



Kákya Táymut

KUK-yuh TIE-moot, Umatilla Indian Translation: *Bird News*

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THE YEAR OF THE THREE-TOED WOODPECKER: BIRD CLUB FIELD TRIP, JULY 2, 2005

Those of you who have been among the lucky people to observe the American Three-toed Woodpeckers at Target Meadows Campground (Tollgate vicinity) may agree we should call this the "Year of the Three-toed Woodpecker." With the exception of Dave Herr, who "talks" to the woodpeckers, most birders in Umatilla County seldom see an American Three-toed Woodpecker.

But this family of Three-toed Woodpeckers, nesting right in the campground, is a real people pleaser! On May 14, Joe and Carolyn Corvino and Ginger and Rodger Shoemake (all from Walla Walla) first discovered the male Three-toed as he excavated a nest cavity in the lodgepole pine tree near campsite #9 at Target Meadows Campground. We don't know where the female was at that time; she was probably supervising, but no one reported seeing her.

On July 2, the birders attending the Pendleton Bird Club field trip were privileged to watch both parents feeding at least one chick. The chick was well-feathered and should fledge very soon.

The group had three target birds for the field trip, and we had a rare day, indeed, when all three were successfully found! The Three-toed Woodpecker was, of course, one. Maybe a more difficult bird to find in Umatilla County is the Green-tailed Towhee. We know where he lives, but will he cooperate and be heard and seen? Yes, he did finally sing, worked his way up the steep, brushy draw, and even let a few people briefly view his rusty head and green tail!

The home of this Green-tailed Towhee is in the brushy habitat at the bottom of a steep draw

overlooking the North Fork Umatilla Wilderness Area out McDougal Road off the Tollgate Highway. At the end of McDougal Road, about three miles south of the highway, is a gorgeous Eastern Oregon vista. If you could see clear to the bottom of the canyon walls, there is the North Fork of the Umatilla River. A wonderful Golden Eagle thrilled the group as it soared across the canyon, adding a bit more magic to the view. There were plenty of birds at the top of the canyon to make it a very interesting stop. Among the birds viewed and heard were Cassin's Vireo, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, MacGillivray's Warbler, Red-naped Sapsucker, Western Tanager, Calliope Hummingbird, Lazuli Bunting, and, of course, the Green-tailed Towhee was a great topper.

Woodward Campground at Langdon Lake was the site of the third target bird. The female COMMON GOLDENEYE and six "GOLDENETTES" (Dave Herr's term for the baby Goldeneyes about ten days old) were swimming, diving, and feeding near the Langdon Lake shore of Woodward Campground. If confirmed to be Common Goldeneye, this will be one of the first, if not the first, verified breeding record for Oregon. The photographers made many attempts to catch the mother and babies in good lighting and position to show their field marks for verification of the species.

Woodward Campground is an excellent birding area. Besides the Goldeneyes, there were Mallards with babies, a nesting Lincoln's Sparrow (5 eggs in a neat cup on the ground), Hammond's Flycatcher, Red Crossbill, Dark-eyed Junco, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglet, to name a few.

The attendees on this field trip were Carolyn and Joe Corvino, Nancy and Lyle Brown, Dave Herr, Dannell and Bob Tapley, Aaron Skirvin, June and Duane Whitten. It was a good turn out for the Fourth of July weekend and a great birding day, with sixty-five species seen on the trip.

Contributed by June Whitten

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Field Trip

Saturday, July 23, 2005
Shorebirding at McKay Reservoir

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking area near the end of the road along the west edge of the reservoir.

Trip Leader: Aaron Skirvin 276-1948

Field Trip

Saturday, August 13, 2005
Birding at Mission Ponds

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the NE corner of Pendleton Safeway parking lot.

Trip Leader: Jack Simons (276-8566)

Oregon Field Ornithologists **26th Annual Meeting**

August 19 - 21, 2005
Eastern Oregon University, La Grande, Oregon

For more information and registration see:
<http://www.oregonbirds.org/annualMeeting.html>

Field Trip

Saturday, August 27, 2005
Birding at Vinson and Gurdane

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the NE corner of Pendleton Safeway parking lot.

Trip Leaders: Aaron Skirvin (276-1948) and June Whitten (276-9019)

Fall Field Trip to Malheur NWR

September 2 - 5, 2005

To register, contact June Whitten by **August 1** - 276-9019

See article in this newsletter

Field Trip

Saturday, September 10, 2005
Birding at McNary Wildlife Area

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the NE corner of Pendleton Safeway parking lot.

Trip Leaders: Aaron Skirvin (276-1948) and June Whitten (276-9019)

North American Fall Migration Count

Saturday, September 17, 2005

Everyone, from beginners to experts, is welcome to join in the fun! Contact Aaron Skirvin, Umatilla County Coordinator, 276-1948 or askirvin@wtechlink.net.

Pendleton Bird Club Meeting

Thursday, October 13, 2005 7:30 p.m.

First Christian Church
Pendleton, Oregon
(Across from the Pendleton Arts Center)

Last Call for Sign-ups for the Malheur/Steens Mountain Trip, September 2 - 5

Duncan Evered, Director of the Malheur Field Station, has reserved Owl East and Owl West dormitories for the Pendleton Bird Club for Labor Day Weekend. The twelve people signed up so far will exactly fill these facilities.

If anyone else is interested in going to Malheur over Labor Day weekend, you need to register before August 1. Duncan is holding the Pelican dormitory

for us until August 1, and it may or may not be available after that time.

To secure your reservation, please mail \$20 to June Whitten, 1837 S. W. Athens Ave., Pendleton, 97801. For more information, contact June Whitten jwhitten@oregontrail.net or 276-9019.

VISIT THE BIRD CLUB'S WEBSITE

www.pendletonbirders.org

Bird checklists, ID Challenge, Club Member's Photo Gallery, Newsletter Archive and more.

Club Picnic/Barbecue – Saturday, July 9

We had another great turn out of birders for the picnic on July 9. Even with threatening weather, 19 bird club members assembled at Battle Mountain State Park for the club's annual picnic/barbecue.

Just after we lit the barbecues, a rain-laden cloud opened up overhead, which sent us scurrying, with handfuls of delicious potluck dishes, for shelter under the covered picnic site. While we waited out the brief shower, Jack Simons unveiled the club's new T-shirts with logos, and Aaron Skirvin introduced the new "Checklist of the Birds of Umatilla County".

As we concluded the unveiling, the rain shower ended, and the grills were ready start the barbecue. Lots of visiting with new and old friends, but little birding, transpired during the picnic. Not only does the club have great birders, story tellers, and fellowship, we also have a wealth of great cooks. Those who didn't attend sure missed out on some tasty food!

Most of the birding at the picnic was accomplished on the drive to and from Battle Mountain park. Short-eared Owls and other birds were the highlights as they were seen perched on roadside fenceposts (see Dave Herr's article on June – July Bird Sightings in this newsletter). Bob and Dannel Tapley saw two juvenile Ferruginous Hawks sitting on a hillside near Nye Junction and memorialized their sighting with a neat photograph.

We certainly appreciate the effort everyone made to attend the picnic, and special recognition goes to Priscilla Dauble and Judy Johnson, who drove over

from Walla Walla. Picnickers were Connie and Russ Betts, Joy and Steve Jaeger, Jack Simons, Priscilla Dauble, Judy Johnson, Bob and Dannel Tapley, Dave Herr, Aaron Skirvin, Nancy and Lyle Brown, June and Duane Whitten, Janet Ebaugh, and Hero, Haval, and John Norman.

Contributed by Aaron Skirvin

Logo Effort — It Takes a Village

As you are aware, the Grasshopper Sparrow was chosen by Bird Club members at the October 2004 meeting to represent the club's logo. Three additional candidate birds were on the short list: Mountain Bluebird, Lazuli Bunting, and Ferruginous Hawk. An oversight committee was formed to ensure the logo project moved forward. Committee members included Dannel Tapley, Connie Betts, Duane Whitten and Jack Simons.

Committee members met to decide on display criteria, such as the bird's profile, vegetation within the bird's habitat, etc. After the criteria were selected, we asked Elva Hamerstrom Paulson, a professional artist and personal friend of club member Dave Herr, to produce the rendering.

Once the original art work was complete committee members met to discuss the layout of text, font and supporting art work (an ellipse border). Dave Herr scanned the original art work, then work began on producing a formal logo design.

After the layout was finalized, we contacted a local merchant (Polly's Put-Ons) in Pendleton to produce a sample embroidered fabric logo that could be used on shirts and caps. The sample was later scrutinized by committee members with suggestions to make the bird more life-like. A second sample was generated which is now being used for the embroidered logo. Meanwhile, a printout of the scanned logo was given to Polly's Put-Ons to develop an iron-on heat transfer logo. This logo is now being used for club T-shirts (see article below, "Caps, T-Shirts With Logo Now Available").

At the same time, club member Bob Tapley volunteered to develop the logo which is now being used on both the Newsletter masthead and Home Page on the club's web site. A big "thank you!" to Bob for his efforts. In fact, none of this would have happened without the volunteer efforts of many, many people who gave valuable time and energy to see the project to completion.

I would like to thank the logo committee members as well as other bird club members who donated

their time and shared ideas to make this project such a worthwhile venture. I think the finished product is something the Bird Club can be proud of. It really does “take a village”.

Submitted by Jack Simons

Caps, T-Shirts With Logo Now Available

We are proud to announce that the long-awaited Pendleton Bird Club logo is now available on shirts and baseball-style caps. We know Club members have waited an excruciatingly long time to order apparel with the club’s logo, but we think you will agree it was worth the wait!

Caps — The logo-embroidered caps are made from a soft, brushed denim material in natural contrasting green tones (so that elusive MacGillivray’s Warbler will land next to you and not flare to the next county!). The cost of the cap is \$15.00.

T-Shirt — The T-shirt has an iron-on patch on the left breast and shows the subtle brown and tan colors of our beloved Grasshopper Sparrow. T-shirts are made from a premium 100% cotton fabric and are available in small, medium, large and extra large sizes. The T-shirt is available in one color — Oatmeal — which highlights subtle colors in the logo. Please specify the correct *size* when ordering. The cost of the T-shirt is \$12.00.

Polo Shirt — A more formal Polo-style shirt (with sleeve cuffs and collar) is also available. This shirt is made from Piquet knit 100% cotton fabric and may be ordered from a list of 25 different colors (please specify which color *and* size when ordering). Because of the knit material, polo shirts are only available with the embroidered logo — no iron-on logo. The cost of the Polo shirt is \$28.00. (See colors listed below or visit Polly’s Put-Ons on SE Court Street in Pendleton to see the actual color.)

Heat Transfer Sheet — In addition to the above items, Bob Tapley (who designed the logo used on our web site) has made available an 8-1/2 x 11 inch sheet of four individual iron-on patches printed on heat transfer material that Club members can purchase to adorn their own apparel items. The cost of the transfer sheet is \$5.00.

All proceeds go to the Pendleton Bird Club.

To place an order for any of the above items, please fill in the order form below (scroll down at the end of the newsletter) and mail a check (**payable to the Pendleton Bird Club**) in the full amount to:

Jack Simons

73585 Williams Lane
Pendleton, OR 97801

Phone: 541-276-8566
Email: styletoil@eoni.com

Bird Checklists Available at Armchair Books

If you would like to pick up a copy of the new “Checklist of the Birds of Umatilla County”, you may purchase them at Armchair Books, which is located at the northeast corner of Dorian and SW 1st Streets in Pendleton. Checklists are one dollar each, with all proceeds going to the bird club. Thank you Terry Dallas, owner of Armchair Books, for allowing us to use some of your shelf space for the checklists. And, many thanks to Bob and Dannel Tapley who donated their time and printer to print and fold the checklists.

Fall Shorebirding at Pendleton and McKay Reservoir

The fall shorebird migration in Umatilla County starts in late June and extends to October. The best places to observe these migrating shorebirds in Umatilla County are on the mudflats at McKay Reservoir and Cold Springs Reservoir. The first species to arrive from their northern breeding areas are Western Sandpiper, which initially greatly outnumber the other species, Least Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, and Long-billed Dowitcher. The adults move through the area first (beginning in late June), followed by flocks of juveniles in late July, August, and September.

Identification can be difficult for some species, so it pays to study the field marks shown in field guides, learn to distinguish adults from juveniles, and know which species are most likely to occur in the local area. To complicate matters, the adults are beginning to molt from alternate (breeding) plumage to basic (winter) plumage. As the migration season advances, so does the molt.

Normally, shorebirds are seen in mixed flocks on mudflats where they busily feed (refuel) for the next leg of their southward journey. To aid in identifying shorebirds, it is helpful to divide the various species based on size, relative to the Killdeer, a common species in the area. Listed below are the species you are most likely to see in the local area during the fall migration.

Shorebirds Smaller than Killdeer

1. Peeps = Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper

Western Sandpiper – Dark, often black legs; long, tapering, down-curved bill; brownish gray back, often with rufous on scapulars. Common to Abundant.

Least Sandpiper – Greenish or yellowish green legs; short, slightly down curved bill; back often brownish; brownish streaks on upper breast. Common

Baird's Sandpiper – Black legs and bill; slightly but noticeably larger than Western and Least Sandpipers; brownish breast; juveniles have buffy head; wings noticeably longer than tail. Uncommon.

Semipalmated Sandpiper – Dark or black legs; short, blunt bill (though some overlap in bill length with Western Sandpiper); grayer back than Western Sandpiper, usually no rufous on scapulars. Rare, but regular here and can be difficult to distinguish from Western.

2. Spotted Sandpiper – A little larger than the peeps; pale legs; spotted (breeding adults are our only sandpiper with spotted breast and belly) or white beneath (juveniles and winter adults); constantly teeters/bobs; white streak on shoulder. Uncommon
3. Semipalmated Plover – Killdeer-like, but much smaller than Killdeer; one dark breast band; small bill. Uncommon.
4. Sanderling – Black legs and bill; very pale white and gray (salt and pepper pattern); black spot at bend of wing. Very Rare.

Shorebirds Similar in Size to a Killdeer

1. Killdeer – White beneath; white collar; 2 black breast bands; orange rump and tail. Common in spring, summer and fall.
2. Pectoral Sandpiper – Yellowish legs; overall brownish color (except belly); heavily streaked breast down to white belly. Uncommon.
3. Solitary Sandpiper – Legs olive-greenish; **prominent white eye-ring (our only sandpiper with eye-ring)**; white-dotted wings and back; occasionally bobs/teeters. Uncommon to Rare.

4. Wilson's Phalarope – Yellowish or grayish legs; gray and white body; whitish face in juvenal and basic plumage; needle-like black bill; swims, wades, and forages on mud. Uncommon to Rare.
5. Red-necked Phalarope – usually seen swimming; a little smaller than Wilson's Phalarope; thin, needle-like, black bill; black patch through and behind eye; brownish gray back; light stripe on each side of back. Uncommon.

Shorebirds Larger than Killdeer

1. Greater Yellowlegs – Long yellowish or orangish legs; grayish/brown upper parts, white below; long, bill, about 1.5 times the width of head; bill thick at base and often two-tone, appears slightly upturned. Uncommon.
2. Lesser Yellowlegs – Body is about the same size as a Killdeer, but has very long yellowish or orangish legs; smaller than Greater Yellowlegs; grayish/brown upper parts, white below; thin, straight, blackish bill, a little longer than the width of head. Uncommon.
3. Long-billed Dowitcher – Stocky and brownish; very long bill; white back (usually seen in flight); solid dark cap. Uncommon to Common.
4. Wilson's Snipe – Stocky and brownish; very long bill; whitish stripes on back; whitish streak on crown. Uncommon.
5. American Avocet – Long, blue-gray legs; faded rusty head (in fall); black and white body; up-turned bill. Rare.
6. Black-necked Stilt – Very long reddish legs; black and white body and head; straight, thin black bill. Rare.

Other shorebirds very rarely seen and that do not occur annually in the fall at Pendleton/McKay Reservoir include: Ruddy Turnstone, Whimbrel, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Red Knot, Dunlin, Black-bellied Plover, and American Golden Plover.

Contributed by Aaron Skirvin

June – July Bird Sightings

Summer is here and most birds are nesting or have already fledged young. Of course now is the time to start looking for migrating shore birds. Aaron Skirvin reports since McKay Reservoir did not fill this year (due to the winter/spring drought) mudflats are opening up earlier than normal this summer. Because of the low water levels, Aaron predicts shorebirding at McKay will be good all summer and fall. In fact, the following species have already been reported from McKay: **Western Sandpiper, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Red-necked Phalarope, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Long-billed Dowitchers and Caspian Terns.**

The mystery of the **Reeve's Pheasant** may be at least partially solved. You will recall that Nancy Brown reported a male **Reeve's Pheasant** at her Hermiston home this May, but had no idea where this native of China came from. Now Nancy has learned that a neighbor has been feeding a pair of Reeve's all winter. Although Nancy is still not sure of their origin, she believes the female may be nesting and is interested in seeing if any young birds show up. Nancy also reported that the Hermiston Day Care Center contacted her and ask how long it took for a **California Quail** to hatch it's eggs. It seems a quail is nesting in one of the playgrounds. Luckily, the Day Care Center has another playground they are willing to use until the eggs hatch.

One June 25, Neal Hinds relocated the two **Common Loons**, an adult and an immature, he had first seen below McNary Dam on June 17. Although **Common Loons** can be found on the Columbia River in the late fall and winter, a summer record is very unusual.

Short-eared Owls continue to be found in the county, with the area south of Nye Junction along Highway 395 and Alkali Canyon Roads being real "hotspots". Karen Kronner reports she has also been seeing owls at a number of other locations throughout the county. On July 3, Aaron and June Whitten reported seeing at least **12 Short-eared Owls** along Highway 395 south of Pilot Rock as well as 2 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** and a **Northern Pygmy Owl** at Battle Mountain. Many folks reported seeing **Short-eared Owls** July 9, driving to and from the Pendleton Bird Club Picnic. Driving home along Alkali and Mud Canyon roads after the picnic, Judy Johnson, Pricilla Dauble and I

(Dave Herr), found over 15 owls. The following day Russ and Connie Betts reported seeing **Short-eared Owls** along the same route as well as a number of other interesting species including a **Common Poorwill**. The **Burrowing Owls** nesting along Alkali Canyon Road also seem to be doing well. There are several pictures of the owls on the club's website (www.pendletonbirders.org) in the "Club Member's Photo Gallery". I saw both adult owls July 17, and the young should fledge any day now.

Some interesting birds have been found at Mission Ponds recently. On June 21, Aaron reported finding one **Black Tern**. Eating lunch at Mission Ponds on June 30, Aaron was able to add 3 new birds to the Mission Pond's list including a singing **Willow Flycatcher**, a **Gray Catbird** and a **Black-chinned Hummingbird**.

Birding in the Blue Mountains has also been good. I (Dave Herr) found an **American Three-toed Woodpecker** excavating a nest cavity south of Langdon Lake on July 3. This is the third site in which Three-toed Woodpeckers have been seen this year; the two sites are Woodward Campground at Langdon Lake and Target Meadows Campground a few miles north of Tollgate. Mike Denny reported finding a singing male **AMERICAN REDSTART** near the end of Forest Road 5415-020j just off Yellowjacket Road about 15 miles south of Pilot Rock. Redstarts are not reported in the county every year, so this is a great find. Along with the more common species, **Flammulated Owls, Green-tailed Towhees, Lewis's Woodpeckers** and **Blue Grouse** have also been reported from the Blues this year. Birding in the Meacham area on the weekend of July 16 – 17, Neal Hinds found a **GREAT GRAY OWL, Turkey Vulture, MacGillivray's Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Calliope Hummingbird, Gray Jay, Black-backed Woodpecker, and Red Crossbill.**

While walking along the Umatilla River Parkway in Pendleton on July 17, Bob Tapley reported finding a number of species including **Osprey, Downy Woodpecker, Great Blue Herons, Mallards, a Western Kingbird, several Rough-winged Swallows, a Violet Green Swallow, and a number of Yellow Warblers.**

For the past several weeks I have been taking photos of birds along the Alkali Canyon and Mud Springs Canyon roads. A folder with some of the species I've photographed can be found on the PBC website

in the “Club Member’s Photo Gallery”. I found that during the last couple of weeks the roads have been full of adult and juvenile sparrows. If you want a sparrow I.D. challenge, drop me a note and I’ll send you a picture file of sparrows I photographed.

Thanks to all who contributed sightings during this reporting period. Please continue to send me your sightings at dsherr@oregontrail.net or call 276-6413. Good birding!

Contributed by Dave Herr

Newsletter Editor: Position Vacant

Editor: Aaron Skirvin – 276-1948

Email: askirvin@wtechlink.net



Order Form for Bird Club Caps, Shirts, and Heat-transfer Logos

To order, please fill in the order form and mail a check (**payable to the Pendleton Bird Club**) in the full amount to:

Jack Simons
73585 Williams Lane
Pendleton, OR 97801

Phone: 541-276-8566
Email: styletoil@eoni.com

<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Color</i>	<i>Item Cost</i>	<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
Denim Cap		NA	NA	\$15.00		
T-Shirt (circle the size)		(S, M, L, X-Lg)	Oatmeal	\$12.00		
Polo Shirt (circle the size)		(S, M, L, X-Lg)	(See list below)	\$28.00		
Heat Transfer Sheet		NA	NA	\$5.00		

Total Cost: _____

Polo shirt colors —

Sunset Red	Light Blue	Yellow	Seafoam	Navy	Blueberry
Pistachio	Ivory	Oxford	Faded Blue	Stone	Red
Steel Grey	Royal	Burgundy	Classic Navy	Forest	Faded Olive
Athletic Gold	Black	Purple	Dark Green	Orange	Bark

White