



# The Pileated Post

## Quarterly Newsletter Friends of the Little Pend Oreille NWR

Fall 2012

[http:// www.refugefriends.com](http://www.refugefriends.com)

Number 42

### From the President

I would like to discuss a few things. First the need for new Board Members, second my time spent at the Friends Academy this summer and lastly some interesting upcoming events you don't want to miss!

We are in the process of filling 3 positions on the Friends Board. This is a great way to get to know the refuge and refuge staff better. Be the first to know about future happenings on the refuge. Help set priorities for the Friends and how we can further support the mission of the refuge and the refuge staff. Help with advocacy, outreach, education, fund raising and projects on the refuge. If you are energetic and enthusiastic about helping plan the future of the Friends and the Refuge and would like to become a board member or want more information please get hold of me (phone and email at end of article.) Don't delay; elections will be held September 22nd at the annual membership meeting.

Last spring I was lucky enough to be one of the 24 people to have my application accepted to attend "Friends Academy 5" at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown West Virginia in July. This was an incredible week of intensive training and education about the refuge system and the important role that Friends groups play. I got to make many new connections with many Friends groups and refuge managers to discuss how to energize Friends groups and help to improve upon the great relationships between Friends groups and refuges and the refuge system. We learned to importance of Friends groups and how much the Refuge system appreciates the hard work of the Friends.

Friends groups help in many ways such as building trails, securing grants for trails and other projects, interpretation, education, public outreach etc. But one of the most important roles that Friends play is advocate for the individual refuges and the refuge system as a whole. In the past Friends have played an important part in public testimony in Washington D.C. and have helped secure funds needed to keep the Refuge system operating. In the future advocacy

we become even more important to ensure the future success of the Refuge system and their mission.

The Friends Academy has moved to become even more involved and more passionate about the Little Pend Oreille NWR and refuge system as a whole. I hope it will help me become a better leader and help the Friends of the LPO continue our important role in the years to come.

I am passionate about what I learned at the Academy and plan to give a short presentation (at our annual membership meeting) about the National Conservation Training Center and what I learned. I will try to answer any and all questions about my time at NCTC and how you can help us move into the future.

At last we have some fun and interesting events coming up at the refuge from trail work to helping restore an historic barn. A restoration carpenter, from the FWS, will be working on the Sampson barn from September 12 -19. The carpenter will be looking for help on this project and all are encouraged to stop by and help or just learn. The barn is located about ½ mile east of Headquarters. More details will be available on our website as the date approach.

On September 22nd starting at 9:00 am, we will have our Annual Membership Meeting at the refuge fire cache/maintenance area at the refuge. The meeting includes a year-end roundup of Friends activities, board elections, a short presentation on Friends Academy and a guest speaker. This year's guest speaker will be Dan Brauner, Prescribed Fire Specialist for the Little Pend Oreille NWR. Dan will talk about the importance of fire and how the refuge uses fire to help improve habitat. Dan will also touch on other aspects of the refuge. Dan is passionate about the refuge and has a good deal of knowledge to share. There will be snacks and coffee before hand and a BBQ lunch after (please bring a side dish) where the board will supply the main dish. After lunch there will be a short hike for anyone who wishes to come along. The hike will be near Lake McDowell in an area where a prescribed burn was conducted this spring and

we can see how it is coming along. Please come out to meet the Friends and help us move forward.

The same weekend (September 22-23) the Washington Trails Association is planning a work party for the new Beaver Pond Overlook/Big Pines trail. Our day is quite full the 22<sup>nd</sup>, but consider helping out on Sunday. Please register at <http://wta.org>. We will also provide a link at our website when the details have been finalized.

**Dan Price, President**

email: [bigdan65@yahoo.com](mailto:bigdan65@yahoo.com)

Phone: 509-684-5863

## Refuge Manager's Meandering

This has been the busiest summer I can recall. I probably say that every summer, but for now, I'll stand behind those words!

Our biological program received a shot in arm when we were able to fund a biological technician for six months. Josh Koesch came west from Wisconsin this spring and has been a real asset to the program. Before we knew we would be funded for a biotech we decided to seek summer help by sponsoring an intern. We were lucky to have Tyler Kelly accept the position. Tyler is from Dillon, Montana and attends the University of Montana. They say good things come in threes, and so it was for us this year. Tia Monzinga, a 2011 Colville High graduate and Washington State University biology major showed up on our doorstep looking for volunteer experience. And did she ever get it! From weed spraying to amphibian surveys, they all did a great job working with Mike Munts on several projects, making significant contributions to the refuge.

We also sponsored a Youth Conservation Corps crew this again summer. We were very fortunate to hire Juli Butorac as the adult leader. Juli just finished her teaching degree at Eastern Washington University and has moved on to a permanent teaching position in Umatilla, Washington. Her crew consisted of Jessica Olson, Sarah Trautman, Yuriy Romashevskiy, and Andrew Filipoff. The work the crew accomplished this year was amazing and ranged from mosquito surveillance trapping to landscaping and fence building. We only wish we could afford to hire two crews each summer!

Finally, two fire crew members have moved on to new jobs. Danny Martin worked with us for two years while finishing his teaching degree and will be working the Colville School system this fall. Chad Butorac, spent five years on the fire crew and will be working with this wife Juli teaching high school science in Umatilla.

We have long enforced a prohibition on the operation of recreational Off Highway Vehicles on the refuge. I mention recreational use since the staff does use OHV's for administrative purposes on the refuge for tasks like prescribed fire projects and habitat improvement work. In August the Stevens County Commissioners decided to legalize the use of Off Highway Vehicles on county maintained roads. The rub is, there are about 6.7 miles of county maintained roads within the refuge boundary, including the Kaniksu Unit. In both written and oral testimony I asked the commissioners to exclude those portions of the county roads within the refuge boundaries from that rule change to help protect refuge resources and reduce confusion about county versus refuge roads within the boundary. Unfortunately a majority was not persuaded, and so by the time you read this it will be legal ride an OHV on those county roads. I'm hoping this becomes a non-issue, since there is no compelling reason to ride on those short sections of county roads within the refuge, and we will continue to vigorously enforce the rules on prohibiting their use on refuge administered roads.

Dates have been set for working on the Sampson Barn stabilization and restoration project. The Regional Refuge restoration carpenter will be here on September 12 – 19 to supervise the work. We'll be looking for volunteers to help him with hewing the new logs, and jacking up and replacing pilings and sills. Working on this 100+ year old log barn is a great opportunity to learn new skills and make a lasting contribution to the refuge. Anybody interested in volunteering should call our refuge office for more details.

Finally, a sincere thank you from the whole refuge crew for the wonderful staff appreciation picnic! The food was good, but most importantly it was a great chance to mingle with our Friends. We all appreciate your support!



**Jerry Cline, Refuge Manager**

## Biologist's Report

It certainly has been an unusual year so far. After the record rains of June dried up we have had one of the hottest and driest summers I have seen in many years. The drought conditions have certainly taken their toll on the resources of the refuge. Bayley Lake is still high but many other ponds are looking more like we would expect in August in spite of the record rainfall this past spring. The biology intern and my volunteer have both left to return to school for the fall semester. Josh, the bio tech, is still here and is scheduled to be around until early November. I look forward to having him here for a few more productive months. With a full crew we have been able to make progress on several projects this summer.

We were able to get a lot more weed control done than the refuge has been able to do for several years. Bat surveys are continuing and we now have two remote bat detectors operating on the refuge. In the first month of the project we have identified 10 species of bats on the refuge. This compares to 14 for the state. So far the best bat diversity appears to be along the Little Pend Oreille River and especially the area around the refuge headquarters. We also started an amphibian inventory this past July and we have surveyed many of the lakes, ponds, and wetlands on the refuge. So far we have

found spotted frog, Pacific tree-frog, western toad, American bullfrog, and long-toed salamanders. The deer that were fitted with radio collars and tags last winter have spent the summer near Tiger and southwest of Metaline Falls. They made quite a rapid trek when the time came to move to summer grounds. On a related part of that project the state researchers are trying to locate deer scat on the refuge during the month of August. They are using tracking dogs to locate pellet piles for collection and determination of what the deer are eating when they are on the refuge. Both of the dogs they are using originally came from animal shelters and could have been put down if not adopted. A very novel approach to locating scat samples while giving the dogs another chance at life.

This past summer we started a Fourth of July Butterfly Count on the refuge. Six participants found 26 species of butterflies on July 7. This count is similar to the Christmas Bird Count and we hope to continue it in future years. One of the more noteworthy records was the first Monarch we have a record of. This was the first count though, so we will see if they show up again next year.

The Bayley Lake Bald Eagles once again fledged two young this summer. Of particular note was the observation of one of the young being harassed by a pair of Peregrine falcons the first week of August. This is the first observation of pe-

regines on the refuge in more than 15 years. Another first was spotting a Yellow-billed Cuckoo at the edge of McDowell Lake. This was not only a first for the refuge but the first cuckoo in Eastern Washington since the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Although it may be almost 100 degrees as I write this in the middle of August, fall is coming. The refuge can be a delightful place to visit in the fall. With temperatures cooling it should be much more pleasant in the afternoons. The aspen and mountain maples will be changing color soon as will be many of the shrubs. Then in a few more weeks the larch will start to turn. Songbirds, waterfowl and other birds will soon begin their trek south for the winter while still other will be arriving from points farther north.

One final point as we beginning to wind down the field season and many of the seasonal staff moves on to other jobs, back to school or just a winter of rest it is a tradition for the Friends of the LPO to put on the staff appreciation barbeque. I for one would like to say thank on behalf of myself and I am sure the rest of the refuge staff. We all have a good time during this annual event with the friends and we greatly appreciate the support from all of you involved with the Friends of the Little Pend Oreille NWR.

**Mike Munts, Refuge Staff**

### Critter of the Season



Photo by Mike Edley

Let's take a look at a little different group of wildlife this time. Butterflies are a common group of wildlife on the refuge but are often overlooked by many visitors. One of the most common butterflies on the refuge this last summer is the Lorquin's Admiral (*Limenitis lorquini*). Lorquin's Admiral is named after the French naturalist Pierre Joseph Michel Lorquin, who came from France to California during

the gold rush. After striking out of the gold fields he turned to natural history observation and made important contributions to the natural history of the western US and especially central California. They are striking black butterflies with rows of white spots around the wings and orange wing tips, with a wingspan of two to two and a half inches. They are found near forest edges and along roads throughout much of the refuge. They prefer aspen and cottonwood trees but can be found around conifers as well. The caterpillars prefer a variety of deciduous trees and can be found on aspen, cottonwood, choke cherry, and willow trees. The adults lay their eggs on the host trees. After the eggs hatch the caterpillars will feed in the same trees they hatched in. Each caterpillar will overwinter rolled up inside a leaf in one of these trees. In the spring the caterpillars will emerge and continue feeding. Then in late spring they will form a pupa (cocoon) for the transition to an adult butterfly. The adults will live for several weeks while they feed then look for a mate and lay eggs to start the process all over again. Adults will feed on a variety of sources including nectar of flowers. They will show puddling behavior where many individuals seem to be flocking around puddles to drink. They will also use mineral deposits and feed on dung of vertebrates to extract the minerals.

### Summer 2012—Nature Notes

It seemed to me there were many more butterflies than usual around this summer. Everywhere I went I saw butterflies. So I participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July butterfly count on the Refuge hoping to learn more about butterflies and be able to identify more of these lovely insects. And I did - it was a great day and I encourage you to join us next year for the count. Be sure to read our biologists article on butterflies. July 23<sup>rd</sup> was overcast, around 72 degrees F (much cooler than previous days) with a strong wind. I counted 28 butterflies on my lunch walk along part of the Mill Butte Trail. I was amazed I saw that many in just half an hour. Most of them I flushed off the trail ahead of me; perhaps the strong wind was keeping them low to the ground or the cooler day caused them to bask in the sun on the bare ground of the trail. Do any Lepidopterist out there know what caused this behavior?

My guess is I saw 6 or 7 species and I even saw some species that we did not see on the butterfly count. Butterfly species I saw were Fritillary, Crescent, Wood-nymph, Azure and Skipper. The way we identified butterflies on the count was to catch them in a net so we could see their markings. Once you get to know what to look for, you can identify some through binoculars or just looking at them if they stay still long enough.

I was amazed by all the flowers blooming (I am including plants considered weeds and non-native plants) after all they produce nectar so are a food source for butterflies. I have grouped them by color and am just using common names.

Flowers blooming-

White – bladder campion, sweet clover, yarrow, fleabane, diffuse knapweed

Yellow – cinquefoil, St. Johnswort, monkey-flower, goldenrod, salsify, hawksbeard, sow-thistle, brown-eyed susan, fleabane, clover

Pink – red clover, knapweed, fleabane, Deptford pink, gentian

Red – scarlet gilia

Purple – heal all, fleabane, alfalfa

Blue – harebell, lupine

Peach – Collomia

It is quite a treat to see the variety of shapes, sizes and colors of flowers. You should come out for a visit to enjoy them for yourself.

Moving on to birds, I have noticed some birds walking along the edge of the sidewalk that is outside my office window; they have been searching for bugs in the lawn. The first one I watched was a female Brown-headed Cowbird that just walked along the edge of the sidewalk and kept reaching into the grass for an insect. The next bird I noticed doing the same thing was a House Wren. The only difference in the behavior was the wren was chirping the entire time. The third bird I watched feeding in this manner was a juvenile Brown-headed Cowbird. It was a bit comical looking- its feet seemed too big for its body. I'll have to keep watching to see what other species uses our sidewalk café. A family of Eastern Kingbirds was around headquarters for a few days. I only saw 3 birds, 2 adults and a juvenile. And they were noisy. One afternoon the 3 were on the yard outside my office window and the juvenile was begging for food. One adult moved less than 2 feet, caught a grasshopper and fed it to the juvenile. With all the grasshoppers in the yard there should be flocks of birds feeding there.

When I walk on the lower end of the Mill Butte Trail, I often see robber flies. The other day I saw a robber fly struggling to fly. When it landed I got a good look at what it was carrying – a grasshopper that was bigger than it was. This species of robber fly looks nothing like a house fly. Their body somewhat resembles a dragonfly with a long abdomen but the wings are totally different. A dragonfly's wings are held out perpendicular to its body like an airplane while a robber fly's wings are held over its body. From what I have read, robber flies are quite the predators and will often go after prey larger than themselves. There are many photos on-line of robber flies catching dragonflies. That is impressive. While sitting along the Little Pend Oreille River during some of these hot summer days, I have watched dragonflies cruising up and down the river. They can maneuver very quickly and are quite alert and aware of their surroundings. They will make a pass past me or come in only so far

to take a look at this new object in their territory. These robber flies must be very stealthy or fast to catch a dragonfly.



**Robber Fly** (*Triorla interrupta*) with **Dragonfly** (*Plathemis lydia*)

What mammals have been seen? Eleven sightings of cow moose, 6 of a cow with a calf (one sighting had 2 calves) and 7 of a bull moose. Tyler, our biology intern, took a photo of a big, beautiful bull moose in McDowell Marsh. Places moose have been seen are quite varied. The most sightings were at the Beaver Ponds; McDowell and Black-tail Mountain Road tied for the next most sightings. Moose were also seen at Potter's Pond, the Christianson Place, Headquarters and the Shop. I think Tyler had the best tale. He was out jogging one evening on Rookery and Rookery Cutoff Roads and saw a cow moose, a cow elk and a black bear.

There have been eight sightings of black bear – both black and cinnamon in coloration. Starvation Flat and Rookery Road is where most of the bears have been seen. I saw a bear while walking near Spring Creek which flows near portions of the Mill Butte Trail. It was in the heat of the day. At first I thought it was a cub and perhaps mamma bear was nearby. This small bear was nosing around and headed in the same direction as I was, so I turned around and went back the way I'd come. When I got on the other side of the creek, I could see the bear was still nosing around in the brush. Then it finally got wind of me and meandered off. I think it was a yearling.

Fall is a great time to visit the Refuge – just remember some of our hunting seasons start September 1<sup>st</sup>. Modern firearm season for deer starts October 13<sup>th</sup>

**Barbara Harding, Refuge Staff**

**Photographers Wanted!**

The more time one spends out at our Refuge, the more one becomes aware of the variety of opportunities for taking wonderful photos of this unique place in our corner of northeastern Washington. Ours isn't a single season refuge. It changes from day-to-day, week-to-week, and season-to-season. There are hidden corners of our Refuge to explore with one's camera. There are photo-ops just waiting for visitors on any of their trips to the LPO.

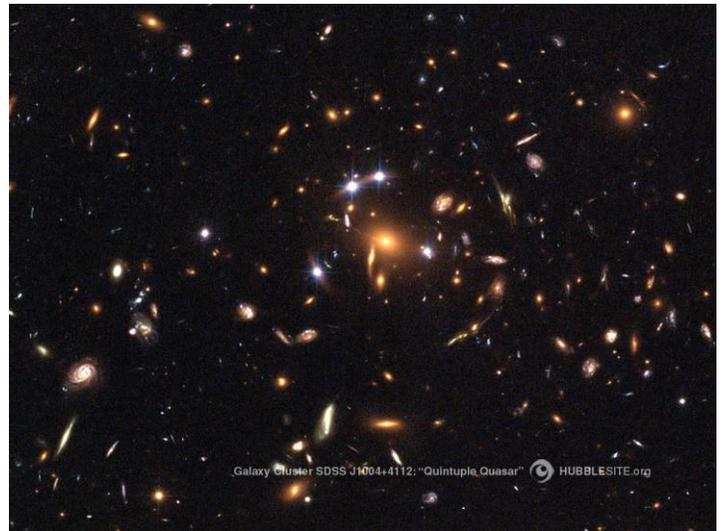
The 2012 Friend of the LPO Photo Contest began last August 16<sup>th</sup> and extended until August 15<sup>th</sup> this year. Judging will take place soon and winners will be featured in, among other places, the Winter Pileated Post. Thank you for your submissions.

Contact me if you have questions at:

[janderson@ultraplix.com](mailto:janderson@ultraplix.com).

Next time you visit the Refuge, don't forget your camera!

**Joel Anderson , Board Member**



These are not single stars!

## Newsletter Necessities

### Number 42 - Jim Groth - Editor

To send comments, write articles for the newsletter, or to contribute items of interest, please contact:

Editor, *The Pileated Post*  
P.O. Box 215, Colville, WA 99114  
Email: [larchsavage@yahoo.com](mailto:larchsavage@yahoo.com)

*The Pileated Post* is published quarterly and is mailed to all *Friends of the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge*.

### Calendar

#### September

12<sup>th</sup> -- Board Meeting--6:00 p.m.  
22<sup>th</sup>—Annual Meeting—9:00 a.m.

#### October

10<sup>th</sup>– Board Meeting –6:00 p.m.

#### November

7<sup>th</sup> – Board Meeting – 6:00 p.m.

**Our Mission:**The Friends of the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the conservation of native fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats on the Refuge, providing educational opportunities, and fostering understanding and appreciation of the Refuge.

### Friends of the LPO

#### Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Annual Membership

\_\_\_\_ I would like my newsletter emailed to me  
\_\_\_\_ Basic Member \$10      \_\_\_\_ New  
\_\_\_\_ Contributing Member \$25      \_\_\_\_ Renew  
\_\_\_\_ Supporting Member \$50  
\_\_\_\_ Sustaining Member \$75  
\_\_\_\_ Corporate Member \$100  
\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail, along with a check to:  
Friends of the LPONWR  
Box 215  
Colville, WA 99114



Box 215  
Colville, WA 99114

## Membership Renewal Time

Dear Friend,

Our records indicate that it is time for you to renew your membership in the *Friends of the Little Pend Oreille*. We greatly appreciate your past support of the *Friends*, and of the Refuge itself. Please take a moment and send in your renewal today. Although your membership dues represent a large percentage of our budget, it is your acknowledgement that the Refuge System, and the LPO in particular, is important to you that is most essential to the success of the *Friends*. If our records are incorrect, please let us know by emailing us at [friendslpo@gmail.com](mailto:friendslpo@gmail.com).

If you desire you can renew using a credit card. Just go to <http://refugefriends.com> and select "Membership Sign-up" from the column on the left.

Thank you.

Please fill out the form below and mail to:  
P.O. Box 215, Colville, WA 99114  
(An addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience).  
Make checks payable to "The Friends of the LPO"

NOTE: Only the information you supply on this form will be entered into our member database

### Friends of the LPO Membership Renewal/Application Form

<b>Annual Membership</b>	
Name _____	New _____ Renewal _____
Address _____	_____ Member \$10.00
City _____ State _____	_____ Contributing Member \$25.00
Zip _____ Telephone _____	_____ Supporting Member \$50.00
Email _____	_____ Sustaining Member \$75.00
Date _____	_____ Corporate \$100.00
Would you like to Volunteer? Yes No	_____ Other \$ _____
Would you like to receive the <i>Pileated Post</i> via email? Yes No	
	7