

## Come to Stanwood for July program meeting

Pilchuck Audubon's July program meeting will take place at the Stanwood Library meeting room on Friday, July 8, beginning at 7 p.m.



*Lois Ruskell, Information and Education Coordinator for the Snohomish Conservation District, will be July's featured speaker.*

The featured speaker will be Lois Ruskell, Information and Education Coordinator for the Snohomish Conservation District. The title of her presentation is "What your conservation district does for you."

The Snohomish Conservation District is a political sub-division of state government that's been working with farmers and land-owners since 1941. The mission

of the organization is to work cooperatively with others to promote and encourage conservation and responsible use of natural resources. District programs include classes and workshops, engineering assistance, farm planning and more!

Lois has been with the district since 1989. She started as a dairy technician and planner and now coordinates the district publications, web site, media information and workshops. She manages the youth program which includes Envirothon, Natural Resources Youth Camp and the annual plant sale. She received the State WACD Employee of the Year award in 1998 and the Northwest Area Employee of the Year award in 2007. She has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Industry from Arizona State University and is a graduate of the AgForestry Leadership program. She toured China with the Agforestry class in January, 2009.

Everyone is welcome to attend. So, please pass the invitation along to all your friends, family and birding friends in the north county. We hope the program meeting in this special location will encourage lots of new folks to attend.

The Stanwood Library is located at 9701 271st Street NW, Stanwood.

## Follow Pilchuck Audubon on Facebook and Twitter

If you have a Facebook account, please search for Pilchuck Audubon and "like" our page. If you're active on Twitter, follow us at @pilchuckaudubon.

We'll use Facebook and Twitter to provide program, field trip and other important updates.

**July program meeting  
Friday, July 8, 7 p.m.**

### ***What your conservation district does for you***

Join Lois Ruskell, Information and Education Coordinator for the Snohomish Conservation District, and learn more about what this important organization does for all of us!

#### **Special location – July only!**

Stanwood Library meeting room  
9701 271st Street NW, Stanwood

**For more information, call 425.252.0926**

**Watch [www.pilchuckaudubon.org](http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org) for the most up-to-date information.**

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## **Local merchants donate Birdathon prizes**

Results for this year's Birdathon aren't available quite yet. But, we wanted to take this opportunity to recognize the local merchants who, year after year, donate prizes for Birdathon participants. Please consider supporting these businesses as you go about your daily life. And, thank them for their continued support and generosity. This year's sponsors include the Everett Fred Meyer, QFC in Mukilteo, Wild Bird Nest in Lynnwood and the Everett and Lake Forest Park Wild Birds Unlimited stores. Thank you!

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# President's message

By Mike Blackbird, President, Pilchuck Audubon Society



The other day – a rainy day, if I remember correctly – I was vegging on the couch in the bonus room, flipping through the TV channels with the remote. (I admit it. I watch TV.) I chanced on an old James Stewart movie, *Mr.*

*Hobbs Takes a Vacation*. It must have been 1962, the year the movie was released, when I last saw it.

Without going into plot detail, suffice it to say that Mr. Hobbs has to go on a boring bird-watching jaunt. The bird watching character is dressed in tropical khaki and a pith helmet to emphasize he's a nerd, a popular perception of bird watchers.

Watching that movie's bird watching segment also called to mind Wally Cox, the slight, bespectacled actor who died a few years back. Wally Cox was the head of the bird-watching club that Jane Hathaway (played by Nancy Kulp) belonged to on *The Beverly Hillbillies*. He wore a Smokey Bear hat with a little Boy Scout uniform.

In the almost 40 years I've been a bird watcher, I've never worn a pith helmet, a Smokey Bear hat, or dressed in a Boy Scout uniform. Nor have I ever seen a fellow birder so attired. So I was pleased when recently I came across a blog titled, *Two Fisted Birdwatcher*, which wholeheartedly describes my perception of being a birder.

*two-fist-ed* – (tü-'fis-ted), adjective: marked by vigorous often virile energy. As in *two-fisted journalism*.

*A man holds a pair of binoculars, one hand wrapped around each side. His fingers are curled like fists, and they come*

*together making a strong symbolic statement. You're looking at a two-fisted bird watcher, buddy.*

*Birders were once portrayed as ladies in tweed and guys who looked like bookish nerds. But tough men and women are birding and they're not tweedy or nerdy. They're Army Rangers on patrol.*

*They stalk wild animals: Spring migrants that were in a South American jungle a month ago. Or winter visitors that crossed the Canadian tundra to get here.*

*Bobcats and bears are cool, and we see a few. But, birds come in wild varieties, and spotting them is a physical and mental challenge: a two-fisted sport.*

*You just can't hold a pair of binoculars up to your eyes without putting up your dukes. The two-fisted bird watcher is here. Maybe, the two-fisted bird watcher is you.*

So, perhaps I am a two-fisted bird watcher. But, I also like to think I'm a SNAG (sensitive new-age guy). Just ask Florence.

## Meetings open to all

The PAS board meets the first Tuesday of each month, at 6 p.m., at the Sno-Isle Coop meeting room (2804 Grand Ave., Everett). All are welcome to attend to learn about chapter goals and priorities. For more info, contact Kathleen Snyder at 425.438.1505.

## 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 annette.colombini@pilchuckaudubon.org or mail to 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198, Snohomish, WA 98290. Submissions must be received by the fifth of the month preceding publication. We reserve the right to edit.

**To contact Pilchuck Audubon Society, call 425.252.0926.**

The *Profile* is available at [www.pilchuckaudubon.org](http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org)



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Newsletter Editor	Annette Colombini.....	425.501.8125
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### Staff

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# Trip calendar

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

## Tuesday, July 5

### Stevens Pass

Meet at 7 a.m. at the Monroe Park and Ride on Highway 2, one-half mile west of the fairgrounds. Trying for summer birding success at higher altitudes. Will visit The Old Cascades Highway, Smithbrook Road and maybe the ski slopes. Warblers, grouse, sparrows, flycatchers, ravens, nutcrackers, chipmunk and hare. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

## Tuesday, July 12

### Snohomish and Ebey Island

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Snohomish Park and Ride, located at the junction of Highway 9 and Bickford Ave. Enjoyable and relaxed trip. We will take a short walk on the dike along Ebey Slough. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Art Wait, 360.563.0181, Virginia Clark will advise

## Sunday, July 17

### Ross Lake NRA (Diablo Lake), Thunder Knob Trail

Meet at 8 a.m. at Everett Mall – in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. This hike is 3.6 miles round trip and is not a loop. There's a 425-foot elevation gain. Described as "moderately easy." Sounds perfect for kids. Great views of the reservoirs and surrounding peaks. Visits forest clearings and a pond. Goes over creek beds and terrain recently rearranged by Mother Nature during massive floods from 2003-06. Free. Pack a lunch. We may also stop on the way home for dinner.

Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425.244.7633, [aracfi@msn.com](mailto:aracfi@msn.com)

## July 19 Blue Stilly Park, Virginia's neighborhood

Meet at 8 a.m. at the 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. Virginia will show us her neighborhood, including her feeders. No need to pack a lunch, for Virginia will provide at her place.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

## Tuesday, July 26

### Mount Baker Highway

Meet at 7 a.m. at the 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. Golden Eagle, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, Ptarmigan, swifts, pipits, larks and numerous mammals are possible. Expect wildflowers and adventure. Pack a lunch.

Leaders: Art Wait, 360.563.0181, Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

## Sunday, August 21

### Mt. Rainier NP (Ohanapecosh), Silver Falls Loop Trail

Meet at 8 a.m. at Everett Mall – in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. Six-mile loop along the Ohanapecosh River near the park's Stevens Canyon Entrance. The falls are 75-feet high. National Park entrance fee \$15 or Golden Eagle Pass. Pack a lunch. We may also stop on the way home for dinner.

Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425.244.7633, [aracfi@msn.com](mailto:aracfi@msn.com)

*Notice to field trip participants: Field trips are open to members and non-members alike. No advance notice required unless otherwise stated in the trip description. Trips go, rain or shine. However, in case of snow or ice, contact trip leader! Bring a sack lunch, beverage, binoculars, scope and field guide if you have them. If not, we'll share. Please, no perfume or cologne. Be prepared to share gas money with carpool drivers. Pets, even leashed, are prohibited on field trips. Please leave them at home.*

## Laura Spehar named citizen of the year

Our own Laura Spehar was recently named Citizen of the Year by the Edmonds Kiwanis Club and the *Edmonds Beacon*. Laura does a tremendous amount of work in the community and this award is well deserved. Congratulations, Laura!

# Bring friends, family to PAS picnic August 14

Pilchuck Audubon's annual picnic is scheduled for Sunday, August 14, at Langus Riverfront Park in Everett. Come along, relax, eat and enjoy the company of your fellow PAS members.

We're planning a truly fantastic day full of activities for the whole family.

At 10 a.m., Terri Wentworth-Davis (formerly Terri Spencer), environmental educator, past PAS Education Committee chair and long-time PAS member, will lead a bird and nature hike for the kids.

At the same time, there'll be a birding competition between teams of PAS members and guests. August isn't the greatest month for birding, so this will really be a challenge!

At 10 a.m., we'll form teams (balanced with beginning, intermediate and expert birders). At 10:30, teams will set off and have until noon to find as many bird species as possible. The winning team gets oodles of Virginia Clark's delicious cookies. Priceless!

To keep things as fair as possible, scopes and electronic

calling devices won't be allowed. But, you can use a vehicle and go wherever you want within the allowed time frame. Members of the team must stay within sight of each other during the competition.

At noon, we'll gather for lunch. PAS will supply hot dogs from Silvana Meats, as well as buns, plates, napkins and utensils. Bring along your favorite salad, side dish or dessert to share. Bring your own beverage (alcohol is not allowed in the park).

After lunch, we'll honor all the folks who volunteer to make Pilchuck Audubon the great organization it is. We'll have a brief acknowledgement by Mike Blackburn, PAS president, and present small tokens of our appreciation.

So, make plans to attend what will be a great event. Feel free to bring guests, especially grandkids. Everyone is welcome.

For more information, contact Kathleen Snyder at 425.438.1505 or [ksnyder75@gmail.com](mailto:ksnyder75@gmail.com).

# Have fun, be entertained and get smarter

## Cascades bird banding camp for adults

August 6-12 **McDaniel Field Station**

The Puget Sound Bird Observatory invites you to learn bird-banding techniques in Washington's Cascade Mountains. Under the guidance of expert trainers, Dan Froehlich and Don Norman, participants will focus on the basics of net placement, bird handling and net extraction, ageing, sexing, molts and plumage. This training follows NABC guidelines, includes six mornings of banding at various locations and six nights of camping at a semi-remote campground in the Naches Ranger District of the Wenatchee National Forest.

For more information, visit [www.pugetsoundbirds.org](http://www.pugetsoundbirds.org) or contact Emily Sprong at [emily@pugetsoundbirds.org](mailto:emily@pugetsoundbirds.org).

## Stilly Festival of the River and Pow Wow

August 12-14 **River Meadows Park, Arlington**

The Stillaguamish Festival of the River is a fun way to celebrate summer – and the environment of the Pacific Northwest. Enjoy great music, food, crafts, wild bird presentations, kids' activities and much, much more.

This year's event will feature a giant storytelling tent, interpretive salmon habitat tours and a salmon barbeque.

For more information, visit [www.festivaloftheriver.com](http://www.festivaloftheriver.com).

## Feast with Friends

Thurs., September 1 **AngelArmsWorks, Snohomish**

The fifth annual Feast with Friends fundraiser is scheduled for Thursday, September 1, 6-9 p.m., at AngelArmsWorks, the home and studio of Snohomish Mayor Karen Guzak and Warner Blake. This fantastic and delicious event raises money for the Smart Growth program. Local farmers donate local products. Local chefs create great food. Local wineries donate great wine. All you do is eat, drink and enjoy!

AngelArmsWorks is located at 230 B Street, Snohomish.

For more information, visit [www.futurewise.org](http://www.futurewise.org) or contact Kristin Kelly at [Kristin@futurewise.org](mailto:Kristin@futurewise.org).

## Livable Snohomish County Summit and candidate forum

Saturday, October 29 **PUD building, Everett**

Plans are in the works. Watch future issues of *The Profile* for more information about this free event.

To volunteer at the event, contact Kristy Kelly at [kristin@futurewise.org](mailto:kristin@futurewise.org).

## *Please join us for* **A Feast with Friends**

**Thursday, September 1, 6-9 p.m.**  
**AngelArmsWorks in Snohomish**

Celebrate Washington's diverse food culture and the people who make it possible – local food producers, winemakers and guest chefs. Our guest chefs will use local ingredients to create delectable bites complemented by regional wine pairings. From the field to your plate, you'll taste the difference that supporting local farms makes.

You can even vote for your favorite top chef!

**\$50 per person, general admission**

### **Sponsorship levels**

- \$100 Individual Host (1 ticket)
- \$250 Chef's Choice Sponsor (2 tickets)
- \$500 Tasting Sponsor (4 tickets)
- \$1000 Culinary Sponsor (6 tickets)
- \$2500 Gourmet Benefactor (8 tickets)\*

RSVP to Kristin Kelly: [kristin@futurewise.org](mailto:kristin@futurewise.org) or 425.923.8625

\*All sponsorship levels include on-site signage, recognition at the event, on PAS and Futurewise web sites and in both newsletters.

AngelArmsWorks is located at 230 Avenue B, Snohomish.

## **Don't miss the American Alps Challenge!**

**Saturday, September 24**  
**North Cascades Highway**



*After plunging down from the mountains, the American Alps Challenge winds its way through the Skagit Valley to Marblemount. Photo by Jim Scarborough.*

The American Alps Challenge is a cross-North Cascades relay race (bike, run, kayak and bike), plus multiple family nature events. Check out the Challenge at [www.americanalps.org](http://www.americanalps.org).

***Be a part of the Challenge. Learn more about what the North Cascades has to offer. Help protect this incredible wild place.***

# Hikers and bug snatchers love Spencer Island

By Terry Nightingale

On May 15, five stalwart birders ventured out into the driving rain to visit Spencer Island, situated near the Everett wastewater treatment plant adjacent to I-5 between Everett and Marysville. Almost immediately after leaving our cars, we saw flashes of yellow and were rewarded with close-up looks of Western Tanagers in the trees lining the gravel road to the park. Not much further down the trail, we caught sight of Cinnamon Teal and Blue-winged Teal in one of the nearby ponds. We started to get the feeling that no matter the weather, this was going to be a good day.

The recurring theme for this day of birding was swallows (aka, "bug snatchers"). Hundreds of them. They swooped and swarmed above the nearby ponds and the expansive tide flats, hunting what must have been an invisible army of flying insects. As we crossed the bridge to the island, and made our way along the "out and back" trail toward the northern tip of the island (since the loop trails are washed out), we spotted Northern Rough-winged Swallows, Violet-green Swallows, Barn Swallows, Cliff Swallows and Tree Swallows. We seemed to be amongst the swarm for most of our walk, leading a couple of birders to wonder whether the swallows had been following us to feed on the bugs we stirred up on our journey.

I'm happy to report that the intense rain didn't last long, and a (much more tolerable) light sprinkle settled over us for most of the walk. Several species of warblers made it clear they'd arrived in their breeding grounds. We heard the songs of an Orange-crowned Warbler and a Yellow Warbler, caught sight of Yellow-rumped Warblers. And, thanks to one of our birders who knew his warbler songs, we heard and then confirmed by sight two Wilson's Warblers, with nice looks at the black crown.

Another highlight of the trip was a group of five Yellow-headed Blackbirds, perched in tall trees to the west of the



Northern Rough-winged Swallow,  
by Annette Colombini



Barn Swallow, by Annette Colombini

island. These were lifers for two of us – and very exciting. If you're thinking this sounds like great habitat for raptors, you're right! We counted two Ospreys, two Bald Eagles and a Peregrine Falcon. The prize for the best non-bird of the day went to the large yellow Frisbee bird we witnessed repeatedly flying over some nearby hedges, accompanied by the barking of dogs. While not something we can check off our life lists, the Frisbee bird did draw our attention to another Western Tanager, perched in a distant tree, which led us to muse about whether we would have noticed any less-brilliantly colored bird at such a distance.

Heading back toward the cars, we learned that the small ponds near the bridge held a few more surprises: 26 Gadwall took flight as we approached, and we noticed three Wood Ducks swimming about. A wet, but very productive birding day.

Here's what we came up with for birds: a Canada Goose, 3 Wood Ducks, 26 Gadwall, 11 Mallards, 3 Blue-winged Teal, 3 Cinnamon Teal, 2 Great Blue Herons, 2 Ospreys, 2 Bald Eagles, a Peregrine Falcon, 2 Killdeer, a Spotted Sandpiper, 3 Glaucous-winged Gulls, a Belted Kingfisher, an Empidonax species (perhaps a Willow Flycatcher?), an American Crow, 5 Northern Rough-winged Swallows, 150 Tree Swallows, 10 Violet-green Swallows, 5 Barn Swallows, 20 Cliff Swallows, a Black-capped Chickadee, a Bewick's Wren,

a Pacific Wren, 2 Marsh Wrens, a Swainson's Thrush, 2 American Robins, a Cedar Waxwing, an Orange-crowned Warbler, a Yellow Warbler, 3 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 2 Common Yellowthroats, 2 Wilson's Warblers, a Spotted Towhee, 2 Song Sparrows, a Dark-eyed Junco, 3 Western Tanagers, 10 Red-winged Blackbirds, 5 Yellow-headed Blackbirds, 2 Brown-headed Cowbirds, a House Finch and 6 American Goldfinches.

## You'll need a Discover Pass starting July 1

Don't forget: the Discover Pass will be required as of July 1 for vehicle access to recreation lands and water-access sites managed by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The pass – on sale now – costs \$30 a year per vehicle or \$10 for a day-use pass. State recreation lands include state parks, boat launches, campgrounds, heritage sites, wildlife and natural areas, trails and trailheads. Holders of certain types of fishing and hunting licenses, registered campers in

state parks and other users are exempt from some Discover Pass requirements. Visit [www.discoverpass.wa.gov](http://www.discoverpass.wa.gov) for more information.

The Discover Pass can be purchased at nearly 600 sporting goods or other retail stores that sell hunting and fishing licenses. It's also available for purchase online or by calling toll free 1.866.320.9933. Beginning next fall, the public will be able to purchase a pass when renewing a vehicle license through the Washington State Department of Licensing. The Discover Pass or day-use pass must be visibly displayed in the front windshield of any motor vehicle.

# Tricolored Blackbird colonies protected

Through negotiated agreements with farmers in Central California and Riverside County, Audubon California secured the safety of several large colonies of rare Tricolored Blackbirds. In all, the agreements resulted in the protection of the breeding production of at least 50,000 birds, which constitutes more than 10 percent of the species' global population.

"More than 95 percent of the world's Tricolored Blackbirds live in California, so we have a special responsibility to protect them," said Graham Chisholm, executive director of Audubon California. "This shows what private landowners can do to help a declining species and make a big conservation impact. Their willingness to help has been inspiring."

In the early 20th century, Tricolored Blackbird flocks numbered in the millions, but since then the population has declined to fewer than 400,000 today. The reasons for this decline are many, but the loss of wetlands and grasslands in southern California and the Central Valley is the main issue.

With the loss of native habitat, the species has become dependent on agricultural lands, with most of the largest colonies nesting in grain fields. Because Tricolored Blackbirds nest in just a few huge colonies, a farmer harvesting a field unknowingly might wipe out a huge portion of the entire species' young in just a few minutes. Audubon California negoti-



*Tricolored Blackbird, by Jerry Ting*

ates with farmers to delay the harvesting of these fields, compensating the farmers for the loss of value of their crops that might result from the delay.

This spring, Audubon California sealed three such agreements. The organization also paid another farm near a colony for grain to feed one of the protected colonies, so that the birds wouldn't reduce the value of neighboring crops. Lastly, Audubon California also negotiated an agreement with a Kern County duck club to water its marsh habitat during the spring, which helped to support a 5,000-bird breeding colony.

While Audubon California has facilitated the agreements, most of the funding has through the California Department of Fish and Game. In one instance, however, Audubon California used revenue from a special fundraising campaign to save a particularly valuable colony in Riverside County. Revenue from Audubon

California's online 5 dollars/5 birds Campaign went to pay a farmer in Riverside County to delay cutting a 30-acre field holding 4,000 birds. This colony represents more than 70 percent of Tricolored Blackbirds in Southern California, where the population has been plummeting in recent years.

"I want to thank everyone who took action to help us work with farmers to save Tricolored Blackbird nests," said Chisholm. "It's simple steps that made a big difference."

# Common Birds in Decline list released

Audubon's unprecedented analysis of 40 years of citizen-science bird population data from our Christmas Bird Counts, plus the Breeding Bird Survey reveals alarming declines for many common birds.

The birds on the Common Birds in Decline list include American Bittern, Black-throated Sparrow, Boreal Chickadee, Common Grackle, Common Tern, Eastern Meadowlark, Evening Grosbeak, Field Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Greater Scaup, Horned Lark, Lark Sparrow, Little Blue Heron, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Bobwhite, Northern Pintail, Ruffed Grouse, Rufous Hummingbird, Snow Bunting and Whip-poor-will. All 20 species lost at least half their populations in just four decades.

The findings point to growing impact from the many environmental challenges our birds face, from habitat loss from development, deforestation and conversion of land to agriculture, to climate change. Only citizen action can make a difference for the birds and the state of our future.

The wide variety of birds affected is reason for concern. Populations of meadowlarks and other grassland birds are diving because of suburban sprawl, industrial development and the intensification of farming over the past 50 years.



*Rufous Hummingbird, by Annette Colombini*

Greater Scaup and other tundra-breeding birds are succumbing to dramatic changes to their breeding habitat as the permafrost melts earlier and more temperate predators move north in a likely response to global warming. Boreal forest birds like the Boreal Chickadee face deforestation from increased insect outbreaks and fire, as well as excessive logging, drilling and mining.

One thing these common species all share is the grim potential to become uncommon – unless we take action to protect them and their habitat.

There are many steps we can take to help stop the decline of these – and other – species. Pilchuck Audubon is already taking action by promoting the Christmas Bird Count, the Great Backyard Bird Count and the Port Susan Important Bird Area. Please get involved!

And, at home, you can also help by combatting invasive plant species, volunteering to restore native habitat, planting native plants in your own yard and foregoing the use of pesticides in your yard.

For more info, visit <http://birds.audubon.org/what-you-can-do-birds>.

# Birding highlights

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

There are some really exciting bird sightings to report this month. A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** and a couple of **Western Bluebirds** were seen near Frontier Airpark between Marysville and Granite Falls. Also, a **Water Pipit** and **Lazuli Bunting** were reported by the Beasons at Lake Bosworth. If May was this good – even with the crummy weather we had – I can't wait to see what June will bring.

From Lake Bosworth, Carole and Larry Beason also listed 6 **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, 4 **Brewer's Blackbirds**, 20 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, 21 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 5 **Golden-crowned Sparrows**, a **Hutton's Vireo**, 17 **Tree Swallows**, a **Turkey Vulture**, 2 **Wilson's Warblers**, 2 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and, unfortunately, 3 **Brown-headed Cowbirds** for a species count of 49.

John Davis also had a total species count of 49 from his walks through Forest Park. He saw the usual chickadees and woodpeckers, along with a **Barred Owl**, a **Black-throated Gray Warbler**, 2 **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, 3 **Hermit Thrushes**, 2 **Orange-crowned Warblers**, 4 **Pacific Wrens**, a **Pacific-slope Flycatcher**, a **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, a **Swainson's Thrush**, 3 **Violet-green Swallows**, 3 **Western Tanagers**, 8 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and a **Warbling Vireo**.

Annette Colombini heard a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** at her Lake Stevens home. She also reported a **Swainson's Thrush**, 2 **American Goldfinches**, 5 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 7 **American Crows**, 3 **American Robins**, a **Northern Flicker**, 4 **Black-capped Chickadees**, 2 **Spotted Towhees**, 2 **Pine Siskins**, 4 **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, a **Brown Creeper** and a **Rufous Hummingbird** for a total species count of 14.

Gail Dibernardo listed a Vireo species in her Brier yard. She also listed interesting species such as a **Killdeer**, a **Turkey Vulture**, a **Northern Harrier**, 5 **Violet-green Swallows**, 4 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 2 **Wilson's Warblers**, a **Great Blue Heron**, 6 **California Quail** and 15 **Dark-eyed**



Rose-breasted Grosbeak, by Melanie Liu



Killdeer, by Don Metzner



Brown-headed cowbird, by Paul Kusmin

April 26, 2011-May 25, 2011

**Juncos** (parents feeding the juveniles) for a total species count of 27.

Hilkka Egtvedt got her report in early because she participates in the Birdathon every year. Her species count of 30 from her Mukilteo home included 3 **American Goldfinches**, 7 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, a **Bewick's Wren**, 3 more **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, 8 **Golden-crowned Sparrows**, 14 **Pine Siskins**, 4 **Red Crossbills**, a **Varied Thrush**, 2 **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, a **Western Tanager** and a **Pileated Woodpecker**.

It must really be nice to have **Wood Ducks** in your yard. They're so beautiful! Kriss Erickson reported 5 in her Everett yard, along with 3 **Mallards**, 2 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, 6 **Western Gulls**, 3 **Steller's Jays**, 4 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, a **White-crowned Sparrow**, 2 **Anna's Hummingbirds** and 30 **Bushtits** for a species count of 19.

Adeline Gildow submitted her report from her Camano Island home, along with a list of bird species spotted in Hawaii in April. Her species count of 33 from home included 11 **American Goldfinches**, 4 **Bald Eagles**, 8 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 3 **Great Blue Herons**, 4 **Eurasian Collared Doves**, 2 **Western Tanagers**, 2 **Killdeer**, a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** and 2 **Ospreys**. Her Hawaii count included 2 **Zebra Doves**, 2 **Mourning Doves**, 2 **Northern Cardinals**, 2 **Red-crested Cardinals** and 6 **Cattle Egrets**.

The first **Black-headed Grosbeak** of the season for Julie O'Donald finally arrived at her Brier home on May 11. She also reported 2 **Bewick's Wrens**, 2 **Anna's Hummingbirds**, a **California Quail**, 2 **Pileated Woodpeckers**, a **Pacific Wren**, 2 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, a **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, 2 **White-crowned Sparrows** and 2 **Wilson's Warblers** for a species count of 25.

Looks like the **Brown-headed Cowbirds** made to Mary Sinker's place in Stanwood.

(See "Sightings" on page 9)

# Smart Growth report

By Kristin Kelly, Smart Growth Director

I recently attended a Rail Summit, hosted by Snohomish County and Cascadia Center. It brought together a group of planners, elected officials and transportation proponents to share information and get inspired about how to make our region more sustainable through transportation options other than driving a car. It was a great conference – very inspiring – but one thing was not discussed: the proposed Gateway Pacific Coal Terminal in Bellingham.

Two attorneys approached me at the summit: Barbara Dykes (former Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney on land use and former hearing examiner) and Tom Ehrlichman (former attorney who represented the development community, but who told me he's "seen the light"). They filled me in on what's going on with this coal terminal. Not only could this project impact our rail system, it could also impact our air and water quality.

Although this is all the buzz in Whatcom County, I'd heard little about it until recently. Here's what I've learned in a short period of time.

This coal terminal would be located in Cherry Point near Bellingham to aide the biggest coal company in the world, Peabody Energy. Peabody, based in St. Louis, signed an agreement with the biggest port logistics company in the world, Seattle-based SSA Marine, to build a coal export terminal, called Gateway Pacific Terminal. The terminal could ship up to 54 million tons of coal to Asian markets. Another such effort stalled out in Longview, when permits were denied and environmental assessments were not forthcoming.

In Bellingham, environmental advocates and other citizens have come out en masse at public meetings to oppose this coal terminal. In April, more than 350 people attended a debate between pro-coal and anti-coal advocates. The pro-coal camp argues that the terminals will provide up to 280 permanent longshore jobs.

The anti-coal terminal advocates argue that the increase in rail traffic will be detrimental for the local communities and towns and that coal, in general, causes adverse effects on public health and the global climate.

During an event in May, more than 250 people packed a local high school to speak to the Bellingham mayor, who had his own forum which brought out 300 community members opposed to the terminal.

I hear now the mayor is opposed to the coal terminal. Here's a link to an article from the *Bellingham Herald*: [www.bellinghamherald.com/2011/03/01/1891340/gateway-pacific-terminal-at-cherry.html](http://www.bellinghamherald.com/2011/03/01/1891340/gateway-pacific-terminal-at-cherry.html).

Apparently, SSA Marine and Peabody, using the jobs argument, have labor and state and local politicians on their side. But it appears the opposition is growing, and for good reason.

Barbara and Tom now have their own consulting business called Salish Land Policy Consultants, which promotes informed public policy discourse in the northern counties of Washington. They also represent the opposition to the Gateway Coal Terminal. They've raised many environmental impact questions that apparently have not been assessed.

A summary of their concerns:

The mining, transport and shipping of coal to China for use

in coal-fired power plants will create emissions in quantities that can be calculated, based on the quantities shipped. Studies demonstrate that emissions from China will travel to North America. For example, one study estimates an average of 16 percent of the mercury in the environment in North America comes from atmospheric transport of Asian sources.

The proposed transportation of coal from the Powder River Basin to Cherry Point involves impacts that should be regulated by appropriate federal agencies, thus triggering NEPA review of the impacts. These agencies have a duty to review and regulate impacts precluded by the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act and the Rivers and Harbors Act, among other regulations. Rail line transportation impacts are within the scope of review and should be identified as part of the JARPA and iMAP review. Why would the review team allow only a very narrow discussion of rail line transportation impacts? Aren't the impacts of coal transport known along the alternative routes identified for this proposal? Since the routes are known, can't the impacts be identified and quantified?

The current application does not include an analysis of conflicts with local, county and multi-county policies promoting efficient transportation, risk analysis of accident rates and possible spills into Puget Sound, stormwater impacts from coal spills along the route, effects on local National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit compliance, effects of coal dust pollution and coal pollution on Puget Sound Partnership initiative to clean up the Puget Sound by 2020, noise impacts, diesel exhaust impacts from idling trains or impacts from vibration of trains to properties adjacent to railroad tracks (effects of especially heavy coal trains on rail-line wear are well documented).

Other concerns proposed in their comments include impacts from storage of coal on the site, inventory of adopted waterfront development along the route (in reference to one of routes through Snohomish County up the coast to Bellingham) and the possible impacts to economic viability.

To view their complete comment letter, click on this link: [www.communitywisebellingham.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/4-27-2011-Salish-Land-Policy-Solutions.pdf](http://www.communitywisebellingham.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/4-27-2011-Salish-Land-Policy-Solutions.pdf).

Clearly, this is a project that will affect many counties in Washington, and there appear to be many unanswered questions as to the impacts to wildlife and bird habitat, as well as air and water quality.

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## Help wanted for PAS financial review

Interested in a short-term volunteer project to help PAS? Are you not intimidated by numbers and finance? We need someone to do a financial review of PAS accounts for 2010.

This isn't an audit. It's a spot check of random transactions and bank accounts. Margaret Bridge, who took on the project last year, will show you the ropes. The task should take about 6 hours. You'll need a computer and an internet connection.

You'll earn our heartfelt appreciation should you decide to accept this assignment. For more info, please call Carolyn Lacy, Treasurer, at 360.668.2494.

## Non-taxable IRA transfers to eligible charities

Taxpayers older than age 70 years, six months may make tax-free distributions up to \$100,000 to a charity from an IRA. This contribution counts toward the minimum distribution requirement. This is another way you may donate to PAS.

For other contributions or membership renewals, donate on the PAS web site: [www.pilchuckaudubon.org](http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org), then click on "Join/Donate."

Please consult your tax advisor for specific information and tax implications.

## Sightings ...

(continued from page 7)

Her total species count of 38 included 4 **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, 19 **American Robins**, 5 **Barn Swallows**, 9 **Rufous Hummingbirds**, 7 **Song Sparrows**, 12 **American Goldfinches**, 5 **White-crowned Sparrows**, 3 **Western Tanagers**, 5 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 4 **Downy Woodpeckers**, a **Pileated Woodpecker** and 2 **Pacific Wrens**.

Dick Vanderhoff listed a **White-breasted Nuthatch** at his peanut feeder. I thought it might be unusual, but I saw one at the feeder in my yard recently. His total species count of 12 from Stanwood included 2 **Bald Eagles**, 7 **Steller's Jays**, 6 **White-crowned Sparrows**, an **Anna's Hummingbird**, 4 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, a **Red-tailed Hawk**, a **Pileated Woodpecker**, 4 **House Finches**, 2 **American Goldfinches** and 3 **Pacific Wrens**.

I think set a record for myself with 35 species from my home in Marysville. Two more **California Quail** appeared, so now there are 4. My count also included 8 **American Robins**, 2 **Golden-crowned Sparrows**, 3 **Mourning Doves**, 2 **Ringed-necked Ducks** at the pond, a **Pacific Wren** in the woods, a **Barn Owl**, 8 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 2 **Western Tanagers**, 15 **Canada Geese** in the fields, 15 **Tree Swallows** along the wires and 25+ **Mallards** in the field.

Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Please e-mail me at [pricemara@clearwire.net](mailto:pricemara@clearwire.net) or leave a message at 425.750.8125.

## Audubon membership information

Joint membership in National Audubon Society (NAS) and Pilchuck Audubon Society (PAS) includes NAS's quarterly magazine *Audubon* and PAS's *Profile* e-newsletter for one year. Cost is \$20 for an Introductory Membership or \$35 for renewals. When you join National Audubon Society, you automatically become a member of PAS. **All PAS membership dues are tax-deductible.\* The PAS tax ID number is 96-6183664.**

PAS receives only a small portion of your national dues to support the work of the chapter. If you do not want to be a national member or you want your dues to stay local, you can join PAS separately. Local membership in PAS includes a one-year subscription (12 issues) to PAS's *Profile* newsletter. Cost is \$28. A special limited income category is available for \$16.

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- New member ..... \$28
- Renewal ..... \$28
- Lifetime PAS member ..... \$1000
  - 10 monthly payments of \$100
  - 4 quarterly payments of \$250
  - 1 payment of \$1000
- Donation ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to:  
Pilchuck Audubon Society

Mail your check and this form to:  
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1429 Avenue D, PMB 198  
Snohomish, WA 98290

### NAS membership

(includes PAS membership)

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(includes PAS renewal)

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Contact me about volunteer opportunities.

I am interested in the Conservation Committee.

\* Consult your tax professional for full details.