



Pilchuck Audubon Profile



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PAS joins Suiattle River Road lawsuit

By Katherine Johnson, chair, PAS Forest Practices Committee



Evidence of old growth logging along the Suiattle River, by Kevin Geraghty.

In the March issue of *The Profile* was an article about the "Access and Travel Management" planning underway for the Suiattle River basin. You may recall that Pilchuck Audubon Society had questions about the legality of repairs made to the Suiattle River Road (also known

as Forest Road 26) with complete disregard of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal laws.

On April 20, the Western Environmental Law Center filed a lawsuit in the Ninth Circuit Court on behalf of Pilchuck Audubon, North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) and Bill Lider to halt road construction on Suiattle River Road 26, pending a proper environmental review.

The Suiattle River watershed is a sensitive, beautiful and dynamic place. The centerpiece of the watershed – the Suiattle River – is especially unruly: the watershed experiences high rainfall and frequent floods, which cause the river to migrate in its floodplain – sometimes significantly. When the river meanders, it often washes out segments of the Suiattle River Road, which is located directly adjacent to the river.

In October 2003, record rainfall produced some of the most severe storm damage seen on Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie (MBS) National Forest lands in many years. During a 24-hour period, more than six inches of rain fell in the forest lowlands and up to 10 inches in the higher elevation areas. At the Sauk River gauge – fed by the Suiattle River – 106,000 cubic feet/second (CFS) of water flowed through the river system, which was – and remains – the highest flow on record. For comparison, Niagara Falls averages 100,000 CFS.

The October 2003 floods washed out several sections of the Suiattle River Road. Subsequent storms – in 2006 and 2007 – washed out additional portions of the road, which was closed to public vehicular access at MP 12.6. It remains closed today.

Rather than concede Forest Road 26 to the Suiattle River, the Forest Service, Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) and Western Forest Lands Highway Division – all federal agencies – embarked on an ill-conceived project to reconstruct the Suiattle River Road at a cost of millions of dollars to the American taxpayer. Bear in mind, this money is being spent

(See "Lawsuit" on page 9)

June program meeting
Friday, June 10, 7 p.m.

Bird feathers: a guide to North American species

David Scott is a skilled wildlife tracker and naturalist who's been involved in environmental education since 2003.

Join him as he discusses his new book: *Bird feathers: a guide to North American species*, the first field guide dedicated solely to the identification of feathers.

This wonderful, informative book will be available to purchase at the program meeting.

Everett Firefighters Hall
2411 Hewitt Avenue, Everett

For more information, call 425.252.0926

Watch www.pilchuckaudubon.org for the most up-to-date information.

Follow PAS 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](https://twitter.com/pilchuckaudubon).

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

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President's message

By Mike Blackbird, President, Pilchuck Audubon Society



opportunists plural of **op-por-tun-ist** –
noun: A person who exploits circumstances to gain immediate advantage, rather than being guided by principles or plans.

Now, while I'm a lover of birds, I've been a bit like the high school nerd secretly admiring the bad boy image of those willing to bluff their way into the center of attention.

Crows, to my mind, are the bad boys of the bird world. They don't hop, they strut. When they choose to come to my backyard (which they rarely do), they own it. I've always viewed them as opportunists.

But, are they? Isn't that our biggest failing ... to anthropomorphize wildlife? When you really think about it, crows are simply birds that adjust to the environment that we humans have presented them. Crows have learned to successfully make a living in close proximity to humans. They aren't opportunists by definition, though it's true they aren't guided by principles or plans. Crows are birds just trying to make a living and assure the next generation of crows.

Okay, that's the intellectual part of this piece. On a rare recent sunny day – a Wednesday, if I remember correctly – I was coming down the stairs of my home. I looked out the window and saw a Mallard hen marching up the street in front of my house with 10 newly hatched ducklings in tow. Where on earth was she going? There was no pond or lake in that direction. Losing sight of her and her charges, I went outside to find that her progress had been halted by a crow in her line of march. Gathering ominously on nearby roof tops like a scene from Hitchcock's *The Birds*, more crows were weighing their opportunities for a convenient meal.

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

In my bare feet, I hurried up the block to chase off the crow on the ground. Then I rushed back home, put on a pair of shoes, grabbed a walking stick, hustled up the block hoping to herd this obviously thoughtless mother away from the threat of crows and steer her to the mitigation pond a block away in the other direction.

Faced with this big guy in her road, the mother duck relented, turned back the way she had come and began a reluctant retreat. Her retreat wasn't with resignation. She attempted to lead her brood into neighboring yards, and ducking under shrubs to out flank me. But, I met her every move head on. Finally, she scampered ahead of me and when she came to the mitigation pond gate scooted under it and led her brood to the cattails and safety.

I suppose an argument can be made that I interceded in a natural process by interfering with predator and prey. I would submit that suburbia interferes with the natural process. And, like the pond where the momma duck and her charges now safely resided, I was just mitigating.

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.



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Trip calendar

Check our web site at www.pilchuckaudubon.org for the latest information.

Tuesday, May 31

Leavenworth area

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Monroe Park and Ride on Highway 2, a half-mile west of the fairgrounds. Expect many species rarely seen around home. We will go up Icicle Creek and certainly try for the Calliope Hummingbird and Lazuli Bunting in Camas Meadows. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750
Art Wait, 360.563.0181

June 2-6

Ferry County

This year's trip will go in a different, "loony" direction. Susie Schaefer plans to take the group to nearby lakes with a history of nesting Common Loons. We'll depart Thursday morning, June 2, and return Monday night, June 6. We'll use Curlew as a base. If you're interested in extending your visit beyond June 6, bring your passport and we'll visit a loon lake accessible from the Canadian side.

Expenses for food and gas will be shared. This trip requires a lot of planning, so signups and confirmations are needed as soon as possible. If you're interested or would like more info, please contact Susie Schaefer: 425.771.8165 or susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org.

Tuesday, June 7

Camano Island

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5, exit 200). Park away from the store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. (next to I-5). We will bird Triangle Cove, Eide Road, English Boom, Iverson Spit and Cama Beach State Park. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Sunday, June 12 Christmas and Rattlesnake lakes

Meet at 8 a.m. at Everett Mall – in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. We'll carpool to the Cedar River Watershed near Snoqualmie Pass on I-90, and hike to Christmas Lake and Rattlesnake Lake. Elevation gain is gradual and less than 100 feet. This is a full-day hike so pack a lunch. We may also grab dinner in Snoqualmie or North Bend.

Leader: Terry Nightingale, 206.619.2383, tnight@pobox.com

Tuesday, June 14

Ellensburg area

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Monroe Park and Ride on Highway 2, a half-mile west of the fairgrounds. We will bird portions of Umtanum Creek area, Robinson Canyon and other areas. This will be a long, rewarding day. Hope to see Yellow-breasted Chat, Warbling Vireo, Lazuli Bunting and maybe Canyon and Rock wren. Pack a lunch.

Leaders: Margaret Bridge, 360.862.1694
Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tuesday, June 21

Big Four Meadows

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Frontier Village Park and Ride (9600 Market Place). From State Highway 9, turn eastbound onto Market Place (the street Target is on), then north into the Park and Ride just west of Target. A beautiful setting for our annual potluck bird trip. Bring something to share. Virginia provides hot dogs and potato salad and will advise if you want to know what to bring. Expect swallows, hummingbirds, swifts, warblers, vireos and dippers. A trailhead pass is required, but is available en route.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tuesday, June 28

Mid-Whidbey Island

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5, exit 200). Park away from the store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. (next to I-5). This is the area between Crockett Lake and Swantown, an always exciting experience for both birding and scenery. Pack a lunch.

Leaders: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750
Art Wait, 360.563.0181

Sun., June 26

Elger Bay Preserve, Camano Island

Meet at 8 a.m. at Everett Mall – in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. We'll hike the 3.3 mile East Loop Trail through the forest with a viewing platform over a beaver marsh. Pack a snack, although we may stop on the way home for a late lunch.

Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425.244.7633, aracfi@msn.com

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

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

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.

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Have fun, be entertained and get smarter

A cook's guide to foraging and cuisine

June 2 **NW Stream Center, Everett**
When it comes to eating within your own "food shed," wild foraging is as local as it gets. Come explore 40-plus common edible native plants from mountain to sea – with award-winning author and naturalist, Jennifer Hahn.

On Thursday, June 2, at the Northwest Stream Center, Jennifer will share slides and stories from her new book, *Pacific feast: a cook's guide to west coast foraging and cuisine*. You will discover a host of delicious and nutritious wild and weedy greens, trees, ferns, berries, flowers, mushrooms, sea veggies and shellfish that thrive along the Pacific Coast.

The presentation begins at 7 p.m. The cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advance registration is required. For more info, call 425.316.8592.

The Northwest Stream Center is located in McCollum Park, Everett. Take the 128th Street exit from I-5 and drive east for one-half mile. Turn right into the entrance of the park and drive to the south end. The Northwest Stream Center is the last structure at the end of the road.

Transit-oriented communities: a blueprint

Thursday, June 9 **Everett Station**
Explore a vision for compact urban areas and the protection of farms, forests and green space at a workshop on Thursday, June 9, from 2 to 6 p.m. at the Everett Transit Center. Afterwards, enjoy a reception and peruse a visual exhibit – sponsored by Futurewise, GGLO and the Transportation Choices Coalition – which will be on display throughout June.

The Blueprint program is anchored by a comprehensive publication, *Blueprint for transit-oriented communities*. It's an action plan for promoting neighborhoods that give people greater access to housing, jobs, shopping and recreation without relying on a personal vehicle.

The workshop, reception and exhibit will take place in first floor meeting room at the Everett Station, 3201 Smith Avenue.

For more information about transit-oriented communities, visit www.futurewise.org/priorities.toc.

Wetland wigglers

Thursday, June 9 **NW Stream Center, Everett**
Learn about the connections between healthy watersheds, wetlands, wildlife, fish and aquatic insects. Aquatic insects are important indicators of wetland health and water quality, as well as vital parts of the wetland food chain.

They are also beautiful and fascinating, as anyone watching dragonflies skimming the surface of a pond on a summer's day will attest. There will be a live exhibition of critters from the NW Stream Center resident pond, so you can view first-hand the insects that live in our local ponds and learn about their life cycles and habitats.

The class begins at 11 a.m. and is recommended for children 4 and older. The cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advance registration is required. For more info, call 425.316.8592.

The Northwest Stream Center is located in McCollum Park, Everett. Take the 128th Street exit from I-5 and drive east for one-half mile. Turn right into the entrance of the park and drive to the south end. The Northwest Stream Center is the last structure at the end of the road.

Native plant walk and pressing

Thursday, June 9 **NW Stream Center, Everett**
Join us for a walk in the woods and native plant gardens around the NW Stream Center. Naturalist Tom Noland will teach you how to identify native plants you are likely to encounter in the area – perhaps even in your own backyard.

After the walk in the woods, the audience will gather together and learn how to preserve leaves using a plant press ... a great exercise for kids and their parents!

The fun begins at 2 p.m. and is recommended for children 4 and older. The cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advance registration is required. For more info, call 425.316.8592.

The Northwest Stream Center is located in McCollum Park, Everett. Take the 128th Street exit from I-5 and drive east for one-half mile. Turn right into the entrance of the park and drive to the south end. The Northwest Stream Center is the last structure at the end of the road.

Foraging for wild edibles

Saturday, June 18 **NW Stream Center, Everett**
Take a walk in the woods at the NW Stream Center and find plant edibles. Then enjoy a wild food feast!

The class runs from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. and is limited to 30 participants. The cost is \$30 for PAS members. Advance registration is required. For more info, call 425.316.8592.

The Northwest Stream Center is located in McCollum Park, Everett. Take the 128th Street exit from I-5 and drive east for one-half mile. Turn right into the entrance of the park and drive to the south end. The Northwest Stream Center is the last structure at the end of the road.

National Pollinator Week

June 20-24 Demo Garden, Edmonds

The Native Plant Demo Garden in Edmonds will celebrate National Pollinator Week with five weeknight programs starting at 7 p.m. on Monday, June 20. Please come by and learn about the valuable ecosystem services provided by bees, birds, butterflies, bats and beetles.

Monday's program: bees. Tuesday's program: beekeeping. Wednesday's program: butterflies. Thursday's program: lady bugs. Friday's program: bats.

The Demo Garden is located at the Willow Creek Hatchery at 95 Pine Street, Edmonds.

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 or contact Emily Sprong at emily@pugetsoundbirds.org.

(See "Events" on page 11)

Support original vision for North Cascades

By Jim Davis, Executive Director, North Cascades Conservation Council

The American Alps Legacy Project (AALP) is an initiative to complete the original conservation vision for the North Cascades National Park (NCNP). The North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) and the Mountaineers are leading the effort to expand the park and protect this unique and pristine area.

The project is examining public lands from Concrete to Winthrop to determine whether they should be included in the park. These rugged and remote lands have long been known as the "American Alps." As many who have visited the American Alps know, they are a truly spectacular area, comparable to the best national parks in the world.

Most people believe the American Alps are fully protected as national park or wilderness. Unfortunately, much was left out when the national park and adjacent wilderness areas were created. Core wildlife habitats, lowland old-growth forests, pristine rivers and streams, magnificent mountains and popular recreation areas still remain unprotected by park or wilderness status.

Very few people ever actually enter the NCNP. Motorists on the North Cascades Highway don't. They only pass through the Ross Lake National Recreation Area. Then, just three miles east of Ross Lake, the highway enters forest service lands passing through 30 miles of spectacular mountain scenery.

Awareness of the ecological importance of lowland forests has grown, along with the realization that there is much more to mountains and wild lands than just scenery. Salmon spawning areas are at lower elevations, as are critical winter habitats for many species of wildlife. Black and Vaux's swifts, Western Tanagers, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Warbling Vireos and flycatchers – as well as many other bird species – have been observed in low-elevation areas.

Protection of high-elevation habitats near the Cascade Crest is essential for supporting grizzly bear, wolf and wolverine recovery. High-elevation areas (such as Washington Pass and Rainy Pass) also support numerous bird species, including Clark's Nutcracker, Red Crossbill, Red-naped Sapsucker and Dark-eyed Juncos. Protection of these habitats is important to ensure the long-term survival of these mammals and birds.

The AALP has produced a biodiversity report for the North Cascades that clearly outlines reasons for increasing the size of the NCNP. You can access the informative report via our web site at www.americanalps.org.

New threats to the American Alps have arisen in the past four decades. Energy shortages and high costs are prompting calls for new hydropower facilities that threaten rivers and streams. Shrinking glaciers are reducing water availability, threatening fresh water habitats for salmon and prompting calls for water storage dams. Logging and biomass harvest could have major impacts on North Cascades forests. Mining is an ever-present threat in the North Cascades. Puget Sound population increases and motorized recreation are threatening to overrun recreation resources in the American Alps.

The American Alps campaign recognizes that public lands conservation doesn't occur in a vacuum. Public lands hold many values for many people. We are committed to designating new park lands in a way that meets recreation and community needs, as well as conservation needs.

The AALP will assure that recreation access and visitor facilities in the North Cascades will be fully preserved and even enhanced in some places (i.e., development of new park visitor centers and low-elevation trails). American Alps is working closely with communities adjacent to the NCNP to assure they receive the economic benefits of park designation. An

(See "Alps" on page 10)

Don't miss the American Alps Challenge!

Saturday, September 24
North Cascades Highway



Liberty Bell Peak, site of the start of the American Alps Challenge.



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.

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

Governor signs Discover Pass into law



On May 12, Governor Chris Gregoire, flanked by recreation enthusiasts, signed legislation that will keep state park and recreation lands open with revenue from a vehicle access pass known as the Discover Pass.

"It is essential we keep our recreation areas open to the public," said

Gregoire. "I applaud the Legislature for coming together with a solution that allows us to help keep our state recreation lands open and accessible during the worst budget crisis in the state's history."

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 in mid-June – will cost \$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 for more information.

Once available, the Discover Pass can be purchased at nearly 600 sporting goods or other retail stores that sell hunting and fishing licenses. It will also be 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.

Revenue from the Discover Pass will fill budget gaps created by the loss of State General Fund support for parks and recreation on state lands. Revenue will be split among the three state agencies that provide recreational access to state lands in proportion to their need for general fund replacement: 84% to State Parks, 8% to WDFW and 8% to DNR.

State Parks, WDFW and DNR jointly requested legislation that led to the creation of the Discover Pass, intended to provide revenue to maintain recreation access to state lands and meet the increasing demand for outdoor recreation.

The legislation was sponsored by Sen. Kevin Ranker, D-San Juan Islands, who conducted stakeholder work and coordinated with other legislators. In addition to providing a stable source of revenue, the legislation provides reciprocal authority for law enforcement staff from each agency, which will improve public safety and help protect state resources.

Tide pools, birds add up to fun for hikers

By Jonathan Blubaugh

The weekend bird hikers traveled to Saltwater State Park in Des Moines on April 17. We were joined by Sue Miller, who showed us around the tide pools. We arrived at low tide, so our visit began on the beach. We made a quick tally of seabirds and shorebirds, then began our investigation of marine invertebrates.

We carefully turned over rocks to see what was living underneath. The one I remember best was the red rock crab. At first, all I saw was muddy sand. But, Sue reached into the mud and produced a gorgeous crab. I'd guess it was 4-6 inches across. It was buried just under a thin layer of ooze (plus the rock).

The red rock crab was a lifer for me! She quickly produced a couple more. I wasn't really seeing them, but got the idea that she could see their general outline in the mud. So, I gave it a try and came up with another one. I was thrilled.

The next lifer for me was a nudibranch or sea slug, called a sea lemon. It was a brownish yellow slug, about an inch long. Other marine invertebrates we saw included purple shore crabs, green shore crabs, an anemone, the sea lemon, little brown flatworms, hermit crabs, acorn barnacles, mussels, sand flea amphipods, whelks and limpets.

Next, Sue taught us about seaweed. All we really wanted to



Sea Lemon Nudibranch, by Matt Knoth

know was if they were edible! They are. There was ribbon kelp, eel grass, spaghetti weed brown algae, soda straw algae, sea lettuce and filamentous red algae.

We were soon ready to hike up the ravine. The weather was fabulous, but the trails were still muddy from months of rain. The highlight for me was a Red-necked Grebe we saw early on. None of us had seen one in such spectacular breeding plumage. We also got a good look at a noisy Pileated Woodpecker.

Here's a partial list of the birds we saw: a Common Loon (pretty breeding plumage), the grebe, a Double-crested Cormorant, a Great Blue Heron, six Canada Geese, a couple of Mallards, six Surf Scoters, a couple of White-winged Scoters, a pair of Black Scoters, seventeen Common Goldeneyes, four Barrow's Goldeneyes, a pair of Bald Eagles, a Peregrine Falcon, four Mew Gulls, 37 Glaucous-winged Gulls, a Band-tailed Pigeon, an Anna's Hummingbird, a Belted Kingfisher, a couple of Downy Woodpeckers, a couple of Northern Flickers, two Pileated Woodpeckers, two Steller's Jays, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a Pacific Wren, four Golden-crowned Kinglets, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, an American Robin, an Orange-crowned Warbler, a Spotted Towhee, a couple of Song Sparrows and four Pine Siskins.

Birding highlights

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

March 26, 2011-April 25, 2011

I'm still waiting for spring to happen. Maybe next month? At least the swallows are back.

According to the Sibley Guide online, in 2010 the American Ornithologists Union split the North American population of **Winter Wrens** into two separate species – the **Eastern Wren** and the **Pacific Wren**. I will now list all **Winter Wrens** as **Pacific Wrens**.

Carole and Larry Beason are happy that May is here as the **Muscovy Ducks** returned to their Lake Bosworth location. In fact, they swam right by their beach. Their total species count of 46 this month included 3 **Bald Eagles**, a **Barn Swallow**, 2 **Common Loons**, 31 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 5 **Golden-crowned Sparrows**, a **Hutton's Vireo**, a **Merlin**, 2 **Ospreys**, 2 **Red-breasted Sapsuckers**, 22 **Violet-green Swallows**, 5 **White-crowned Sparrows** and 3 **Rufous Hummingbirds**.

John Davis counted 41 species on his walks through Forest Park this month – including interesting species such as a **Wilson's Snipe** in a blackberry patch, 12 **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, 5 **Varied Thrushes**, 2 **Townsend's Solitaires** and 4 **Savannah Sparrows**. He also reported 2 **Violet-green Swallows**, 4 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, 2 **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, 8 **Pacific Wrens**, 14 **American Robins**, a **Red-breasted Sapsucker** and a **Hermit Thrush**.

It must be nice having **Wood Ducks** in your yard. Kriss Erickson reported 2 males and 2 females from her Everett location this month. She also listed 2 **Bewick's Wrens**, 2 **Downy Woodpeckers**, 4 **Northern Flickers**, 4 **Steller's Jays**, 18 **Bushtits**, 35 **European Starlings**, a **Yellow Warbler**, 6 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, a **Marsh Wren**, a **Pileated Woodpecker**, 2 **Mallards** and 16 **American Crows** for a total species count of 15.

Hilkka Egtvedt has something new and unusual to report this month from her Mukilteo home. Two **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** have discovered the hummingbird feeder and come by frequently to get sips of sugar water. I have seen the young **Hairy Woodpeckers** trying to get sips out the hummingbird feeders, but not the chickadees. Her total species count of 27 also included a **Bald Eagle**, 12 **American**



Common Loon, by Paul Kusmin



Osprey, by Annette Colombini



Western Tanager

Goldfinches, 10 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, 2 **California Quail**, 2 **Fox Sparrows**, 4 **House Finches**, 9 **Pine Siskins**, a **Rufous Hummingbird**, a **Townsend's Warbler** and 2 **Red-breasted Sapsuckers**.

Julie O'Donald spotted 4 **Bald Eagles** soaring above her Brier home in April. She also spotted 4 **Violet-green Swallows**, a **Townsend's Warbler**, a **Townsend's Solitaire**, a **Great Blue Heron**, 2 **Anna's Hummingbirds**, a **Brown Creeper**, 2 **Pacific Wrens**, 7 **Varied Thrushes**, a **Killdeer** and a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** for a total species count of 28.

Mary Sinker's report always seems to have larger numbers of each species. Must be something about Stanwood. She reported 10 **American Goldfinches**, 23 **American Robins**, 12 **Black-capped Chickadees**, 10 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 9 **House Finches**, 15 **Mourning Doves**, 10 **Steller's Jays**, 4 **Hairy Woodpeckers**, 10 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, 35 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 2 **Pacific Wrens** and 2 **Tree Swallows** for a total species count of 32.

Dick Vanderhoff reported 2 mature **Bald Eagles** fishing in the bay near his Stanwood home. He also listed a male **Northern Flicker** calling for his mate on top of a smoke stack, **American Robins**, 7 chickadee species, a **Rufous Hummingbird**, 2 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, 2 **Mourning Doves**, 4 **Red-tailed Hawks** along Marine Drive and another **Bald Eagle** sitting in a tree for a total species count of 9.

Things are improving at my Marysville home. I see a lot of different species, but not a lot at a time. My total species count of 31 includes 2 **California Quail**, a **Pileated Woodpecker** (who visits often), 2 **Mourning Doves**, a **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, 2 **Rufous Hummingbirds**, 6 **Tree Swallows** along the wires, 20 **Mallards** and 20+ **American Wigeons** in the flooded fields, a **Turkey Vulture** flying over, a **White-Crowned Sparrow**, a **Yellow-crowned Sparrow** and my favorite – a **Western Tanager**.

Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Please e-mail me at pricemara@clearwire.net or leave a message at 425.750.8125.

Smart Growth report

By Kristin Kelly, Smart Growth Director

Transportation is a topic most people think about at some point in the day – whether stuck in a traffic jam, looking for a space at the park and ride, waiting for a bus, riding a bike, walking to the store or buying gas. Our mobility is important. And, generally speaking, it's expensive – whether it's the price of a vehicle, the cost of fuel or the taxes to build roads, bike or pedestrian lanes or fund transit. Funding the solutions affects all of us.

It's no wonder that transportation issues are in the forefront of political discussions and decision making. And, transportation is an issue I'm seriously involved with this year.

Community Transit budget, service cuts

Like last year, Community Transit (CT) is facing huge budget shortfalls which will likely result in service changes and probably cuts. In Olympia this session, a bill to allow the county council to implement a \$20 per vehicle fee – called a congestion reduction fee – did not pass. This bill held some potential for additional funding for CT. (Curiously, the House and Senate did pass SB5457, which allows the King County Council to implement this fee for King County Metro.)

We won't know what changes or cuts CT is considering until June. In the meantime, we need to consider how important buses are to our quality of life. We don't all ride the bus. But, many people in Snohomish County do. And, without adequate bus service, these folks may not be able to get to work, the grocery store, the doctor, church or a movie.

Not everyone has a car, nor should we. Funding for CT and all transit services should be a top priority. Increasing transportation choices will reduce traffic congestion, improve freight mobility, decrease pollution, spur economic development and connect rural communities.

In June, CT will host five open houses regarding proposed service changes and cuts. And, they'll conduct a public hearing July 7. I'll keep you informed via e-mail. Your involvement will be important. If we don't have your e-mail in our database, please send me a message: kristin@futurewise.org. I'll be sure to keep you informed!

Community Transit open houses

Mountlake Terrace: Monday, June 6, 6-8:30 p.m., Mountlake Terrace Library, Large meeting room, 23300 58th Ave. West.

Edmonds: Tuesday, June 7, 2-4 p.m., Edmonds Community College, Snohomish Hall, Room O304, 20000 68th Ave. West.

Monroe: Wednesday, June 15, 6-8 p.m., Monroe High School Performing Arts Center, 17001 Test Road.

Everett: Wednesday, June 22, 10 a.m.-12 noon, Everett Station, Weyerhaeuser Room, 3201 Smith Avenue.

Arlington: Thursday, June 23, 5-8 p.m., City of Arlington Community Room, Hedley Hall, 18513 59th Avenue NE.

Community Transit public hearing: Thursday, July 7, 5-8:30 p.m., Rose Hill Community Center, 304 Lincoln Ave., Mukilteo.

In addition, Community Transit staff will host rider forums at Park and Rides and Transit Centers throughout the county.

Transit-oriented development

Seven Urban Centers have been designated in Snohomish County. One way to ensure their success is transportation –

close, reliable transit stations and links. Building sustainable urban centers with the best of housing, retail, living wage jobs, community and pedestrian-friendly open spaces, and that are close to transit will help protect more rural areas, farms and forest lands. Rules allowing Urban Centers exist. But, there's still a lot to learn about how to make them successful and enticing to developers.

On June 9, from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m., Futurewise, along with Transportation Choices Coalition and the architect firm of GGLO, will host a workshop, reception and exhibit of the "Blueprint for transit-oriented communities" program. The City of Everett and Everett Parks donated the first floor room of the Everett Transit Center for this event.

Representatives from Futurewise and GGLO will anchor a three-hour presentation. It will include an image-rich presentation, along with research that shows social and environmental benefits of Transit-oriented Communities – including policy actions needed at all levels of government.

To attend, please RSVP by June 6 to kristin@futurewise.org.

The exhibit will remain open through June. So, if you can't make the workshop, you'll have ample opportunity to check out the exhibit.

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, then click on "Join/Donate."

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

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.

Lawsuit ...

(continued from page 1)

on a road that has washed out countless times since it was first constructed in the 1930s. It will surely wash out again, only to be repaired – again – at taxpayers' expense.

At some point between 2007 and 2010, the Forest Service turned over primary responsibility for repairing the Suiattle River Road to the FHWA. Now, claiming an "emergency," the Federal Highways Administration is proposing to circumvent environmental laws and is violating the Northwest Forest Plan by rebuilding the road without conducting a detailed environmental review.

Construction has already begun – the March *Profile* article featured a photo of logging of old growth trees completed last fall – and is scheduled to resume May 16. A preliminary injunction has been sought to insure the agency has adequately assessed and disclosed the impacts of its road construction project before more ancient forest is felled, salmon streams are muddied and rare species are irreparably lost.

The proposed project would destroy mature and old-growth forests that are home to numerous federally listed threatened species, including the Northern Spotted Owl and the Marbled Murrelet. The road project would also devastate portions of the Suiattle River, a designated "wild and scenic" river, which is protected habitat for many fish species, such as the Puget Sound chinook salmon, coho salmon, pink salmon, steelhead and bull trout.

It should be noted that this lawsuit doesn't contest the rebuilding of the Suiattle River Road *per se*, but alleges the agencies failed to follow environmental laws that require public notification and adequate analysis of the

effects of their proposal prior to initiating construction.

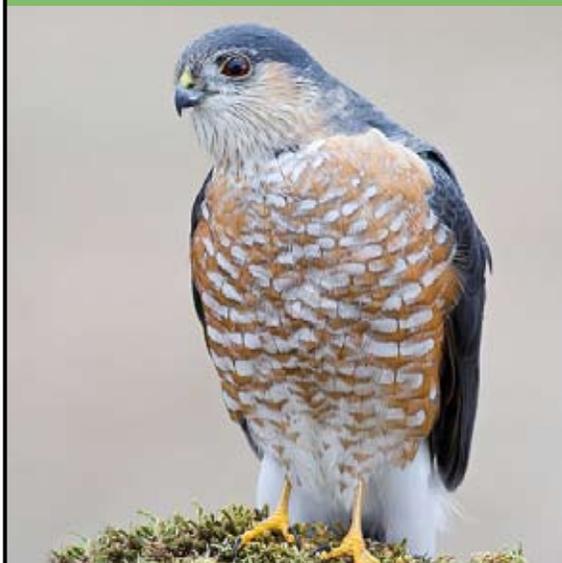
We simply want the federal agencies to obey the law and do the detailed study needed to determine whether the road can be repaired without causing significant environmental harm.

That said, we are, in truth, skeptical the road could be rebuilt without ill effects. We favor the conversion of the existing road to a trail. Rather than limiting recreational opportunities as some would claim, however, this would add about 10 miles to a beautiful trail – 10 miles that are more accessible to "less able" individuals than the current trails.

Without the intrusion of motor vehicles, this route provides a wonderful, non-strenuous recreational experience in close proximity to a beautiful river. This recreation opportunity is accessible to many whose physical limitations prevent them from hiking on the more difficult upland wilderness trails. Horses and mountain bikes can use the former roadbed with fewer of the adverse impacts that such travel can cause on hiking trails. And, since it's closed to automobiles, the Suiattle River Road offers a longer trail for those continuing into the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area. This enhances the wilderness experience for human visitors and reduces human and stock impacts on the more fragile alpine regions, since fewer will travel the longer distance.

Closing the road would provide a richer experience for those able to continue into the upper elevations, for nothing can compare to the experience of hiking for days through old-growth forest, mile after mile, before climbing into the high country. This opportunity is extremely rare to nonexistent in the Cascades. Wouldn't it be great if one didn't have to drive to the Olympic National Park for this experience?

Bird of the month: Sharp-shinned Hawk



Quick facts

- Small hawk, similar in size to a jay or dove (10-14" long)
- Long tail, barred, with squared tip
- Wings short and rounded
- Blue-gray back and wings, reddish barring on underparts
- May frequent your birdfeeder – but not for seed!

Sharp-shinned Hawks often visit backyard birdfeeders – where they eat other birds, not seed.

Sharp-shinned Hawks migrate south out of Canada and are observed in large numbers at hawk watches – 11,000+ were seen in one day in New Jersey.

The male and female show a greater disparity in size than other American hawks. The female is nearly twice as heavy as the male.

Cool fact: After young Sharp-shinned Hawks leave the nest, the adults pass food to them in mid-air. The parents give the prize to the first young hawk to reach them, hovering briefly and kicking the prey outward just as the fledgling arrives.

The range of the “Swifter” stretches far

What is a swifter? Swifter are a band of hardy people – citizen scientists – tracking the progress of the spring and fall migrations of the Vaux’s Swifts. Their home range covers California, Oregon, Idaho, Washington, British Columbia and even into Montana. Some venture out each evening to count and collect information about weather and predation, while others are faithful for the “big” efforts on Saturday nights.

Swifters have reported big counts already in Tillamook, Fort Lewis and on Vancouver Island, as well as the usuals at Sell-eck, Washington, and in the California cities of Rio Linda, Los Angeles and San Rafael. Oh, and of course Monroe!

We look forward to nightly reports, all the while knowing Larry Schwitters, our resident swifts expert, is carefully recording the data so we can continue to construct the big picture of these amazing birds’ natural history and migration.

We’ve come to know the biggest and brightest Cooper’s Hawks hang out around the chimneys and roosts and, no

Alps ...

(continued from page 5)

economic study examining the AALP has revealed that expansion of the park and addition of family-friendly front-country recreation amenities will create more than 1,000 jobs in adjacent communities. We recognize that conservation will best be served, in the long-run, through the active support of those who live, recreate and operate businesses in the North Cascades.

Going around the map of the AALP, some of the places we are examining for park designation include:

Baker River: An area stretching from Mt. Shuksan to Baker Lake and Baker River has no formal protection as national park or wilderness. Ranging from lush lowland valleys along the Baker River to rugged mountains, much of this area is inaccessible to all but the most adventuresome explorers. A road to the Mt. Shuksan climbing trail offers incredible views of this mountainous terrain. Large sections of the area provide excellent over wintering habitat for wildlife. The outstanding conservation values of this pristine area should certainly make it a prime candidate for inclusion in the park.

Bacon Creek: The Bacon Creek carve out sticks up like a sore thumb into the NCNP, one of the most obvious logic-defying boundaries included in the 1968 bill. This is among the sections of land that were most coveted by timber interests and excluded from the park. Bacon Creek remains a productive salmon stream with direct connection to the ocean via the Skagit River system. Although logged at lower elevations, most of this valley retains park qualities that make it a prime candidate for inclusion in the NCNP.

Cascade River: Another area of illogical and truncated boundaries, some of the Cascade River watershed is within the national park, with the rest remaining in national forest. The most popular alpine hiking destination in the NCNP, Cascade Pass, is reached from a national forest road that suffers frequent and severe storm related damage. The AALP is exploring the option of putting everything north and east of the mainstem of the Cascade River into the park. This would give the park responsibility for the road leading to the Cascade Pass trailhead and assure access for hikers.

doubt, eat well – at least for several weeks in spring and fall. Crows are also a major predator.

We hope you’re checking out the live video stream on the Department of Fish and Wildlife’s web site (http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildwatch/vauxcam/video_chimney.html). It’s not perfect, but it does give you a good look at what’s going on. Curt Young and Larry have compiled a Vaux’s Swifts highlight DVD, which will be available to purchase at Swifts Night Out on September 10 in Monroe.

The spring migration usually lasts through early June. Although, this year, it has been slow – perhaps due to the cool, wet spring and a lack of bugs so far.

Pilchuck Audubon owes many thanks to the swifters for their commitment to the study of these little birds – especially our own team of counters led by July Alles. And, most of all, to Larry Schwitters, who is leading this exciting journey.

Skagit River: At what should be the western gateway of the NCNP, one instead enters the Ross Lake National Recreation Area at Marblemount. This section of the Skagit River was excluded from the park and placed into NRA status to allow future construction of the Copper Creek Dam, which would have flooded the Skagit Valley from Copper Creek upstream to Newhalem. Seattle City Light is no longer interested in a dam at Copper Creek. This part of the Skagit River remains an important salmon spawning area, along with its tributaries Goodell, Newhalem and other creeks. This big, low-elevation, verdant west-side valley system – with its extensive bottom-land forests of maple and cottonwood – would make an ideal western gateway to the NCNP.

Big Beaver Creek: This magnificent valley and its western red cedar forests, among the most amazing in the northwest, were excluded from the national park to allow their flooding by the once-planned High Ross Dam. A coalition of conservation groups stopped that project and saved the valley and the cedars. As one of the outstanding old-growth forests in the American Alps study area, the Big Beaver watershed should be considered for inclusion in the national park, along with everything else on the west and east sides of Ross Lake.

Thunder Creek: Thunder Creek is a big, low-elevation, forested valley surrounded by high glaciated peaks, one of the most impressive places in the American Alps study area. Its lower reaches were left out of the North Cascades National Park because Seattle City Light originally wanted to build a dam to store additional water on Thunder Creek upstream from Diablo Lake. This pristine and remote area could be added to the park, along with Ruby Mountain, excluded in the original park bill because of a once-planned tramway to its summit, an idea abandoned long ago.

Granite and Bridge creeks: The long and scenic Granite Creek valley, which the North Cascades Highway follows for many miles from Ross Lake up to Rainy Pass, has outstanding scenic characteristics that are often associated with national parks. Many visitors have wondered how it was ever excluded from the NCNP. Upper Bridge Creek, with its high

(See “Alps” on page 11)

Alps ...

(continued from page 10)

peaks and pristine meadows, and a major section of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, also deserves consideration for inclusion in the park.

Golden Horn and Upper Methow: Every year, thousands of visitors marvel at the sights from the viewpoints at and near Washington Pass. Here is the scenic climax of the North Cascades Highway, with iconic Liberty Bell Mountain and Early Winter Spires rising in salmon-hued, neck-craning relief. Here, too, is the high point of the Skagit watershed in the United States, with headwaters in the currently unprotected Swamp Creek Valley. On the east side of the crest, the headwaters of the Methow River are critical to both ranchers and salmon. This area should definitely be considered for inclusion in the national park.

The story behind the current park boundaries is related by Harvey Manning in his classic work, *Wilderness Alps: conservation and conflict in the North Cascades*. Manning relates how some years after the establishment of the park, a forest service employee who had been closely involved, paid a visit to Manning's Cougar Mountain home.

When Manning asked him who drew the odd lines, the man proudly replied, "I did." It turned out that he was a fan of hut-to-hut hiking as practiced in parts of the Swiss Alps, had grand visions for the same thing in the North Cascades and was in a position to make sure that what he considered to be good hut sites were kept outside of the park.

Reflecting on the compromises necessary to establish the NCNP in 1968, Harvey Manning said: "In 2000, they will say of the North Cascades Conservation Council, 'You were too timid. You compromised too much. You should have been more far-sighted, more daring.' I hereby place on record my personal apologies to the year 2000. In our defense, we will then only be able to say, 'We did not ask for protection for all of the land we knew needed and deserved protection. We did, for a fact, compromise in the name of political practicality. We tried to save you as much as we thought possible.' "

Harvey Manning and other conservationists never stopped thinking about filling in the gaps and finishing the job. Momentum for completing the NCNP is now starting to build. Numerous conservation and recreation organizations are supporting the campaign, including local Audubon chapters, the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, Republicans for Environmental Protection, Washington Environmental Council, Mount Baker Club, Nooksack Nordic Ski Club and others. Campaign leadership is being provided by the American Alps Advisory Committee, including Dan Evans, Gordon Orians, Polly Dyer, Art Kruckeberg, Estella Leopold, Jim Wickwire, Mike McCloskey, Brock Evans, Norm Winn and Peter Jackson.

We invite you to join NCCC, the Mountaineers and other groups that support the American Alps Legacy Proposal in finishing what was started in 1957 and partially completed in 1968. It is time to complete the North Cascades National Park, and put the final pieces in place that will protect the wild forests, scenic mountains, pristine rivers and core wildlife habitats that make the North Cascades, our "American Alps," one of the most important and fascinating wild places on Earth.

For more information on the American Alps Legacy Project (including access to the American Alps Biodiversity Report and the American Alps Economic Benefits Report), visit www.americanalps.org. If you want to help with the campaign, contact us at info@americanalps.org or call 360.296.5159.

Events ...

(continued from page 4)

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.

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 or contact Kristin Kelly at 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.

Call 24 hours a day for
help for injured wildlife

Second Chance Wildlife Care Center
Snohomish, 425-335-0788



Deer Creek Wild Animal Rehab
Everett, 425-334-8171



Sarvey Wildlife Center: Arlington, 360-435-4817

PAWS: Lynnwood, 425-787-2500, ext. 817

Follow PAS 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](https://twitter.com/pilchuckaudubon).

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

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 also available for \$16.

Local PAS membership

- 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:
*PAS Membership Chair
1429 Avenue D, PMB 198
Snohomish, WA 98290*

NAS membership

(includes PAS membership)

- Introductory membership \$20

Make check payable to:
National Audubon Society

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

NAS renewal

(includes PAS renewal)

- Renewal \$35

Make check payable to:
National Audubon Society

Mail your check and this form to:
*NAS, Membership Data Center
POB 420235
Palm Coast, Florida 32142*

- Contact me about volunteer opportunities.
- I am interested in the Conservation Committee.

* Consult your tax professional for full details.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____