Winter trip to Costa Rica leaves lifetime memories

By Crista Videriksen Worthy

As winter wears on, it might be time to plan an escape to a tropical place loaded with birds. Photographer Jackie Robidoux visited Cancun, Mexico and asked the local grounds keeper where the wildlife liked to “hang out.” He directed her to the golf course where she photographed this gray-necked wood rail.

One year we flew to Costa Rica. This tiny country is home to more than 500,000 species. OK, so 300,000 of them are insects, but at least 830 of them are birds. My husband is not a birder, nor am I, really—I just like to go where wildlife is and notice as many birds as I can along the way. We landed in the bustling capital of San Jose, where great-tailed grackles were nearly ubiquitous. But this country of 4.8 million people has protected 25 percent of its land as wild.

I grew up on southern California’s beaches so we skipped the coastal Pacific resorts and instead drove to the Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve and Monteverde Cloud Forest. The drive was an adventure, past areas cleared for farming and cattle to a long, climbing, twisty dirt road with potholes beyond jarring. Along the way, we saw white-winged doves, white-lined tanagers, and a yellow-headed caracara. Swarms of hummingbirds surrounded the feeders at the Santa Elena visitor’s center, including violet sabrewings and purple-throated mountain-gems. We also spotted blue-crowned motmots, collared redstarts, and slate-throated redstarts there. In Monteverde, it’s somewhat windy in December and you see the wind blowing constantly up the mountains from the humid east Caribbean side and watch the clouds condensing, like a movie sped up, and then dissipate on the drier Pacific, or west side. We crossed deep forest canyons via foot bridges and saw yellow-eared toucanets, golden-bellied fly-catchers, black phoebes, and common bush-tanagers, but, sadly, we never did see the famed resplendent quetzal or any of the trogons.

Next, we drove down to Tabacon, on the Caribbean side, in the shadow of that great, ever-active volcano, Arenal. On the way we came across a large family of co-atimundis that were quite tame and surrounded us when we got out of our car. We also saw howler monkeys, black-shouldered kites, thrush-like manakins, cinnamon becards, turkey vultures, Nicaraguan grackles, an eastern meadowlark, Montezuma oropendolas, and red-winged blackbirds.

Tabacon is a resort with a multitude of pools of varying temperatures, all heated by the nearby volcano. There’s nothing like getting a water-massage by sitting under a waterfall of 100-degree water. We saw white-crowned parrots, a brown-hooded parrot, crimson-fronted parakeets, orange-hooded parakeets, short-tailed nighthawks, clay-colored robins, a red hepatic tanager, great kiskadees, chestnut-mandibled toucans, and more yellow-eared toucanets.

One day we hiked through the forest up the volcano’s lower slope. We saw a line of leaf-cutter ants, each carrying a piece of a leaf. We walked on a narrow trail but immediately left and right was solid forest, so thick you couldn’t see more...
President's Message
By Liz Urban

This time of year and the politically turbulent past few months have made me pause and think about the things that I am thankful for and the things that I think are important enough to speak up about.

I am thankful for my family and especially my young son. I am thankful that I can help shape the world in which he will grow up. I am thankful that I am able to support the missions of nonprofits who share my vision with my time as a volunteer and with the money in my wallet. I am thankful for our wonderful community, which loves the out-of-doors and embraces diversity of all kinds. I am thankful that there are wild places and public lands for us all to enjoy into perpetuity.

I am thankful that as a part of GEAS, I am able to stand bundled in the snow and participate in bird feeder counts with enthusiastic kids and teachers. Kids who exclaim, “Do you see that red-tailed hawk over there?” and tell me that he likes to hunt from that tree. The same kids, who are learning to value nature through all kinds of great opportunities here in Idaho, are also the ones that fill me with hope for our country’s future.

In reflecting upon the GEAS mission I find some inspiration. We are “dedicated to building an understanding, appreciation, and respect.” I aspire to apply that sentiment beyond the natural world outlined in our mission to all areas of my life. I feel ardent resolve to stand by my principles and hope that you too will be active participants in our community and our republic. Together our voices can and will be heard.

Thank you, members, for letting me share my thoughts and feelings with you each newsletter. This is sure to be a fairly revealing column about myself, but I cannot be silent and hope that many of you feel the same. We are but a modest chapter of the National Audubon Society, but I for one am so thankful that we exist, and that our members and donors value what we do. Your support is potentially more important now than ever and I hope you will continue to help us “conserve and restore natural ecosystems for birds and other wildlife” into the future.

Happy holidays, and may you have a wonderful New Year!

Liz Urban, President

GEAS CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bruneau Christmas Bird Count</td>
<td>January 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Bird Walk</td>
<td>January 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIBA Field Trip: Caldwell</td>
<td>January 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEAS Monthly meeting</td>
<td>January 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Stroll: Hyatt Hidden Lakes</td>
<td>January 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIBA Field Trip: Roswell Marsh</td>
<td>February 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Bird Walk</td>
<td>February 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Backyard Bird Count</td>
<td>February 17-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEAS Monthly meeting</td>
<td>February 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Trip: Hagerman area</td>
<td>February 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email/Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liz Urban, President</td>
<td><a href="mailto:urbanhawk137@gmail.com">urbanhawk137@gmail.com</a>/629-2146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leah Dunn, Vice President</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ldboise@gmail.com">ldboise@gmail.com</a>/ldboise@gmail.com/378-4248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Norton, Secretary</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nortonsu@msn.com">nortonsu@msn.com</a>/lulrey@cableone.net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lew Ulrey, Treasurer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lulrey@cableone.net">lulrey@cableone.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Finn, Past President</td>
<td><a href="mailto:a.gentilis@gmail.com">a.gentilis@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michele Crist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mrcgoldeneagle@gmail.com">mrcgoldeneagle@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Takasugi</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aeltakasugi@cableone.net">aeltakasugi@cableone.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Llewellyn</td>
<td><a href="mailto:m.rose.llewellyn@gmail.com">m.rose.llewellyn@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris McClure</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chrimec@gmail.com">chrimec@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Podolsky</td>
<td><a href="mailto:matthew@wildlensinc.org">matthew@wildlensinc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Sapiens</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dr.sapiens@gmail.com">dr.sapiens@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Schueck</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lschueck@gmail.com">lschueck@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Silver</td>
<td><a href="mailto:amysilver819@gmail.com">amysilver819@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Larson (Honorary)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:larson83703@msn.com">larson83703@msn.com</a>/343-0959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levi Mohler (Honorary, Deceased)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liven “Pete” Peterson (Honorary, Deceased)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Belknap (Honorary)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMITTEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email/Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banquet:</td>
<td>Susan Hazelton, Sue Norton and Liz Urban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation:</td>
<td>Matt Podolsky</td>
<td><a href="mailto:urbanhawk137@gmail.com">urbanhawk137@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education:</td>
<td>Amy Silver</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ldboise@gmail.com">ldboise@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Trips:</td>
<td>Alex Takasugi, Kristin Gnojewski,</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kgnajewski@cableone.net">kgnajewski@cableone.net</a>/484-9132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership:</td>
<td>Leah Dunn</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ldboise@gmail.com">ldboise@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program:</td>
<td>Alexander Sapiens</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dr.sapiens@gmail.com">dr.sapiens@gmail.com</a>/408-832-5400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity:</td>
<td>Newsletter:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sparre47@gmail.com">sparre47@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Niels S. Nokkelentved</td>
<td>377-3360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Information</td>
<td>Megan Llewellyn</td>
<td><a href="mailto:m.rose.llewellyn@gmail.com">m.rose.llewellyn@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rods325@gmail.com">rods325@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>859-3298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rod Smith</td>
<td>Jennifer Robbins-Smith</td>
<td>859-3298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historian:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:threehappycampers@hotmail.com">threehappycampers@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>859-3298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webmaster:</td>
<td>Michele Crist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mrcgoldeneagle@gmail.com">mrcgoldeneagle@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grants and Awards: Michele Crist mrcgoldeneagle@gmail.com
In Memoriam: Harold Ward

Harold Ward, a longtime member of Golden Eagle Audubon Society, died on October 27, 2016 in Boise. Harold was born in Geneva, N.Y. and graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering. He earned a master’s degree in computer science from Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Harold was passionate about the environment. His fascination with birds began when he bought some land with the intention of logging it. He noticed the birds on his woodlot, and this started his intense study of birds and their songs. The woodlot went unlogged. Harold served on the GEAS board from 2002 to 2015. He presented evening programs on bird song and on finding good websites for learning about birds for GEAS and Southwest Idaho Birders’ Association. Harold was Volunteer of the Year for 2012, maintained the GEAS web site, did a long-term Breeding Bird Survey, led field trips, volunteered for the Christmas Bird Count every year, helped with the silent auction at the banquet, drove Al Larson on bluebird trails, and assisted with the newsletter. He always said yes when someone on the board asked him to help with a project or task. Harold is remembered by many Audubon members for his sense of humor, good will, and precise identification of birds.

Harold was acting president of the Southern Idaho Chapter of Mensa and past Region 8 vice chairman. He enjoyed the camaraderie of local Mensa members and attended weekly local events, quarterly regional events, and annual national events. Harold was the owner and president of Netwings Co. Inc., where his clients included Ryder, The Botanical Research Foundation of Idaho, and IATSE Local 110, specializing in web hosting business development consultation. He was considered one of the foremost authorities of APL programming.

Harold loved seafood and ice cream, had an eclectic taste in music, and thoroughly enjoyed intellectual games, especially cryptic crossword puzzles. Harold had an eclectic taste in music, and thoroughly enjoyed intellectual games, especially cryptic crossword puzzles. Harold was especially devoted to his children and grandchildren. He is survived by his partner, Janet Rhodes; daughter, Alicia Gonzalez; son, Charles Ward; four grandchildren; sister, Virginia, and brother, James. Memorials may be sent to the Golden Eagle Audubon Society, P.O. box 8261, Boise, ID, 83701.

Volunteer Thank Yous

Many thanks to the volunteers who mailed the newsletter out: Susan Hazelton, Hope Denney, Suzanne Woodcock, Lew Ulrey, Alex Takasugi, Ann Swanson, Liz Urban, Jessica Fursek, Leah Dunn and Sue Norton. We also thank Niels Nokkentved for his vital contribution editing and laying out each and every newsletter.

Thank you to Zen Riot and Edna Rey-Visgirdas for organizing a yoga fundraiser to benefit the New Roots Program and Wild Outdoor Week.

Thanks to Amy Silver, Kristin Gnojewski, and Liz Urban for organizing and running our ‘Habitat for the Holidays’ craft event and donating a tree to the ‘festival of trees’ fundraiser on our behalf.

Thank you to Chris McClure and Liz Urban for presenting at our monthly meetings in December and November.

Thank you to all those who have led field trips and organize the Christmas Bird Counts.

Thank you to the Board of Directors for giving their time to keep GEAS operating and moving forward.

Chapter News

News from the Board

- The November Board Meeting was used to mail out our annual appeal and have some small group discussions.

- In December, the board clarified its membership policy to keep dues and donations separate. However, we do want to let everyone know that your memberships are also tax deductible, and we are working to make sure the appropriate tax receipts are sent to you.

- The board also discussed a clarification on our recommended by-laws update that caused us to postpone publishing them until the next newsletter.

- The board discussed some of our membership services, namely our field trip offerings. We will continue to work with partners to offer a larger number of trips and help with the publicity. Our fieldtrip coordinator, Alex, favors trying some new formats for new trips and the board fully supports that idea.

- Our annual appeal had raised more than $4,700 by the time of our December board meeting. There is still time to give, either online or by mail.

Auction Donations Redux

I’m betting that the most enjoyable parts of the holidays were the family gatherings and the food. And now that the GEAS banquet and auction looms before us, the auction committee is tapping into this sentiment. People appreciate experiences and consumables. Many of us just have too much “stuff” and are trying to downsize, rather than acquire new things.

In the last issue of the newsletter, we listed the top four auction donations: food, trips and travel, birding and adventure gear, and outings.

So if you bake killer gingerbread cookies, have access to a vacation condo, or can contact a wildlife store for a donation, please contact Sue Norton: 378-4248 or nortonsu@msn.com. Sue will coordinate donations so we don’t get 14 birding vests or have multiple people soliciting a donation from the same organization.

Olympic BirdFest, April 7-9.

Birding trips, banquet and more. BirdFest registration at www.olympicbirdfest.org.
GEAS EVENTS for January and February

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 Alex Takasugi at 484-9132 or alextakasugi@cableone.net and Kristin Gnojewski at kgnojewski@cableone.net.

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.

Monday, January 2
Bruneau CBC
Leader: Larry Ridenhour, 863-5596, ridenhour.larry@gmail.com
Time: 7 a.m., for all day trip
Location: Meet at Boise BLM Office, 3948 Development Ave.
This is expedition quality birding around CJ Strike Reservoir and the Snake River from below the dam to Bruneau Dunes State Park. Be prepared for bitter cold and relentless wind (and great birds!). We will finish at the CJ Strike Bridge at sunset to watch thousands of common goldeneye fly in for the evening. Then we will go to the Y Bar and Cafe in Grand View, Idaho to compile numbers and exchange stories. Dinner will be about $12 – Spaghetti (vegetarian sauce will be available) with soup or salad, and French bread, Dessert – $4, either a cheesecake or caramel apple crisp; wine/beer extra depending on type and kind. Gratuity not included and always welcome. They put on a great dinner!

Saturday, January 7
Family Bird Walk in the Park
Time: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Location: Marianne Williams Park
Contact: Alex Takasugi alextakasugi@cableone.net, 484-9132 or Kristin Gnojewski, kgnojewski@cableone.net, 860-3658
We will look for waterfowl on the ponds, then walk the paved loop heading upstream looking for songbirds and raptors. Bring the whole family, especially the young ones. We have binoculars and field guides you can borrow. Sign up the kids in our Frequent Flyer Club where they earn rewards for birding. We will finish by noon.

Saturday, January 14
SIBA Field Trip to Canyon Hill Cemetery, Rotary Pond Park and Caldwell Ponds
Location: Canyon Hill Cemetery, 2024 N. Illinois Avenue, Caldwell (I-84 west exit 28, turn right onto Illinois)
Time: 9 a.m. (8 for Boise carpooling)
Leader: David Potter
Contact: Alex Takasugi alextakasugi@cableone.net 484-9132
Folks in Boise and points east: let’s meet at the St. Luke’s Eagle Road Park and Ride north of I-84 in the St. Luke’s parking lot across from Chevron/McDonalds. We will walk the paved loop around this gem of a park looking for geese, ducks, and herons on the water, as well as songbirds in the brush. Bring the whole family, especially the young ones. We go over the basics of using binoculars. We have binoculars and field guides you can borrow. Sign up the kids in our Frequent Flyer Club where they earn rewards for birding. We will finish by noon.

February 17-20
Great Backyard Bird Count
Count and record birds for as little as 15 minutes on one or more days of the GBBC. Details at: http://gbbc.birdcount.org/get-started/. If you already have an eBird login (or other Cornell citizen science login), you’re already registered, and can submit your birds normally through eBird; all checklists submitted during this time period will count toward the GBBC.

Tuesday, January 17
GEAS Program Meeting: Birds of Idaho, Alexander Sapiens
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Trophy Room, 600 S. Walnut, Boise.
This will be a trip across Idaho, from north to south and from east to west with pictures of birds sorted by family. Some of these photos will dazzle you with birds in action, in the wild, strutting their finest! Sapiens is a GEAS board member and an active birder since 2010. He has traveled throughout the world and Idaho taking pictures of birds as he has become adept at learning bird species, ranges, habitats and behaviors.

Sunday, January 29
SIBA Field Trip to Roswell Marsh WMA
Time: 8 a.m. (7 a.m. for carpooling from Boise)
Location: Parking lot on Pebble Lane south of Hwy 18, two miles west of Roswell. Boise and points east can carpool by meeting at 7 at the St. Luke’s Park and Ride north of I-84 on Eagle Road in the St. Luke’s parking lot across from Chevron/McDonalds.
Trip Leader: David Potter
Contact: Alex Takasugi alextakasugi@cableone.net 484-9132
SIBA will host a birding trip to Roswell WMA looking for winter waterfowl and raptors. We will be doing some walking and looking but on all fairly level areas. If you have a scope, bring it for scoping the water and mudflats. We will also explore some nearby hotspots. This will last into the afternoon. Bring water, lunch and snacks. All are welcome!

Sunday, February 12
Family Bird Walk in the Park
Time: 10 a.m. to noon
Location: Kathryn Albertson Park. Meet in the parking lot, 1001 N. Americana Blvd., Boise
Contact: Alex Takasugi alextakasugi@cableone.net, 484-9132 or Kristin Gnojewski, kgnojewski@cableone.net, 860-3658
We will walk the paved loop around this iconic close-in city park. The brushy banks also host lots of songbirds, and there are hard-packed trails that wind among the ponds. We should be finished by noon, but dress for the weather—warmth and wind protection.

February 21
GEAS Program Meeting: Wilderness Safety, Jimmie Yorgensen
Time: 7 p.m.
Events continued

Location: Trophy Room, 600 S. Walnut, Boise.
Yorgensen has been a member of Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue for 10 years and president for the past five years. He has participated in dozens of back country missions for the purpose of search, rescue and recovery. It is an all voluntary, independent group located in Boise and never charges for its services. Part of Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue’s mission is wilderness safety education and they do dozens of programs each year for a variety of organizations and agencies. The program consists of wilderness preparedness and safety tips on what to do and not do if you should find yourself lost.

Saturday, February 25
Field Trip: Hagerman Area
Time: 7:30 a.m.
Location: Meet at Boise BLM office, 3948 Development Ave., Boise, east of the airport
Trip leader and contact: Alex Takasugi aletkasugi@cableone.net (208) 484-9132
We will combat cabin fever by visiting the Snake River at King Hill, then head on down to Billingsly Dam, Hagerman and Thousand Springs to see what birds are around.
Dress for the weather—warmth and wind protection, and bring a lunch.

January-February
Beginning Birders Workshop
Time: 10 a.m. to noon, starting Saturday, January 7
Have you ever asked, “What bird is that? If so, then a Beginning Birding Workshop co-sponsored by Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge and the Southwestern Idaho Birders Association may be your answer. Learn about common Idaho feeder, water and forest birds in winter at this free, four-part workshop. Open to all adults ages 16-99! For more information, contact 208-467-9278 or deerflat@fws.gov.

Field Trip Preview

Where: Malheur National Wildlife Refuge
When: May 4-7
Accommodations: Malheur Field Station
Transportation: Van
Food: under discussion
Leaders: Kathy Barker McCoy, Matt McCoy, Alex Takasugi
Organization meeting: Time TBA, Saturday, March 11.
Malheur Field Trip Van leaves Boise May 4, returns May 7.

If you’ve never been to Malheur and wonder what all the fuss is about, or if you go every year, this is the trip for you. GEAS used to run an annual trip there; a tradition we’d like to revive.

Wildlife refuges were established to help support waterfowl to get through their migrations in one piece, and to provide a place for hunters who didn’t have private lands to hunt on. With a stroke of a pen, Teddy Roosevelt cemented one of the most important ideas in wildlife conservation the world has ever seen. In 1903, he protected the first true refuge, in Florida, the first of many to address conservation in a practical, hands-on manner by the U.S. government. While this wasn’t the first in the world, it was a strong response to a loss of habitat here. Our first attempt to protect wildlife was in 1868. But Roosevelt had traveled around the globe and saw that people were pushing animals out, that there were few places left in Europe to hunt and watch wildlife. Hunting was becoming a sport, one for the elite. He didn’t want that to happen here. The National Wildlife Refuge system, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, became a response to that concern.

South-central Oregon is a land of extremes; the high mountain ridges and flat playas of the Basin and Range province, with freshwater marshes and saline lakes. This geologic province is defined by the high straight mostly north to south mountain ranges that drop abruptly on one side to flat desert lakes and playas. Mountains surround the basins, thus the rain and snowfall cannot flow out to the sea, so it funnels into the self-draining basins where it evaporates, leaving behind the salts. The Great Salt Lake and Mono Lake are a couple of well-known examples; Harney Lake is the saline lake that Malheur Lake drains into.

The refuge was established to protect waterfowl, but it protects so much more. And it’s different every year. The amount of precipitation controls the amount of water in the lakes and wet meadows here. So in years of ample water, the lakes fill up, spill over their boundaries and flood the sagebrush adjacent. In dry years the lakes recede, leaving wide expanses of mud flats. These changing conditions result in wide variations in the numbers and species of birds that use the area. One year you might see a bazillion shorebirds; another year you might only see a few. Nature is all about change and this is one of the things I like best about Malheur. You never know what you’re going to see, what habitats will be available, how many rare migrants will show up. But I can promise an experience you will be sure to enjoy.

We will be staying at the Malheur Field Station. It is not fancy, but there’s beds, AC, and all kinds of things to see. It’s a dry dusty place that can be cold and wet. Pack for variable weather, bring your own sheets and towels. More info in coming newsletters, organizational meeting March 11.

Malheur in the past couple of years has become the center of the controversy about federal ownership of western lands. Please join us to see the wild riches of our western heritage.
than a few feet. Nearly every leaf had been chewed on by an insect, but they all come out at night to avoid predation by birds. And the din of birdsong, and the perfume of passion flowers! Both were nearly overwhelming. The density of the foliage kept us from spotting many birds, although we glimpsed a black-cheeked woodpecker, brown jays, and a bay wren. We broke out of the forest suddenly and saw huge rocks piled up toward the volcano’s summit, which was cloaked in clouds. I saw a black vulture overhead and then we heard and felt the mountain rumble. Several rocks tumbled down out of the clouds so we fled back into the forest. Another day we floated down the Peñas Blancas River with a guide. All day, we sat in pouring warm rain in our swim clothes, completely comfortable. Our guide Jose pulled over to a tree and picked up a black-and-red poison arrow frog that lived there—I had no idea they were so tiny!

We saw iguanas, howler monkeys, sloths, an immature laughing gull, wood stork, little blue heron, cattle egrets, pectoral sandpipers, mealy parrots, mangrove cuckoo, gray-rumped swifts, belted kingfishers, green kingfishers, linedated woodpecker, smoky-brown woodpecker, white-ringed flycatchers, blue-and-gold tanagers, and scarlet-rumped tanagers. But the highlight of my trip happened right at the Tabacon resort. My husband had gone out early for breakfast. When he came back he said, “There’s a big toucan out there with a green and red bill. It sat right next to me at breakfast.” I didn’t believe him but rushed out to the breakfast area with my camera anyway. Sure enough, a keel-billed toucan sat in the rafters, and when I loaded up a plate with fruit salad he edged closer, hoping for a bite. I never expected to see a live one in its native habitat. That was a memory for a lifetime.

Seeking information from birders

By Heidi Ware

This winter marks the second year of the Intermountain Bird Observatory’s Anna’s Hummingbird research. This winter we have already banded 12 birds and have documented citizen reports of 33 individuals in the Treasure Valley.

We need your help to do our research! We are making a map of Anna’s Hummingbird sightings in Idaho. If you see a hummingbird between now and March, enter it on eBird or contact us so we can add the sighting to the map. If you have a hummingbird coming to your feeder and would like us to band it, let us know. Please help us re-sight our banded birds: check any hummingbirds you see for a white dot on their forehead. Contact: HeidiWare@boisestate.edu 208-426-2223.

The information we are gaining from banding these birds is invaluable. By banding each bird, we are able to get an accurate count of how many there are. At Allen Dale’s home where we suspected four Anna’s, we, along with fellow bander Francine Rudeen, ended up documenting nine: a new record for Idaho! Because we mark each bird with a white dot on the forehead, we are able to track where they move thanks to reports from birdwatchers.

Our goal is to discover where these Anna’s Hummingbirds are coming from. We hope that another hummingbird researcher will catch one of our banded birds. In the future we plan to analyze their feathers for isotopes to discover where they are from.

Donate Fred Meyer Rewards Points to GEAS

Golden Eagle Audubon Society is now a member of the Fred Meyer Community Rewards program. Every time you shop with your Rewards card, some additional points will go to Golden Eagle Audubon. Our number is 85197, and you can link your Rewards card to GEAS at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards. Log in to your account, then enter 85197, or type “Golden” into the search box to see us. Fred Meyer will then send us a check every quarter in an amount based on the number of points we accumulated. This does not reduce your personal rewards points. If you shop on Amazon.com, you can shop through smile.amazon.com and designate Golden Eagle to receive donations from AmazonSmile. It does not affect product selection or price.
Golden Eagle Audubon Society Annual Banquet and Auction
6 p.m., Saturday, March 11, 2017
Red Lion Downtowner, 1800 Fairview Avenue, Boise
$45 Per Person

The speaker for the 2017 GEAS Banquet will be P. Dee Boersma, the “Jane Goodall of penguins.” Boersma, who has a doctorate in zoology, holds the Wadsworth Endowed Chair in Conservation Science at the University of Washington. Her academic research in conservation biology focuses on seabirds as indicators of environmental change. She has been the director of the Wildlife Conservation Society’s study of Magellanic penguins at Punta Tombo, Argentina, home of the world’s largest colony of Magellanic penguins for 30 years. Boersma and her students follow the lives of individual penguins, monitor the colony, and develop the data needed to plan effective conservation efforts. In the Galapagos Islands she is building “condos” to increase the Galapagos penguin population. Boersma was awarded a 2010 Fulbright fellowship to study wildlife videography in New Zealand and was named one of the Nature Conservancy’s “Conservation Heroes of the last 50 years” in 2011. She received the Ocean Conservation Award from the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, California in 2012. Dr. Boersma and Pablo Borboroglu edited “Penguins: Natural History and Conservation” in 2013.

Please join us for this annual fundraising event. In addition to our distinguished presenter, we will have a silent auction before dinner during the social hour at 6 p.m. Come spend an evening in good company and select a homemade dessert for $5. Dinner will be served at 7 p.m.

GEAS BANQUET REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS — DUE BY MARCH 6, 2017.
Mail this form and your check payable to GEAS to: GEAS, 1963 Teal Lane, Boise, ID 83706.
You may pay by credit card online at www.goldeneagleaudubon.org/banquet.
Questions? Contact Sue Norton at 378-4248 or nortonsu@msn.com.

To Pay By Check:
Name: __________________________ Phone: __________________________ Email: __________________________
Address: __________________________ City: __________________________ State: ______ Zip: ______
Number of tickets @ $45 per guest: ______ Check enclosed: $ ________

The entrée choices are: 1) Rosemary and Cracked Pepper Roasted Prime Rib, 2) Char-Grilled Northwest Salmon, or 3) Vegetable Yakisoba. Please circle a meal choice for each guest.

Guest Name: __________________________ Meal Choice: Prime Rib  Salmon  Vegetable

Guest Name: __________________________ Meal Choice: Prime Rib  Salmon  Vegetable

Guest Name: __________________________ Meal Choice: Prime Rib  Salmon  Vegetable

Guest Name: __________________________ Meal Choice: Prime Rib  Salmon  Vegetable

If you would like to support GEAS by donating an auction item or homemade dessert, please contact Sue Norton at:
(208) 378-4248 or nortonsu@msn.com. To preserve the sanity of the auction committee, all donations (except desserts) should be received by February 28.

I would like to donate $__________ for a teacher/student ticket to attend the banquet.
To join the National Audubon Society visit http://www.audubon.org/ and use chapter code G00 for Golden Eagle Audubon Society, or write to: National Audubon Society, PO Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250.

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

Golden Eagle Audubon Society
PO Box 8261
Boise, ID 83707

We invite you to join the Golden Eagle Audubon Chapter

Membership in the local chapter includes a one-year subscription to The Golden Eagle, and all my dues remain with the local chapter and support local activities.

Name: _______________________________________________________________
E-Mail: ________________________________ (allows for website login) □ Student membership $15
Address: __________________________________________________________
City: ___________________________ State:_______________ Zip:_______ □ Individual membership $20
Phone:__________________________ □ Family membership $35
□ I would like to donate an additional $ __________________ □ Golden Eagle Lifetime membership $500

Make check payable to Golden Eagle Audubon Society. Mail to: Golden Eagle Audubon Society, PO Box 8261, Boise, ID 83707, or pay by credit card on our website www.goldeneagleaudubon.org (click support GEAS).

Please contact us for information on membership scholarships.

To join the National Audubon Society visit http://www.audubon.org/ and use chapter code G00 for Golden Eagle Audubon Society, or write to: National Audubon Society, PO Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250.