year: \$15

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

Chapter Code: C2ZG000Z

#### Join the Golden Eagle Audubon Chapter

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

Name:

Address:

City: State: Zip:

E-mail: Phone:

Please enroll me in the local chapter only for a cost of \$15.

Please send my newsletter via e-mail.

Please mail my newsletter to me.

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

Make check payable to Golden Eagle Audubon Society and mail to: Golden Eagle Audubon Society, PO Box 8261, Boise, ID 83707.

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.

Post Office Box 8261, Boise, Idaho 83707

[www.goldeneagleaudubon.org](http://www.goldeneagleaudubon.org)