

SMART GROWTH REPORT

By Kristin Kelly, Smart Growth Executive Director

As growth and development ramp up in Snohomish County this year, citizen calls are becoming more frequent, asking for my help because of concerns in their neighborhoods. While I am there to provide some assistance, the problem continues to be that too many people wait to be involved until a development is being proposed, instead of working with me to ensure better land-use policies and development regulations.

I completely understand how difficult it is to understand all these processes, and the planning language is a far cry from entertaining. I hope to do a better job this year of simplifying some of the issues for folks so they will join in the processes that I work on to have a more livable, sustainable county for all of us, including wildlife and birds.

This year starts out with two very important Washington State Supreme Court decisions. The first is called the *Hirst* decision. The case involved an appeal of Whatcom County's policy to allow new development to occur in rural areas where impacts to the ground and surface water were profound. The Supreme Court ruled that Whatcom County has not protected its ground and surface water resources, as the Growth Management Act requires, because it approves subdivisions and building permits without determining whether water is legally available for new development. This ruling has great benefit for Snohomish County as well.

As you know, if you live in a city or urban growth area, water resources are usually available. But in our rural areas, there has been much development over the years with rural cluster subdivisions that, of course, rely heavily on wells. For years, Snohomish County has allowed wells in these rural cluster subdivisions, but no one has really known if the people who buy these homes actually have the legal right to use that water. Drawing down groundwater for residential use clearly affects instream flows and can affect the streams that are habitat for salmon, other fish, birds, and a variety of wildlife.

(Continued on Page 2)

FEBRUARY PROGRAM MEETING

Friday, February 10, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Birding in Ethiopia

with PAS Member Ray White

PAS member Ray White will share his photos of his birding trip to Ethiopia.

Everett Firefighters' Hall

2411 Hewitt Avenue, Everett ([map](#))



Left: Golden-breasted Starling; Right: Blue-breasted Bee-eater. *Photos by Laurens Steijn / BirdingBreaks.nl*

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. 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.



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Luckily in Snohomish County during the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update, the policy was changed to reduce anticipated growth in the rural areas from 15 percent to 8 percent. Still, a plan is just a plan, and implementing that plan doesn't always occur as it should. With Supreme Court ruling in *Hirst*, our county now must show that there is a legal right to use the water for a development to be built. We hope this will cut down on the amount of rural growth and help push developers into redeveloping our much-needed urban areas where transportation networks are already existing or planned to be built. Snohomish County can't continue to sprawl without losing what we hold dear.

That brings me to the second really important recent Supreme Court Decision regarding whether new developments can vest to old stormwater regulations under the Department of Ecology's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Stormwater Permits, as they do with other county regulations. Vesting of development applications is a huge issue in Washington State, and while there have been numerous attempts to get our State Legislators to rewrite the vesting laws so that new developments must comply with the latest best-available science, such as for Critical Areas and Shoreline Management, that has never been successful. But this new Supreme Court ruling is different. The Court ruled that the vested rights doctrine does not preclude the

retroactive application of stormwater regulations adopted by local governments in compliance with the 2013 Phase I permit. What that means for Snohomish County is that all cities and the county will be required to apply the provisions of the new stormwater regulations to vested development projects. Development permits already approved will have five years to be built under the stormwater rules at which they were vested; if building doesn't happen within those five years, then the new rules will apply. This is a good win for helping to keep our waters cleaner for people, fish, and wildlife.

The third issue currently in the works is the appeal of Snohomish County's Critical Area Regulations Update in 2015 by Pilchuck Audubon Society, Futurewise, and the Tulip Tribes. The hearings on the merits before the Growth Management Hearings Board was January 17. There were a number of issues being appealed that have to do with protection of groundwater in our rural and agricultural lands, wetlands, and landslide dangers. I'd be happy to provide anyone who is interested a copy of the appeal and will keep all of you updated on the decision once it is released, and the next steps. We are hoping for a good decision that will ensure our water quality, wildlife habitat, and the health and safety of all residents of the county is protected. ✧

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 or mail to 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198, Snohomish, WA 98290. Submissions must be received by the 21st 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

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Secretary	Kathy Piland	253.736.4937
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Development	Open	develop@pilchuckaudubon.org
Members at Large	Laurel Cheap ...	classroom.awards@pilchuckaudubon.org
	Kathy Johnson.....	forest@pilchuckaudubon.org
	Jay Ward	425.418.3226
	David Gladstone	

Consultant

Committee Chairs

Bird Sightings	Mara Price	360.722.5752
Citizen Science Coord.	Sherrill Miller	field.birds.pas@gmail.com
Communications	Kristin Kelly	execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org
Conservation Awards	Laurel Cheap ...	classroom.awards@pilchuckaudubon.org
Donations	Judy Chapman.....	donations@pilchuckaudubon.org
Education	Jim Beneteau	membership@pilchuckaudubon.org
Field Trips	Art Wait	360.563.0181
Forest Practices	Kathy Johnson.....	forest@pilchuckaudubon.org
Hospitality	Virginia Clark.....	360.435.3750
Newsletter Editor	Carolyn Lacy.....	newsletter@pilchuckaudubon.org
Programs	Susie Schaefer.....	garden@pilchuckaudubon.org
Webmaster	Terry Nightingale	webmaster@pilchuckaudubon.org

Staff

Smart Growth/PAS ExecDir	Kristin Kelly	execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org
Everett Backyard Habitat Prgm	Jed Holmes.....	habitat@pilchuckaudubon.org

Creating Wildlife Habitat One Yard at a Time—Get Involved!

By Jed Holmes, PAS Everett Backyard Habitat Coordinator

The Backyard Habitat Program is off and running. We have begun our outreach to local organizations, businesses, and potential government partners, and the initial feedback has been very positive.

How can you help? We will have a presence at a number of local events relevant to the backyard habitat project. First up is the Conservation District's annual Native Plant Sale on Saturday, February 11. You are welcome to join me at this event to hand out information and encourage people to get their backyards certified. If you are interested in this or other upcoming backyard habitat events, please send me an email, and I will add you to our mailing list for future updates.

Also, you can start with your own backyard. For many of you, this will not require a lot of work, and putting up a



certification sign is a great way to generate interest among neighbors and friends. Special incentives are available to residents of Everett (postal addresses), which is our focus area for this project. Wherever you live, we would be happy to help connect you with the resources and expertise to make your backyard a sanctuary for wildlife. For more information, write or

call: habitat@pilchuckaudubon.org; 360-421-8423. ✧



Photo Credit: [Scottm1dell@flickr](https://www.flickr.com/photos/scottm1dell/)

Winter Gull Identification Class

Full!

The Pilchuck Audubon Society offering of "Winter Gulls of Puget Sound: Learn Adult Gull Identification with Mike Donahue" is full!

Thank you to everyone for your interest and response.

Watch for future offerings of other birding classes. ✧

Rain Garden Opportunity

Have you been thinking about having a rain garden in your yard? This may be the opportunity you have been looking for.

Rain Gardens play an important role in reducing erosion and flooding, and they improve water quality downstream.

Backyard gardeners have used low-impact, sensible techniques (now called rain gardens) for a long time, and businesses and governments are finally catching on, too. When PCC developed a new store in Edmonds, it included rain gardens in the parking lot, and many people have had a chance to see these rain gardens in action.



The Sno-King Watershed Council (SKWC), in cooperation with Farmer Frog and

EarthCorps, is soliciting applications for rain gardens in the Swamp Creek Drainage Basin. Money for construction of the rain gardens will come from a \$125,000 Clean Water Act settlement between the SKWC and Snohomish County for the County's allowing construction of a five-acre parking lot at Paine Field without permits or stormwater treatment. More information on the Clean Water Act settlement can be read at <http://www.heraldnet.com/news/illegal-parking-lot-highlights-silt-problems-in-area-streams/>.

Each home owner selected for this special opportunity will be eligible to receive design and engineering services for a rain garden as well as plants and planting help from Farmer Frog and EarthCorps. This will be a turn-key operation for rain garden construction that will help improve the water quality in the Swamp Creek Drainage Basin. This is a one-time offer that will expire when the money is exhausted.

Minimum Requirements:

- 1) Site must be in the Swamp Creek Drainage Basin;
- 2) Site cannot already have some stormwater flow control or water quality treatment;
- 3) Property Owner must commit to maintain and not remove the rain garden; and
- 4) Site must be residential and not a commercial or industrial property.

To learn more about this program and to get an application, go to <http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org/userfiles/file/backyard%20habitat/Rain%20Garden%20Application%20and%20Map.pdf>.

Farmer Frog will review the applications; if they find that your site is a good potential project location, they will conduct a site visit to inspect your property for suitability for rain garden construction. The successful applicants will be chosen in early March, so check it out right away. You can also contact Bill Lider to answer specific questions at Bill@LiderEngineering.com. ✧

TRIP CALENDAR

Check our website at www.pilchuckaudubon.org
for the latest information



Tuesday, February 7

Silvana Roads

Meet at 8:00 AM at Quilceda Village Wal-Mart west of Marysville (I-5-Exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. Pipits, Waterfowl, Shorebirds, Falcons, all the winter LBJs. We may also visit the Nature Conservancy site. Pack a lunch.

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

Sunday, February 12

South Lynnwood Park

Meet at South Lynnwood Park, 20915 61st Avenue West in Lynnwood at 1:30 PM for a family picnic. At about 2:15 PM, after the picnic, we'll explore the park, including the forested trail, looking and listening for birds and other critters. If the weather is nice enough and time allows, we'll walk to the nearby Hall Lake to look for waterfowl. No experience is necessary—you need bring only your curiosity and binoculars, if you have them. We have several pairs of binoculars to lend for the event if you do not have your own. For the bird walk, bring: snacks, water, binoculars, and foul weather gear just in case. This is a family event, and children are welcome. Please, no pets.

Trip Leader: Terry Nightingale, [206-619-2383](tel:206-619-2383)
tnight@pobox.com

Tuesday, February 14

Blaine, Birch Bay, Semiahmoo, Drayton Harbor

Meet at 7:00 AM at the Quilceda Village Wal-Mart west of Marysville (I-5-Exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. Expect Harlequin and Long-tailed ducks, Brant, and lots of other sea-going avian species. Pack a lunch.

Trip Leaders: Wilma Bayes, [360-629-2028](tel:360-629-2028); Virginia Clark, [360-435-3750](tel:360-435-3750)

Sunday, February 19

Montlake Fill and Washington Park Arboretum

Meet at 8:30 AM at Everett Mall. Park in the back near L.A. Fitness and the Everett Transit Center. We'll carpool to Husky Stadium in Seattle and wander the Montlake Fill, otherwise known as Union Bay Natural Area. If time allows, we'll also explore the Washington Park Arboretum, a short drive away. These natural areas include many habitats including wetlands, Lake Washington, forested areas, and open grass fields. As a bonus, we'll submit our sightings to the Great Backyard Bird Count, which takes place that weekend. No bird-watching experience is necessary—you need bring only your curiosity and binoculars, if you have them. After the bird walk, we'll have an optional lunch at a nearby eatery. For the bird walk, bring snacks, water, binoculars, and foul weather gear, just in case. We'll expect to be back to our carpool spot by mid-afternoon.

Edmonds Wildlife Habitat Native Plant Demonstration Garden 2017

Early in January, planning started for activities at the Demo Garden. The first workshop—on the Great Backyard Bird Count—will be February 11, 10:00 a.m. to noon, with PAS member Alan Mearns. Once again, Alan will explain the purpose of the count and how to participate, and he will also provide information and training on backyard bird identification. Everyone is welcome to attend this workshop, particularly first-time participants or beginning birders.

The February Work Party will be held on February 11 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and, like all work parties, everyone can help and learn new skills and native plant identification.

The Native Plant and Wildlife Sketchers group with Nancy Moore and April Richardson will continue meeting monthly (check out Facebook, Edmonds Wildlife Habitat Native Plant Demonstration Garden, for date, time, and location).

Workshops, work parties, and other activities will be held throughout the year and will be posted on the PAS website calendar. ✧

Trip Leader: Terry Nightingale, [206-619-2383](tel:206-619-2383)
tnight@pobox.com

Tuesday, February 21

Snoqualmie River Valley Monroe to Carnation

Meet at 8:00 AM at Monroe Park & Ride on Highway 2, one-half mile west of the Fairgrounds. Expect a fun time and exciting birds. Pack a lunch.

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

Tuesday, February 28

Port Townsend

Meet at 7:10 AM at the Edmonds Wade James Theater parking lot. The theater's address is 950 Main St., Edmonds, 98020, just east of 9th Ave. on the south side of Main St. We'll take the ferry to Kingston, go through Port Gamble, and across the floating bridge. On the way, we'll visit Marrowstone Island and Indian Island, with views of Admiralty Inlet, waterfowl, shorebirds, and seabirds. Previous year's trips have been memorable and rewarding. Pack a lunch.

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

Saturday, March 25

Woodland Park Zoo

Those who want to carpool meet at 9:00 AM at Everett Mall. Park in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. Those who don't need to carpool, meet us at the Zoo south entrance at 9:45 AM, 750 N. 50th St, Seattle, WA 98103. The meeting time at the Mall is half an hour later than usual because of when the park opens in the morning. Admission plus parking \$19.75. Carpooling strongly encouraged. For our traditional late lunch gathering, we may find a café within walking distance in the neighborhood due to parking issues.

Trip Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425-244-7633,
aracfi@msn.com ✧

Report: Family Picnic and Birdwalk to Jennings Park

By Jonathan Blubaugh

On November 13, twenty birders—a mix of young kids, their parents, and PAS members—gathered at Jennings Park in Marysville for a family picnic and birdwalk. The outing was organized by Rosamaría Graziani, who has been working with PAS in bringing meaningful outdoor activities to kids in Snohomish County who might not otherwise have the opportunity. Especial thanks goes to PAS Executive Director Kristin Kelly for coordinating with Rosamaría so that we could begin arranging this series of outings for Academia Latina.

The weather was predictably dismal for Western Washington in November, but I knew that Jennings Park has a couple of picnic shelters where the kids could hang out whilst waiting for a gap in the showers. So after our little picnic we decided it wasn't raining very much by our standards and the kids, appropriately bundled up, set out to explore the park. We started off at the top at a little demonstration garden. Maybe it was my imagination, but a bed of fuchsias there all seemed to be in bloom even though we were deep into Autumn. We found an Anna's Hummingbird, so maybe I wasn't the only one hallucinating. After looking through the garden, we scouted a bit and found a trail that went downslope to the creek. There is a wooden floating bridge across the creek and marsh that tends to sway pleasantly with twenty people coming and going. Shortly, the trail leads up the other side through some woodlands. This is where I got my biggest thrill.

There were kinglets down low that many of the kids saw. The kinglets are often easier to view after the leaves have fallen, and they tend to move down from their typical crown foraging areas. Also in this mixed flock we found chickadees and a sapsucker, and we heard a couple of other woodpeckers. The thrill came when a cooperative Brown Creeper appeared: most of the kids saw the great camouflaged back, white belly, and de-curved bill. One of the girls even shot a selfie of it with her (ever-present) smart phone! It's the first time I know of that any of the kids had gotten a shot off at one of our quarry. She has been to several of our trips so it shows the kids are really getting into it. I find this deeply gratifying. The photo was a bit blurry, but I can't do any better shooting a bird with my smart phone.

We don't always see too many birds on these siesta time picnic outings, but the students and their parents truly enjoy it. They have seen some great birds, and Rosamaría has been working diligently with us to teach them the names of the most common native trees and other plants. When we get a good look at a bird, we try to show them its picture from a guidebook app.

I also want to thank PAS President Cindy Easterson for her strong support of our project as well as all the PAS volunteers who keep helping out.

Here's a list of most of the birds were tallied: 23 Glaucous-winged Gull, the Anna's Hummingbird, the Red-breasted Sapsucker, seven crows, a Black-capped Chickadee, five Chestnut-backed Chickadee, the Brown Creeper, two

UPCOMING EVENTS, CLASSES, and FESTIVALS *farther afield*

Compiled by Rick Brauer

Lecture: February 15 Bellingham, WA
Deepwater Horizon Disaster: Effects of the Oil Spill on Local People and Wildlife

A special presentation by Melanie Driscoll, a Director of Bird Conservation at National Audubon. Her talk will focus on the oil spill's effects on people and wildlife, prevention efforts, and her thoughts about the particular risks facing Native Americans and others living by the Salish Sea in the event of an oil spill.

<http://www.northcascadesaudubon.org/event/deepwater-horizon-disaster-effects-of-the-oil-spill-on-the-local-people-and-wildlife/>

Winter Wings Festival Feb 16-19 Klamath Falls, OR

The Klamath Basin is renowned for its winter raptors and its stunning abundance and diversity of waterfowl. In 2017 the festival will feature Scott Weidensaul, Chas Glatzer, and Paul Bannick. <http://winterwingsfest.org/>

San Diego Bird Festival Feb 23-26 San Diego, CA

As if their weather in February isn't enough to convince you to visit, San Diego puts on one of the premier bird festivals in the country. This year, Kenn & Kimberly Kaufmann are the featured guests. <http://www.sandiegoaudubon.org/events/bird-festival>

Whooping Crane Festival Feb 23-28 Port Aransas, TX

Promising the opportunity to see these rare birds up close is the hook for this coastal Texas festival.

<http://www.whoopingcranefestival.org>.

Class: Feb 25 Skagit Valley, WA

Winter Visitors: Birding the Skagit Delta

Join Libby Mills for a field excursion designed to celebrate one of the Northwest's natural treasures. The class will survey the area's bird life, with a focus on raptors, wintering waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as the relationships that bring these various species together in this particular place.

12th Annual Feb 25-26 Stanwood, WA

Port Susan Snow Goose and Birding Festival

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

Class: March 2 Seattle + Edmonds, WA

How to Identify the Sea Birds of Puget Sound

Taught by Joe Sweeney, in this class you will discover how to separate a Rhinoceros Auklet from a Pigeon Guillemot, a Horned Grebe from a Red-necked Grebe, and a Common Loon from a Pacific Loon. He will also discuss cormorants, and diving ducks, including mergansers, scoters, and goldeneye.

<http://www.seattleaudubon.org/sas/GetInvolved/Classes/ClassSchedule.aspx> ✧

Golden-crowned Kinglet, and two Ruby-crowned Kinglet. We also heard a Downey Woodpecker, a Northern Flicker, a Bushtit, and a Bewick's Wren. All were uploaded to eBird via the mobile app.

✧

City of Monroe Dedicates New Art Sculpture in Celebration of “Wagner Swifts”

By Cynthia Easterson, PAS President

A dedicated group of supporter and enthusiasts gathered at the corner of Main Street and Lewis Street to give a cheery welcome (albeit a cold one at 23 degrees!) to the new art installation in downtown Monroe, Washington. Artist and sculptor Kevin Pettelle conceived of the idea for a swirling mass of Vaux’s Swifts above a scaled replica of the Wagner chimney as a fitting showpiece for the center of the newly remodeled downtown Monroe.

His concept design was chosen through a competitive process by an Art Selection Committee which included representatives from the Monroe Arts Council, Monroe Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Monroe Association, Monroe Planning Commission, Monroe Park Board, Monroe City Council and Monroe City Staff.

Kevin collaborated with Vaux’s Swift expert, Larry Schwitters to make sure every detail of these beloved birds was just right. Hats off to the City of Monroe for supporting the arts and nature in such a lasting and meaningful way. ✧



Kevin Pettelle, sculptor (L), and Larry Schwitters (R) in front of the replica of the Wagner chimney with the Vaux’s Swifts descending into the chimney for the night.

BACKYARD BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS

November 26 to December 25, 2016

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

This is going to be a short report this month as I have only three Birds Sightings reports to enter.

As usual, I will start with Carole and Larry Beason’s report from Lake Bosworth. Their total species count of 39 included 4 Anna’s Hummingbird, a Bald Eagle over the road, 15 Bufflehead, 12 Common Merganser, 31 Canada Goose and 6 Double-crested Cormorant on the lake, 50 Dark-eyed Junco along the road and in the shrubs, 3 Golden-crowned Sparrows, a Great Blue Heron on the deck, a Great-horned Owl, 6 Hooded Mergansers, and 12 Mallard Ducks on the lake, 3 Pine Siskins in the hanging pots, 9 Purple Finch, 16 Red-winged Blackbirds, 6 Ring-necked Ducks and 12+ Varied Thrush along the road and in the bushes.

Hilkka Egtvedt’s report from Mukilteo listed a Sharp-shinned Hawk, 8 California Quail, 2 Pileated Woodpecker, 4 Steller’s Jay, 4 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 2 Black-capped

Chickadee, 6 American Crow, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, 16 Dark-eyed Junco, 7 European Starling, a Bewick’s Wren, a Song Sparrow, 9 House Finch, 2 White-crowned Sparrow, and 2 Anna’s Hummingbird, for a total species count of 22.

I had 5 Bushtit hanging out on the feeders for the first time. I have seen them in the trees, but never on the feeders. My total species count of 22 from my home in Marysville included 50+ American Crow in the fields along 100th Street, 6 Black-capped Chickadee, 7 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 25 Dark-eyed Junco, 10 Mourning Dove, 25+ Rock Dove on the wires, 5 Spotted Towhee, 6 Steller’s Jay, 22 Canada Goose at Twin Lakes, 2 Trumpeter Swan flying over, 1 Varied Thrush, and 1 Pileated Woodpecker.

If you are interested in participating in our bird sightings, please email me at pricemara1@gmail.com or leave a message on my cell at (425) 750-8125. ✧

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

A Tribute to Marge Wiltfong
by Susie Schaefer

We lost my old PAS friend, Marge Wiltfong, on Sunday, January 22, 2017.

I met Marge at one of the first PAS field trips I went on in 1980 and, after that, spent a lot of time birding with Marge all over Washington and Oregon (including a couple of very memorable trips to Malheur in the early '80s). Marge always helped on Christmas Bird Counts throughout the '80s and early '90s, and we had lots of fun and counted a lot of birds together.

Marge's health problems curtailed her birding activities after 2000, but some of us old time PASers continued to see her after she moved out to Port Susan and later to Warm Beach. And we know that long-time friendships are one of the best rewards of birding. I certainly will miss Marge, and I know others will, too. Thanks for being such a great birding pal! ✧