

## Post-election Note

By **Cindy Easterson, PAS President**

Dear Pilchuck Audubon Supporters,

As part of reflecting on the recent election, I wanted to share some narrative from David Yarnold, National Audubon Society’s President and CEO. He has articulated much of what has been circulating in my thoughts and I couldn’t present this message any better. Please reflect on his message about how we can might continue to advocate for birds and wildlife habitats at our local scale.

“Together we’ve protected birds for 111 years—through administrations led by both parties—and there’s an urgent need to bring some perspective to bear.

“Some things didn’t change on November 9, 2016. An overwhelming majority of Americans still believe climate change threatens their future and the lives of birds and they want real solutions. Most Republicans are still among that number. Millennials still believe their parents have put short-term gain ahead of an environmental legacy, and they want that fixed. Many business leaders believe in a predictable set of environmental regulations.

Americans didn’t vote against clean air or clean water. Most people still believe in science.

“Two things did change that will have a direct bearing on birds and the places they need. It’s clear that the incoming administration will have new conservation priorities and that most of the opportunity to make progress on climate change will shift to the states.

...

“You know what we’re for: the places birds and people need in order to thrive in a warming and drier world, resilient coastlines and communities where people watch out for birds so they have food, water and safe passage. We’re also for the common sense rules that have

*(Continued on Page 2)*

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## NO PROGRAM MEETING IN DECEMBER

[Join us for the Christmas Bird Count](#)

**Edmonds / South County CBC – December 17, 2016**

**Everett / Marysville CBC – December 26, 2016**

Pilchuck Audubon Society sponsors the 15-mile diameter Edmonds-South County and Everett-Marysville Christmas Bird Counts that will occur on December 17 and December 26, respectively. The Edmonds count, centered



near Martha Lake in Lynnwood, occurs in south Snohomish County, north King County, and the SE tip of Whidbey Island, while the Everett-Marysville count area is located between downtown Everett and Island Crossing, extending as far west as the SE tip of Camano Island. Some great opportunities exist to join an existing team or start a new team. Boat surveys

in the Snohomish River Delta and on marine waters (weather permitting) offer a unique opportunity to see waterfowl and sea birds not easily seen from shore. Counts are made on Camano, Ebey, Spencer, Jetty, Whidbey, and Gedney (Hat) islands.

You can participate either by joining a field team of birders covering one of the 28 areas or by independently counting birds at your feeders and in your yard. New participants, whether experienced, intermediate, or beginning birders, are welcome to join the counts. The CBC compilers can direct you to one of these areas after knowing your interests and experience.

As Snohomish County grows and more land is converted into suburban housing, feeder counts grow in importance. We would like to increase the number of people watching their feeders to ensure that we have good coverage of the urban and suburban habitat.

The CBC compilers are:

**Scott Atkinson** (scottatkinson@hotmail.com, tel. 425-210-2716) for Everett/Marysville.

**Bob Schmidt** (bobs@world-wide.com, tel. 425-273-1579) and **Rick Taylor** (taylorrl@outlook.com, tel. 425-214-2764) for Edmonds/South County.

Each CBC will have a post-count potluck to share results and enjoy the evening. The compilers will provide the location and time of this event. ✧

## A Post-election Note *Continued from Page 1*

cleaned our air and water and protected endangered species. Together, we have proven our political clout, whether the goal was protecting tens of millions of acres of Alaskan wilderness or the bird-rich islands off Florida's coast. If successful wildlife or environmental protections are threatened, you can expect us to be highly effective, vocal advocates and to lean hard on our relationships with officials everywhere.

"We intend to stay focused on what we support as much as what we oppose so your role as a champion for birds is more important now than ever. You are the lifeblood of Audubon, part of a community of caring people, from Sacramento to Helena to Lincoln to New York. That's who we are. And that's not going to change."

To you, our local lifeblood, thank you for your financial contributions and the gifts of your time to sustain Pilchuck Audubon Society's programs and projects. Our work will continue because of your support. ✧



## About Pilchuck Audubon Society

The Pilchuck Audubon Profile, official newsletter of Pilchuck Audubon Society, is published monthly.

Pilchuck Audubon Society (PAS) is a grass-roots environmental organization with members throughout Snohomish County and Camano Island, Washington.

Our mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife, for the benefit of the earth's biological diversity.

Through education, advocacy, and community activism, PAS is committed to bringing people closer to wildlife in order to build a deeper understanding of the powerful links between healthy ecosystems and human beings, and to encourage the involvement of our members in efforts

to protect the habitat this wildlife depends upon for survival.

We serve as a local chapter of the National Audubon Society. PAS is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, non-profit organization incorporated in the state of Washington.

### Newsletter Submissions

Submit articles to [newsletter@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:newsletter@pilchuckaudubon.org) or mail to 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198, Snohomish, WA 98290. Submissions must be received by the 21<sup>st</sup> of the month preceding publication. We reserve the right to edit.

**To contact Pilchuck Audubon Society, call 425.610.8027.**

The monthly Profile is available online at

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

## HELP!!

### Do you have a new Email Address?

If you have changed your Email address and still want to receive announcements and the Profile from PAS, send a message to Kristin Kelly at [execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org) with your name and new Email address.

## BIRDERS BEWARE!

On a recent field trip that Pilchuck Audubon took to British Columbia, two of the carpool vehicles were broken into and items stolen.

This is a friendly reminder that many of the places we park to go birding are not safe. Do NOT leave valuables in your vehicles. Carry those credit cards, driver's licenses, and passports on your person. Leave all "non-essential to birding" items safely at home.

If you want to go the extra mile, carry your car registration or garage door remote with you as well. ✧

### Board of Directors

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Photo Credit: Scottmliddell@flickr

## **Winter Gulls of Puget Sound: Learn Adult Gull Identification with Mike Donahue**

Does identifying gulls make you feel like you're seeing fifty shades of gray? Gulls are one of the most challenging groups of birds to identify. You've been saying that you want to take a gull ID class, so now's your chance!

A classroom session will cover identification of adults of all the gulls that regularly occur in Washington in winter. There will be a half day (8:00 a.m. to 12 p.m.) field trip to visit several local gull hotspots on south Lake Washington.

**Class:** February 1, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

**Location:** PUD Building (Upstairs); 2320 California Street; Everett, WA 98201

**Field Trip:** Saturday and Sunday, February 4 and 5. Instructor will lead field trip both days.

**Participants will sign up for one of these days** at the first class.

If there are 12 or fewer in the class, the field trip will be on Saturday only.

**Cost:** \$50 for class and field trip; \$30 lecture only. Youth/Young Adults (under 24): \$30 for class; \$15 lecture only.

**To Register:**

**[Pay Online](#)**

Click the **[Pay Online](#)** link, then click **Event** in Designation drop-down, then type **Gull Class** in the second box.

**OR**

**[RSVP by Email](#)**

RSVP by email to Kristin Kelly, **[execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org)**, and then pay by check made out to

Pilchuck Audubon Society

Mail to:

1429 Avenue D, #198

Snohomish, WA 98290



# Public Meeting Trail Planning for Morning Star Conservation Area

Friday, December 16, 2016

6:30 p.m.

Cavalero Mid High School Cafeteria

8220 24th St SE

Lake Stevens, WA, 98258

([map](#))

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is beginning a trail planning process for the Morning Star Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA). This large area extends from Mt. Pilchuck east to Gothic Basin and southeast of Spada Reservoir, including Boulder and Greider Lakes.

In collaboration with local governments, recreational users, and other interested parties, DNR will create a sustainable trails plan for low-impact recreational opportunities and facilities in the conservation area.

The existing trail network within Morning Star will be evaluated with respect to traditional and cultural use, renovation and/or potential expansion, and desired hiking, backcountry camping, and scenic vistas and viewpoints. These will be prioritized for future project development. Emphasis will focus on the restoration of current impacts to environmentally sensitive areas and redevelopment of existing popular trails.

## MORNING STAR CONSERVATION AREA

The 36,037-acre mountainous conservation area protects outstanding examples of native plant communities and other ecological features, such as subalpine meadows, wetlands, and lakes. Six plant species rare to Washington state occur within these habitats. The site is also large enough to provide important habitat for threatened and endangered wide-ranging wildlife such as Pacific fisher, grizzly bear, and gray wolf. The conservation area protects the middle and high elevations around the Spada Lake basin, which captures warm moist air as it moves inland from Puget Sound and the Pacific Ocean to create one of the wettest areas in the North Cascade Mountains. High precipitation and cool temperatures cause subalpine plant communities to occur at unusually low elevations in this region.

Among the many conservation features in this mid-elevation and subalpine forest landscape are: forest plant assemblages, wetland and bog systems, one state-threatened plant species, five state-sensitive plant species, and habitat for marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, Pacific fisher, and bull trout.

## PUBLIC PLANNING PROCESS

DNR invites the public to come learn more about the project at a public meeting to be held at 6:30 p.m., December 15, 2016, at Cavalero Mid High School Cafeteria, 8220 24th St SE, Lake Stevens, WA, 98258. Following this meeting, DNR will form a public trail planning committee that will work with DNR to develop priorities for the trails plan. Committee meetings are expected to occur periodically for about a year starting early in 2017, and a trail plan should be finalized in 2018.

## GET INVOLVED

To learn more and to be added to our email contact list, contact David Way, 360-333-5741 or [david.way@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:david.way@dnr.wa.gov). You may also

For reference, a [detailed map](#) of the area is available as a PDF file.



contact Kathy Johnson, PAS Forest Practices Chair, 360-659-7252 or [forest@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:forest@pilchuckaudubon.org). ✧

## TRIP CALENDAR

Check our website at [www.pilchuckaudubon.org](http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org)  
for the latest information



### Tuesday, December 6

#### Fir Island Area

Meet at 7:30 AM at Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5-Exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. Expect almost anything. Pack a lunch.

Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, [360-435-3750](tel:360-435-3750)

### Tuesday, December 13

#### Lummi Flats

Meet at 7:00 AM at Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5-Exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. Short-eared Owl, Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Shrike, and Snow Bunting are very likely. Pack a lunch.

Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, [360-435-3750](tel:360-435-3750)

### Sunday, December 20

#### North Everett to South Marysville

Meet at 8:00 AM at Legion Park off North Marine Drive, Everett. Explore the North Everett waterfront and the Snohomish River Estuary, including the Marysville Sewage Facility. View Osprey, eagles, hawks, waterfowl, shorebirds, and gulls. Pack a lunch.

Trip Leader: Art Wait, [360-563-0181](tel:360-563-0181)

### Tuesday, December 27 No scheduled trip

### Saturday, December 17

#### Christmas Bird Count Edmonds / Everett

Team Counting Crows meets at the Lowell Riverfront Trail at 7:30 AM. Take I-5 to the 41<sup>st</sup> St. exit in Everett and go one block east. Take a right on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. It jogs left to 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Turn left down the hill on Lenora/Lowell-Snohomish River Rd. Just after crossing the tracks at the bottom, turn left into the gravel parking lot. Open to all. No reservations required.

### Monday, December 26

#### Christmas Bird Count Everett / Marysville

Team Counting Crows meets at Gissberg Twin Lakes Park at 7:30 AM. Take I-5 to the SR 531/Smokey Point exit. Go west on 172<sup>nd</sup> St. and take a left at the first signal into the Lakewood Crossing shopping center. Turn left into the shopping center and proceed to the I-5 frontage road, Twin Lakes Ave. Turn right and the park will be on your right. Go to the second (south) parking lot. Open to all.

### Saturday, January 21

#### Rasar State Park

Meet at 8:30 AM at Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5 Exit 200). Park away from the store to the east near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. I have requests from a couple of people for a chance to view Bald Eagles. Rasar State

Park is one place we can reasonably assume is a good place to see eagles during the salmon run on the Skagit River in January. The Skagit Eagle Festival will be underway on weekends in January. I floated down the Skagit River in January 2007. We saw 19 eagles from the boat. But it was too cold on the water. So this time I think I would prefer to view them from the shore. Weather permitting, there are more than three miles of trails throughout the state park, including some along the water's edge. Bring: snacks, water, binoculars, and foul-weather gear, just in case. There will be an option to socialize over a late lunch at one of the cafes in the Skagit Valley.

Trip Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425-244-7633, [aracfi@msn.com](mailto:aracfi@msn.com)



## UPCOMING EVENTS, CLASSES, and FESTIVALS farther afield

Compiled by Rick Brauer

### December 10 Holiday Trees for Salmon Everett, WA

Buy a live holiday tree at the Northwest Stream Center (McCullum Park, 600 128th Street SE, Everett 98208); enjoy it over the holidays; plant it afterward, or bring it back to the NW Stream Center and know that your tree will be planted next to a salmon stream in the spring of 2017. It's a great way to help wildlife during the holidays. Buy a tree and get an annual membership gift to the Adopt A Stream Foundation. [http://www.streamkeeper.org/aasf/SITE\\_DIRECTORY.html](http://www.streamkeeper.org/aasf/SITE_DIRECTORY.html)

### December 10-11 Galveston Island, TX Holiday with the Cranes

For a unique holiday experience, spend a wild weekend in Galveston, Texas, celebrating the return of the island's wintering Sandhill Cranes at the Holiday with the Cranes festival. The weekend is full of indoor and outdoor nature activities combined with the ambience of historic Galveston Island. <http://www.galvestonnaturetourism.org/holidaywiththecranes.asp>

### December 13 Victoria, BC National History Night: Antarctic Wildlife

Global climate change is affecting the Antarctic and its wildlife, but sometimes in unexpected ways. Enjoy photos of wildlife and spectacular scenery in this presentation by Dr. Alan Burger, a seabird biologist and university professor. He regularly goes to the Antarctic as a naturalist/lecturer on small adventure-tourism vessels. He has done many voyages to the Antarctic Peninsula and South Georgia and last year, he completed a 31-day voyage from New Zealand to the Ross Sea and along the West Antarctic coast. [http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca/?page\\_id=1518](http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca/?page_id=1518)

**Anytime On-line Bird Classes Anywhere**  
Did you know that Cornell University offers "Bird Academy" classes online? <https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/> ✧



## WEEKEND BIRDWALK to Iron Horse State Park-John Wayne Pioneer Trail at Keechelus Lake Trip Report

By Jonathan Blubaugh

After our birdwalk to Crystal Mountain in July, I was interested in returning to the mountains. Snoqualmie Pass was the natural choice. We explored the John Wayne Trail leaving southeast out of Hyak. The trail is a former railbed and can be walked most of the way from North Bend to Cle Elum. From the map, it looked like the trail was on the shore of Keechelus Lake. Upon arrival, we found that the trail is on the slope a bit above the Keechelus Lake rather than along the shore of the lake. Since it is a former railbed, it is flat by necessity. We wondered why there was not at least a little side trail down to the water. So we never got down to the lakeshore to look closely for waterfowl or shorebirds.

Keechelus Lake is a reservoir alongside Interstate 90 on the east side of Snoqualmie Pass. The freeway follows the immediate shoreline north of the lake, with the railroad following the south shore. Since the trail is long and skinny, there is more than one place to choose for a trailhead. We parked next to a National Forest boat ramp at the head of the lake.

It was a perfect autumn day—mostly sunny and certainly not cold. From the parking lot, we took off along the trail eastbound through forest typical of western Washington: Douglas Fir, Big-leaf Maple, and Western Red Cedar, and we found ourselves walking in familiar flora.

We thought the trail would bring us to the lakeshore, but it never did. Eventually, we found ourselves looking down at the lake from above where there were a few open views. The surrounding mountains were mostly covered with evergreen trees with many patches of deciduous trees all wearing their gorgeous fall colors. We may have been spying scattered groves of red Mountain Ash and yellow Quaking Aspen among the firs and spruce high on the slopes above. The tops were mostly bald and rocky. At trailside the Vine Maples had turned color. The Big-leaf Maples had just begun to turn somewhat yellow.

To me, the coolest thing we saw was a wasp nest. Lisa Weber beautifully captured the colony in the photo submitted with this article. At the time, I thought it might



have been a paper wasp nest, but a little research in Wikipedia shows it might be a species of wasp from our large group of yellow jackets. According to Wikipedia, many of these species are beneficial garden pest predators and

*(Continued on Page 7)*

Photo Credit: Lisa Weber

## HOTLINE to Report Dead, Sick, or Injured Swans Available

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has re-established a hotline to report dead, sick, or injured swans in three northwest Washington counties as part of its ongoing effort to assess the impact of lead poisoning on trumpeter swans.

People can call [\(360\) 466-4345, ext. 266](tel:(360)466-4345), to report dead, sick, or injured swans in Whatcom, Skagit, and Snohomish counties. Callers should be prepared to leave a message including their name and phone number, and the location and condition of the swans. The hotline is available 24 hours a day through the end of March.



Some trumpeter swans in those three counties, and in southwestern British Columbia, die each winter from lead poisoning after ingesting lead shot in areas where they feed.

Lead shot has been banned for waterfowl hunting in Washington for more than 25 years. But swans can still pick up and ingest lead shot while foraging in shallow underwater areas in fields and roosts where lead shot is still present.

"People who observe dead, sick, or injured swans are advised not to handle or collect the birds," said Paul DeBruyn, WDFW wildlife biologist for Skagit and Whatcom counties.

"Instead, people should call the hotline," he said. WDFW and Puget Sound Energy employees, as well as authorized volunteers will pick up the birds.

WDFW and other agencies and organizations have been working since 2001 to reduce swan mortalities and locate sources of toxic lead. ✧

### OLYMPIC BIRDFEST, April 7-9, 2017

Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction and raffle, gala banquet, and more. Our featured speaker: noted nature photographer Bonnie Block. Join our festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 4-6, 2017.

Register separately at [www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon](http://www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon). Extend your festival with our Neah Bay post-trip on April 9-11, 2017: two days exploring northwest coastal Washington. BirdFest registration at [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org). ✧

## SMART GROWTH

By Kristin Kelly

Smart Growth Executive Director

It's a relief in some ways that the November election is behind us and we can start enjoying the holiday season. But come next year, there are so many unknowns with a Trump presidency and how that will affect all of us and our natural world. As the news keeps unfolding, there could be troubling times ahead for our environment.

And while I plan on being an active participant on many environmental issues, I will also be working on your behalf on our county's land use and environmental issues.

I am pleased that Sound Transit 3 passed; while many folk won't see the light rail come to Everett from Lynnwood in their lifetimes, it is important to remember that future generations will have more options to get around our beautiful Pacific Northwest region without relying on gas-guzzling cars. While some will continue to believe that investment in just more buses would have been more economical and useful instead of a light rail system that will take 20 years to build to Everett, I receive email alerts daily from Sound Transit about 30 or more minutes of delay of many of the routes from Everett to Seattle and other places. Buses continue to be stuck in traffic like the rest of us, and I don't see that getting any better soon.

In 2017, pressure to build single-family homes in our urban growth areas will continue, especially in the eastern part of the Southwest UGA around Bothell and Mill Creek. Currently, there are two proposals that have come forward to expand the UGA in this area by reducing UGAs in the northern part of Mill Creek along Larimer-Lowell Road and in Granite Falls. Whether or not this is a good idea is yet to be seen, but I plan on tracking this issue carefully.

Unfortunately, there is a proposal to amend the Monitoring Plan from the recently adopted Tree Canopy Ordinance for our urban growth areas. This is an issue I and several other active members in our county worked on, and we were promised a monitoring plan to ensure this Tree Canopy Plan would actually help save or replace trees as land is developed into more and more single-family subdivisions. I promise you this will be an issue that I and others will continue to address. Sustainable neighborhoods need significant trees as well as urban areas for wildlife and bird habitat, for shade and noise reduction, and combating the effects of greenhouse gas emissions for all the cars on our roads.

Uncertainty lies before us in the federal regulatory and environmental protection arena. How that could affect all the great work in which I've been involved as part of the Executive Committee of the Sustainable Lands Strategy is a concern for all of us—environmental groups, the Tulalip and Stillaguamish Tribes, and local farmers—who have worked six years to ensure net gains in both local agriculture and salmon and wildlife habitat restoration along the Stillaguamish and Snohomish river basins.

I will write more about these issues in January, and implore

## Weekend Trip Report *Continued from Page 6*

pollinators. We found the hive at trailside about ankle level. Examine the various symmetries in the photo: the heart-shaped hive shows radial and bilateral symmetry. The Vine Maple leaves and fern fronds display nearly flat bilateral symmetry, some poking out from the edge of the hive where they were partly assimilated by the industrious insects. Now look at the colors. The dull grey hive makes a sharp contrast with the vivid red and gold of the maple and verdant green of the Bracken Fern and Creeping Blackberry.

You should have come hiking with us!

As usual, we kept a list of the birds we saw, uploading them to Cornell via the mobile eBird application: 16 Turkey Vultures, a Cooper's Hawk, an Osprey, 3 Red-tailed Hawks, a Glaucous-winged Gull, a feral pigeon, a Red-breasted Sapsucker, a red-shafted Northern Flicker, 3 crows, a Steller's Jay, 2 American Robins, more than 31 Dark-eyed Juncos, and 4 Pine Siskins; heard a few Black-capped Chickadees, a few Red-breasted Nuthatches, a Pacific Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglets, a Spotted Towhee, and a couple of American Goldfinches.

The photographers' album can be viewed at <https://www.meetup.com/North-Sound-Birders/events/232683642/>. ✧

## Christmas Bird Count

### CBC

Edmonds / South County  
Saturday, December 17

Both circles need field participants and feeder watchers.

### CBC

Everett / Marysville  
Monday, December 26

Visit the [Pilchuck Audubon website](#) for details on how to participate.

## BOOK DONATIONS

If you are in the process of downsizing or simply de-cluttering, you may be able to help Pilchuck Audubon.



We hold a used book sale featuring birding books at our program meetings. Any bird books that need a new home would be very welcome additions. Simply call or email Kristin, our executive director, to arrange pick up. You can reach her at 425-923-8625 or [execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org).

Donations are tax deductible. The funds raised are used for our many conservation, education, and general expenses. ✧

you to stay involved and work to involve others. Working on local habitat, water quality, and environmental issues will never be so important as it is now during the transition period for leadership in our federal government. ✧

Pilchuck Audubon Society  
 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198  
 Snohomish, WA 98290-1742



**Pilchuck Audubon Society  
 Membership Information**

Support your local Audubon chapter by becoming a member. PAS dues are tax deductible (consult your tax professional for details). The PAS tax ID number is 91-6183664.

- New Member ..... \$28
- Renewal ..... \$28
- Lifetime Member ..... \$1,000
  - 10 monthly payments of \$100
  - 4 quarterly payments of \$250
  - 1 payment of \$1,000
- Donation ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - My employer will match my contribution  
 My employer's gift-matching form is enclosed with my contribution

Make checks payable to **Pilchuck Audubon Society**

Mail to: Pilchuck Audubon Society  
 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198  
 Snohomish, WA 98290-1742

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 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Send me these via e-mail (check all that apply & include your e-mail address above):

- Profile Newsletter
- Program Announcements
- Action Alerts

Pilchuck Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable corporation registered with the Washington Secretary of State. Your contributions are tax deductible.