



Volume 43 #7 April 2010

Barn Beach Reserve and NCW Audubon present
Grizzly Wars: The Public Fight Over the Great Bear

by David Knibb

After filing your taxes, join Barn Beach Reserve and North Central Washington Audubon Society

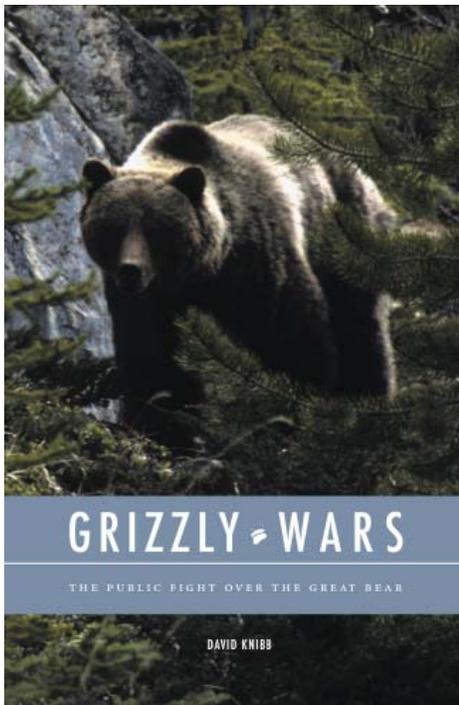
Thursday, April 15th for a presentation and discussion about grizzly bears in the North Cascades.

Long a magnificent symbol of the wild, the grizzly bear is perhaps the most controversial species in North America. David Knibb will talk about grizzly bears, with emphasis on the North Cascades. He is the author of *Grizzly Wars: The Public Fight over the Great Bear*, published by

Eastern Washington University Press.

A former forester on the Okanogan National Forest, Dave has spent most of his adult life in and around the Cascades. On and off the trail, he has seen perhaps a hundred bears. "Two of them may have been grizzlies," he says, "but it's hard to know." From forestry he went to law, where he

became a Seattle attorney and an environmental activist. For several years he served on the state's Forest



Practices Board and taught at University of Puget Sound law school. Eventually he became a full-time writer. His other books include *Backyard Wilderness*, a chronicle of the congressional battle over the Alpine Lakes Wilderness near Leavenworth.

Grizzly bears were one of the first animals listed under the

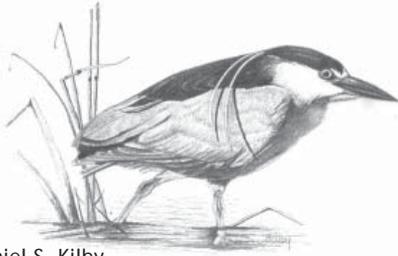
Endangered Species Act. Dave will offer an overview of that recovery effort throughout the West, but will focus mostly on the North Cascades, which are designated as one of the six grizzly recovery areas. The other five are in the Northern Rockies. He will discuss such questions as whether grizzlies still live in the Cascades, how

many, where they are, their future, and what plans there may be to save them. Because wolves have recently returned to the North Cascades, he will also mention several points about the biological and political interplay between grizzlies and wolves.

On April 15, author David Knibb will provide an interesting look at grizzly bears and their history in the North Cascades. The program will be at Barn Beach Reserve, 347 Division Street in Leavenworth at 7:00. Join us afterward for refreshments and stimulating conversation.

The grizzly bear recovery effort, under the Endangered Species Act, has been plodding along for 34 years. Are there any grizzly bears in the Cascades? If so, where and how many are there? What are the future plans for them? David Knibb addresses these questions in his book, and his program promises to be a very good one. Introduction by William Gaines, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Wildlife Biologist.

Editor's Note



Daniel S. Kilby

As I sit in front of my computer on a lovely spring-like morning, there are Pygmy Nuthatches attempting to create cavities in the wood siding on both the north and south side of our house and a Northern Flicker drumming for attention on the metal roofing! Mule deer and chipmunks (my Montana friends refer to them as Saber-toothed timber-tigers) taunt our dogs into a frenzy before eating most of the black oil sunflower seed I put out for birds regardless of where I hang the feeders. Ah, living the peaceful life in the country.

The mission of North Central Washington Audubon is "to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of people and the biological diversity of North Central Washington."

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Despite these 'vermin', I am managing to see and enjoy a few spring birds. Violet-green Swallows arrived a week or so ago. Mountain and Western Bluebirds and also Mountain Chickadees are inspecting our newly cleaned nest boxes. Spotted Towhees and Dark-eyed Juncos are singing their spring songs. The scope in the living room is pointed towards a Red-tailed Hawk's nest near the river. A Mourning Dove is eating seed dropped on the ground by the so-called 'vermin'. White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches as well as Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers are regular feeder visitors.

The hills have the spring green color of new grasses and in some places sagebrush buttercups are blooming. I've heard that farther south, arrowleaf balsamroot is already in bloom! Here currants are starting to leaf out and even the antelope bitterbrush is showing signs of life again.

Spring is a great time to get out and ramble around the hillsides. It sure beats listening to Pygmy Nuthatches beating on the walls.

A Mountain Chickadee checks out a nest box
 photo by Teri J Pieper



North Central Washington Audubon Society Membership Form

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Donation: I would like to support NCW Audubon's programs of education and conservation. Enclosed is my additional donation of \$_____

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The Owl and The Woodpecker: Our Most Iconic Birds

Paul Bannick heads to Republic and Omak

by Conservation Northwest
photos by Paul Bannick

Conservation Northwest, along with North Central Washington Audubon Society, is sponsoring two presentations by Paul Bannick this month. For our members in Ferry and Okanogan Counties, this is a great opportunity to see an entertaining and inspiring program by a great photographer.

Award winning photographer and author Paul Bannick will guide you on a visual journey through Northwest habitats through stunning images of our owls and woodpeckers taken over several thousand hours in the field.

While the presentation will follow themes from his highly acclaimed

book, *The Owl and The Woodpecker*,

it will feature hundreds of new photos taken since the book's release.

This singular photographic study will be accompanied by field stories, and rich natural history derived from

thousands of hours in the field. His talk will look at the way owls and woodpeckers define and enrich their habitat and how their life-histories are intertwined.

Early reviews include the following: "*The Owl and the Woodpecker* is a monumental work of photojournalism by one of North America's top wildlife photographers. The images you'll encounter in this book are the result of an encyclopedic knowledge of birds and their habitats, an intense love of nature, and endless patience. For anyone who appreciates wild things and wild places, each of Bannick's stunning photographs is worth ten thousand words."

—Ted Williams, Editor-at-Large, Audubon magazine

"What a glorious book! Paul Bannick's photographs reveal

Republic, April 22, Republic Elementary School, 7:00 pm
Omak, April 23, Performing Arts Center, 7:00 pm

Award-winning photographer and naturalist Paul Bannick presents images and stories from his critically acclaimed book, *The Owl and the Woodpecker: Encounters With North America's Most Iconic Birds*.

Paul intertwines extensive knowledge of natural history with breathtaking photography as he draws intriguing connections between owls and woodpeckers, with a focus on western habitats. Paul is also development director for Conservation Northwest. The book will be for sale at both programs.

Book signing will be available after the programs.

the startling beauty and complex survival strategies of the owl and the woodpecker, North America's most charismatic—and crucial—cavity-nesting birds. These are images to savor again and again."

—Bruce Barcott, Contributing Editor to Outside Magazine and author of *The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw*

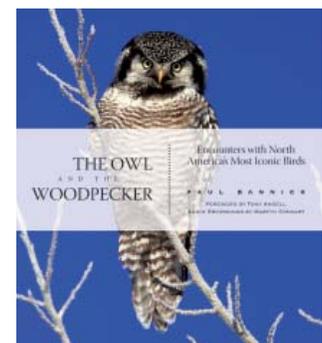
See sample images and pages from his book and reviews at www.paulbannick.com

Paul is an award winning photographer whose work has appeared in Audubon, Sunset,



and Pacific Northwest Magazines, and in many books including the recently published National Wildlife Federation Guide to North American Birds, as well as in many parks, refuges and other places in North America and Europe. *The Owl and The Woodpecker* was a finalist for the 2009 Washington State Book Award for non-fiction. Paul is a frequent guest of NPR programs across the country and has been featured on BirdNote and on Travel With Rick Steves.

Paul works full time for Conservation Northwest, a conservation organization dedicated to protecting and connecting wild areas from the Pacific Coast to the Canadian Rockies and the biodiversity of these areas.



Good News for our Chapter!

It is with **glad heart** that we welcome a new board member, Bridget Egan!

Bridget will be the new Program Chair. We've discussed our new and enlarged vision of "programs" – edging away from traditional monthly sit-down-and-listen-to-a-speaker events. Bridget will be taking the lead but not total responsibility – working with other board members and volunteers in organizing programs, classes, outings, and outreach (some of which might be co-joined with field trips and so be co-organized with Field

Trip Chair, Karen Haire). Bridget is the Membership Coordinator with Chelan Douglas Land Trust (CDLT).

Bridget was born and raised in east central Pennsylvania and moved to Washington in 1999 to serve as a VISTA AmeriCorps member for the Washington Reading Corps. She earned an M.A. at Syracuse University and currently teaches composition part-time at Wenatchee Valley College. She is also involved in the organic garden club at WVC where she helps students dig in the dirt and find grant

by Mark Oswood and Bridget Egan

money. As membership coordinator for the CDLT, she works on growing membership through outreach and events and loves working with their amazing staff and dedicated volunteers - just like many Audubon members! She is excited to volunteer for Audubon and get to know so many new people and great places in NCW. Bridget is a true beginner birder, but was recently rewarded for hiking in the cold, driving rain at Port Susan when she spotted her first American Bittern!

We Still Need a Few More Friendly Faces!

by Teri J Pieper, Twisp

Many thanks to Bridget for stepping up to volunteer to be our Programs Chair and off in the distance I think I see someone's hand raised and saying 'I could take care of the website if Karen would like to be the Field Trips Chair'. Bridget and others will enjoy seeing and learning about local birds during some planned future outings.

We still have open positions that need to be filled and soon! As you know from having thoroughly read previous Wild Phlox issues, Mark Oswood is stepping down from several of his roles, including and especially President of the Board. He will retain the position of Education Chair, something he enjoys doing.

That leaves us with three positions unfilled and these are functions vital to keeping the Chapter active. The descriptions may seem daunting; however board members and other volunteers are available to assist as needed for the bigger tasks such as the Phlox mailings. Mark has offered to train people in the methods he has used in the past. You may have new and better ideas for how to get the jobs done and we are always open to new, more efficient ways. Another idea is the possibility of co-chairs. Perhaps two of you would like to take care of the secretary/gofer/admin chair and share the duties. The person(s) who becomes the secretary/gofer/admin chair probably ought to live in or near the Wenatchee Valley as it is the center of our 'business' however the other two open positions could be done with a computer from anywhere in our four county region.

Secretary/Gofer/Admin: This position includes a variety of small tasks needed to keep things flowing. Handling mailings including the Phlox, pick up and distribute mail from the PO, the traditional secretary task of recording meeting notes and producing meeting minutes, occasional trips to office supply store, mostly for mailing supplies, bank deposits, generate chapter stationary (letterhead, thank-you cards etc.) and mailing labels

Fund Raiser: Our major source of revenue in recent years has been our annual donation appeal letter. The entire board will work with the fund raiser to edit the letter and help with the mailing.

Membership: We keep our membership (and donor) records in a dedicated membership software package, Member Ties. Do you know how to use a database? Then this job is for you!

President and Vice President: We welcome any and all suggestions for filling these two positions.



A Stellar's Jay enjoys a morning bath
photo by Bob Spiwak, Mazama

Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest May 13 - 16

by Gail Roberts, Leavenworth

Mark Your Calendar! Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest is coming up May 13-16.

Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest will hatch before we know it! The steering committee for the festival is well into the planning for this year's festival. Many of our "tried and true" field trips and guides will return, but we try to offer a few new surprises, as well.

We are delighted to announce this year's Keynote Address will be given by Martyn Stewart of NatureSound. Martyn travels around the world to record sounds of nature. His extensive sound library includes thousands of different bird sounds, countless wildlife species, soundscapes from National Parks and other wild lands around the world, plus soundscapes from biomes that no longer exist. We know you will be spellbound.

BirdNote will visit again this year, and they will be leading field trips, as well. Sarvey returns with live raptors and their excellent educational message. If you missed the Upper Basin Birders presentation at the Audubon meeting in October, their excellent and inspiring program, "The Art and Science of Birding," will be repeated on Bird Fest Friday. There are a few other new field trips offered, including two that celebrate International Migratory Bird Day on the weekend prior to Bird Fest. Check out our updated website, www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com and watch for the complete schedule of events to be released the first week in April.

Okanogan Highlands Spring Birdathon May 23

by Heather Findlay,
Okanogan

On Sunday May 23rd we will have our annual Okanogan Spring Birdathon. This year our local Okanogan birding group and North Central Washington Audubon are partnering with Okanogan Valley Land Council (OVLC).

We invite all NCWAS members, friends and anyone else interested to join us in our annual spring birdathon. All ages and levels of birding ability welcome!

On Sunday May 23, we will start at 7:30 a.m. from the Okanogan Valley Land Council office in Tonasket (behind the Subway on the main street). We plan on birding in several areas in the Okanogan Highlands, and will be visiting one or more OVLC conservation easements. It will be a day of birding, enjoying the beautiful Okanogan highlands and a variety of different habitats, and learning a little about conservation easements and the natural environment of this area. We will stop for a picnic lunch somewhere interesting. There will be a few short walks, and some driving in between, so we'll carpool from the starting point in Tonasket.

Bring along binoculars, a bag lunch, and your enthusiasm for enjoying our beautiful region with some local birding and conservation enthusiasts! We've got an interesting route planned. Maybe we'll be lucky enough to see a Great Gray Owl, or Bald Eaglets in the nest - just a couple of the highlights from last year. But big birds, little birds, we'll enjoy seeing them all.

Folks are also invited to travel to the Okanogan on Saturday May 22 for an evening potluck and a get together, and we do already have some Okanogan friends offering to put people up on Saturday night. We'll plan an interesting evening, and encourage people from Wenatchee, the Methow Valley or other areas to come on up the evening before.

Please RSVP to let us know if you are interested in the Saturday May 22nd dinner and evening event, and/or the Sunday May 23rd day of birding in the Okanogan highlands at 846-0475 or heather@eaglesun.net

Celebrate Earth Day for Two Days

By Sharon Lunz

Earth Day at Centennial Park, April 17th, 11 am - 2 p.m., Downtown Wenatchee

Come learn about hands-on projects to celebrate Generation: Green at Wenatchee's Earth Day Festival! This free event will feature family activities, information on composting and recycling, and fun ways to protect and learn about the planet. This event is a partnership with the City of Wenatchee, Wenatchee Downtown Association, Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center, E.A.T., and The Nature Conservancy.

Earth Day at Jacobson Preserve, April 18th, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

This event, organized by the Chelan Douglas Land Trust, will feature a variety of family-friendly, naturalist led activities with creative opportunities to learn about local birds, butterflies, wildlife, and local history. There will be analog birding with North Central Washington Audubon Society, plus Wenatchee Valley Museum and school district ecology boxes, along with participation by Barn Beach Reserve and the Native Plant Society. This is a free, family event! For more information call 667-9708.

Shrub-steppe'n Up Saddlerock

by Susan Ballinger,
Wenatchee

Celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Science Field Experience

The public is invited to an open house on Thursday, May 6 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of "Shrub-steppe'n Up Saddlerock," Wenatchee School District's 5th grade science field experience. Every spring, students learn about our region's geography, geology, plants and animals. On the field day, students visit hands-on learning stations, climb to the top for a sweeping view of our valley, and enjoy a picnic lunch while music teachers sing camp songs.

- What: An open house for our community and a ceremony to thank our many community partner agencies and organizations. Drop in and meet School Board members and district administrators.
- When: Thursday, May 6, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Awards ceremony for recognition of our community partners at 6:30 p.m.
- Where: Appleatchee Trailhead to Saddlerock (west end of Circle Street).

Visitors will park at the trailhead and walk 0.3 miles up the trail to the base camp where there will be activities and displays. For those unable to walk, a WSD vehicle driver will offer rides to the site from the trailhead. The high school Earth Club students will staff exploration stations (Mule deer/marmot, Coyote/cougar, Birds-of-Prey, Botany, Touch Boxes, landscape drawing). Refreshments will be served. Wear shoes suitable for walking on a dirt/gravel trail. Restrooms will be on site. Roam between stations, or choose to hike to the top of the mountain (one-hour round trip).

Hosted by Superintendent Brian Flones, Wenatchee School District School Board, district administrators, and science resource center. For more information contact Science Field Experience Coordinator, (509) 664-3865 x251, or email ballinger.s@mail.wsd.wednet.edu

You Too can do the 'Shrub-steppe up Saddlerock'!

Wenatchee School District invites you to spend a day of adventure and learning on Saddlerock, surrounded by balsamroot, pungent sagebrush, and excited 5th graders. On May 4, 5, and 6, 600 students will hike to the top of Saddlerock. Before and after the hike, groups of students rotate between natural history learning stations all taught by community volunteers. Over three days, 70 adult volunteers are needed to team-teach the stations using detailed lesson scripts and ready-to-go hands on supplies. It is always great to have an Audubon volunteer teaching at "Birds-of-Prey" station.

Each day, three volunteer time slot options are available (8:00-10:30, 8:00-2:00, or 11:45-2:00). All volunteers will do a 10-minute walk up the trail at our base camp. We can provide a vehicle ride for volunteers unable to do this walk. During the mid-day break at base camp, volunteers can attend a field talk by a natural resource professional, take an art lesson, and enjoy our music teachers singing camp songs at lunch.

To sign up, contact coordinator Susan Ballinger (ballinger.s@mail.wsd.wednet.edu; 663-9106). Volunteers will receive a confirmation e-mail (or letter) with logistic details and detailed lesson scripts one week prior to the event.



Wenatchee Native Plant Society Plans Spring Outings

by Susan Ballinger

Join Wenatchee Native Plant Society (WNPS) member Don Schaechtel in his 4th year of developing a species list for the popular Leavenworth Icicle Ridge hiking trail. Don's goal is to refine and confirm his extensive species list. Bring your copy of Hitchcock and a hand lens to do group botany. The trail is 4.5 miles round trip with 1,600 ft of elevation gain, but this isn't an exercise hike. Instead it is a chance to get up-close and key out plants (you will still get some exercise). You can join any or all of the trips as they follow spring to summer blooms from the end of April through early July. Sign up by e-mailing Don at don.safety@verizon.net and he'll e-mail you the current species list draft.

Many other WNPS outings are listed on their website www.wnps.org/chapter_info/wenatchee/home.html. No doubt that in addition to seeing and learning about native plants, there will be birds to see and identify along the way.



My first wildflower of the year
Sagebrush Buttercup
photo by Teri J Pieper

Greater Sage-grouse Warranted but Precluded from ESA Protection

by Western Watershed Project

Seven years after conservationists petitioned to protect Greater Sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced March 5 that the species is “warranted but precluded” from listing under the Act. The grouse will now join more than 270 imperiled species on the list of “candidate species” under the ESA. The decision marks the agency’s second attempt to assess the species for listing after the Bush Administration published an ecologically flawed, politically tainted decision not to list the grouse in 2005.

The Greater Sage-grouse is a charismatic bird that lives in sagebrush steppe in eleven western states. First described by Lewis and Clark in 1805, nineteenth century travelers and settlers reported seeing huge flocks of sage-grouse that darkened the sky as they lifted from valley floors. However, westward expansion and development over the next 200 years eliminated almost half of sagebrush habitat. The total sage-grouse

population, estimated between 140,000-500,000 birds, has declined between 69-99 percent from historic levels.

“The action by Secretary Salazar and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service comes years too late as hundreds of thousands of acres of sage-grouse habitat have been permanently altered or reduced in value for this charismatic native species since the initial petition for listing,” said Dr. Clait Braun, Director of Grouse, Inc. “Some populations are already at the brink of extirpation in each of the states where this species persists.” Dr. Braun, retired Avian Research Program Manager for the Colorado Division of Wildlife, has been involved with sage-grouse research and management since 1973.

Myriad human activities in the Sagebrush Sea have decimated sage-grouse habitat, including livestock grazing, oil and gas development, agricultural conversion, application of herbicides and pesticides, unnatural fire, urban sprawl, mining, off-road vehicle

use, and the placement and construction of utility corridors, roads and fences.

The Fish and Wildlife Service’s finding indicates that current conservation efforts are failing to conserve sage-grouse. The grouse’s new status as a candidate species may require agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management to revise their land use plans on public land to improve habitat for sage-grouse and other sagebrush species.

The Sagebrush Sea Campaign, a program of WildEarth Guardians, was the lead petitioner to list the Greater Sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act. Western Watersheds Project, a western conservation organization, successfully litigated a remand of the negative listing decision in 2007. Advocates for the West represented Western Watersheds Project in federal court. More than twenty conservation groups joined the petition to list sage-grouse under the ESA in 2003.

For more information see www.westernwatersheds.org/

Secretary Salazar Releases New “State of the Birds” Report Showing Climate Change Threatens Hundreds of Species

Austin, TX—Climate change threatens to further imperil hundreds of species of migratory birds, already under stress from habitat loss, invasive species and other environmental threats, a new report released today by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar concludes.

The State of the Birds: 2010 Report on Climate Change, follows a comprehensive report released a year ago showing that nearly a third of the nation’s 800 bird species are endangered, threatened or in significant decline. “For well over a century, migratory birds have faced stresses such as commercial hunting, loss of forests, the use of DDT and other pesticides, a loss of wetlands and other key habitat, the introduction of invasive species, and other impacts of human development,”

Salazar said. “Now they are facing a new threat—climate change—that could dramatically alter their habitat and food supply and push many species towards extinction.”

The report, a collaboration of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and experts from the nation’s leading conservation organizations, shows that climate changes will have an increasingly disruptive effect on bird species in all habitats, with oceanic and Hawaiian birds in greatest peril.

“Just as they did in 1962 when Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, our migratory birds are sending us a message about the health of our planet,” Salazar said. “That is why—for the first time ever—the Department of the Interior has deployed a coordinated strategy

to plan for and respond to the impacts of climate change on the resources we manage.”

The report is the product of a collaborative effort as part of the U.S. North American Bird Conservation Initiative, between federal and state wildlife agencies, and scientific and conservation organizations including partners from the American Bird Conservancy, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Klamath Bird Observatory, National Audubon Society, The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, U.S.D.A. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

For more information on this report see www.stateofthebirds.org/

April 2010 Wild Phlox

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North Central Washington Audubon Society Calendar

April 15	Grizzly Bears in the North Cascades	Sponsored by Barn Beach Reserve and NCW Audubon, at Barn Beach. See page 1
April 17 & 18	Earth Day Celebrations	See page 5 for more info
April 22 & 23	Paul Bannick The Owl & the Woodpecker	In Republic and Omak. See page 3
April 22 - May 31	Methow Aviary Art Exhibit featuring local artists	At the Winthrop Gallery, opening on April 24. For more info see www.winthropgallery.com/current.html
May 6	Shrub-Steppen up Saddlerock	Tenth Anniversary! See page 8 for more info
May 13 - 17	Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest	See page 5 for more info
May 22 & 23	Okanogan Highlands Spring Bird-A-Thon	Join your friends and learn about the birds of the Highlands, maybe see a Great Gray Owl! See page 5
June 11 - 14	WA Ornithological Society	Meeting in Wenatchee, see www.wos.org



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Visit the NCW Audubon Society website for updates on these and other events
www.ncwaudubon.org

Grizzly bears are the most striking symbol of the North American wild, as well as one of the most controversial animals on the continent. David Knibb's book highlights the policy and political issues involved in efforts to save the Great Bear from extinction, including the heated debate over the decision to remove Yellowstone's grizzly bears from the list of threatened species. As Lance Craighead points out in the book's foreword, Knibb tells this compelling story with a refreshing immediacy, almost as if he were there in the conference room, meeting halls, private offices, and p...