



Pilchuck Audubon **Profile**

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Vaux's Swifts begin arriving in Monroe

We put out the welcome mat and the first Vaux's Swift of the season arrived at Frank Wagner Elementary in Monroe on April 18. Surely, the rest of the gang can't be far behind.

These feathered wonders will be greeted not only by our regular team of swift counters and an enthusiastic community, but also by two elementary school "swifts clubs." Last year, a group of students and teachers at Frank Wagner Elementary started a Swifts Club. The kids designed and made wonderful bright red t-shirts for the club and were a big help at the Swifts Night Out celebration last September.

This year, a new Swifts Club was formed at nearby Fryelands Elementary School. Members are busy planning fun activities as they learn more about the swifts.

The local Monroe Swifts group started meeting in March to get ready for the spring migration and to start planning the 2012 Swifts Night Out Celebration scheduled for Saturday, September 15. This year's celebration is a week later than Bird Fest in Edmonds, which will make it easy to participate in both festivals.

When Larry Schwitters, our swift expert and fearless chimney climber, made an ascent of the Frank Wagner Elementary School chimney in March, he discovered that some of the "crow pokers" had blown down. These are used to make it tough for crows to hang out on the chimney, chow down on our featured friends, disrupt their migratory patterns and reduce their numbers.

He also discovered the inside camera was no longer operable. Larry was constructed new crow deterrents, but we had to buy a new camera which we hope to install before the majority of the swifts return to what we call the Wagner Hotel.

To watch the live stream, visit the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife web site and search by "Vaux's Swifts."

If you're interested in joining the Monroe team, helping with the 2012 Swifts Night Out celebration or becoming a counter, contact Judy Alles at jerryjalles@aol.com. Or, if you'd like to be a docent in the fall or have questions about swifts, contact Susie Schaefer at susie.schaefer@comcast.net.

To track the swifts as they move north and south along the flyway or to follow the numbers in Monroe, visit www.monroeswifts.org or Larry Schwitters' web site: www.vauxhappening.org.

Everybody loves those swifts!

**May program meeting
Friday, May 11, 7 p.m.**

Meet the bees

In gardens, fields and roadside ditches, there is a vast empire of insect life and some of the most interesting are native bees. Come meet the only insect that incubates its eggs like a bird, has a powerful medicine science is trying to unlock and specializes in cleaning the spiders out of your yard. Join naturalist and writer, Rob Sandelin, on an exploration of the lives of some of the most interesting creatures in your yard.

**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.***

Help wanted: PAS secretary

There is someone out there with the skills to take notes and compile minutes and who is available one Tuesday night a month. We need you! The position of secretary for the Board of Directors is open and the need is great. Please consider volunteering for this position (a two-year term) and the promise that the responsibilities will only include attending a monthly board meeting, producing the minutes and writing an occasional article for the newsletter. The rewards include working with a great group of people and making a difference in the Snohomish/Camano environmental community.

Please contact Kathleen Snyder at 425.438.1505 for more information.

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President's message

By Kathleen Snyder, President, Pilchuck Audubon Society



It is my pleasure to take over as president of this wonderful organization. Although my last name is not as perfect for an Audubon group as Mike Blackbird's (my predecessor) and my writing skills pale in comparison to his, I am very ready to uphold Pilchuck's mission to champion the environment in Snohomish County and Camano Island. I hope to strengthen and invigorate our organization by promoting citizen science projects, pursuing habitat restoration/creation projects and monitoring our unique urban, suburban and forest habitats.

Being an environmentalist these days is certainly challenging. Locally, we are surrounded with problems needing correction and are also constantly aware of global threats: climate change, acidification of the oceans, population growth. It seems we are fighting an uphill battle, one where the warriors around us are getting older and grayer. The majority of youth today seem to be missing from campgrounds, national parks and outdoor recreation (except where it involves motorized vehicles).

The younger generation relates to the outdoors in a totally different way than before. This change has hit environmental groups quite hard in the past decade. A 2010 Kaiser Family Foundation study found that people ages 8 to 18 spent an average of 7.5 hours a day on digital media. The average age of a Nature Conservancy member is 65.

And, in March, a study by the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology found that three times more Baby Boomers made a personal effort to help the environment than people born in the 1980s and 90s. How do we reach a generation of children who don't have a positive relationship with the outdoors and nature?

The largest conservation groups, including World Wildlife Fund, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy and the

Wildlife Conservation Society, have recognized the disconnect between their old style of operation and the reality of changing times. Quite simply, the love of nature is receding so it becomes necessary that their messages promote the benefits of a healthy environment for humans.

For instance, I received a Washington Nature Conservancy mailer last week which contained these words: "Celebrate some of the more fundamental benefits nature provides, like clean water, clean air and even food" and "ensure a future where nature thrives and enriches lives." Also, I recently saw a new Audubon logo that reads, "Where birds thrive, people prosper."

If future generations don't understand our dependence on a healthy biosphere, they won't be interested in joining efforts to preserve and protect it. In addition, the message needs to expand beyond wilderness protection to include things like promoting sustainable farming, creating urban wildlife habitats and getting corporations to practice sustainability.

Human influence on the planet is so widespread that scientists entertain the notion that we have entered a new geological era, the Anthropocene (age of man). Humans are here to stay and population will increase. It becomes imperative for environmentalists to show our fellow citizens what conservation means to their quality of life, food, water and air.

That's what I want to focus on over the next two years.

I'll put energy into habitat restoration projects that benefit wildlife and provide educational opportunities for people. I'll encourage our members to be involved in bird surveys and citizen science projects. I'll support our Smart Growth director in

(See "President" on page 7)

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 pas.profile@gmail.com 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



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Trip calendar

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

Tuesday, May 1

Camano Island

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

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tues., May 8 Snoqualmie Valley, Monroe to Carnation

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Monroe Park and Ride on Highway 2, a half-mile west of the fairgrounds. Expect a fun time and exciting birds. This trip will mostly cover the area between the Carnation Golf Course and Monroe. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Saturday, May 12

Nisqually Wildlife Refuge

Celebrate Prairie Appreciation Day with Pilchuck Audubon! Join leader Terry Nightingale on an outing to the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge near Olympia. We may even make a stop at the nearby Mima Mounds for the geology enthusiasts among us. Meet Jonathan Blubaugh at 8 a.m. at the Everett Mall. Park in the back near L.A. Fitness and the Everett Transit Center facility. Jonathan will coordinate carpools and guide the group to the refuge, where Terry will be waiting. Marine Biologist Sue Miller will talk about the ecology of the Nisqually area, then we'll search for birds as we walk on the wide, accessible trails and boardwalks. No elevation gain. This will be a half-day or full-day hike, depending on weather and the will of the group. Pack a lunch.

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

Tuesday, May 15

Cle Elum Area

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the Monroe Park and Ride, on Highway 2, a half-mile west of the fairgrounds. An all-day trip. Different birds: Red-naped Sapsucker, Northern Goshawk, Calliope Hummingbird, Western Bluebird, Mountain Bluebird, Magpie, Vesper Sparrow and Cassin's Finch are possible. Experience Cle Elum. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

May 18-20

Klickitat County

There are still a few openings on this trip. We'll take different routes – going and coming – than previous years, plus rediscovering some of the great spots we've visited before. Contact Susie Schaefer for more information: susie.schaefer@comcast.net.

Tuesday, May 22

Smith and Spencer islands

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Langus Riverfront Park, Everett. Go north on SR529 (Broadway) over the Snohomish River. Turn right onto 28th Place NE. Follow signs to Langus Waterfront Park. Continue past the park to a parking lot beyond the left curve in the road (under I-5 and just after the shell house and Everett Animal Shelter). Should see lots of waterfowl and raptors. Walk the Langus Riverfront Trail. Maybe try the Everett Sewage Ponds. Lots of walking. Pack a lunch.

Leaders: Ed Cushing, 425.438.4146, Art Wait, 360.563.0181

Tuesday, May 29

Leavenworth

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the Monroe Park and Ride on Highway 2, a half-mile west of the fairgrounds. 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

June 7-11

Walla Walla

The trip to Walla Walla is almost full, but Susie is compiling a waiting list. Please check and make sure you're on the list if you think you've already registered. Our plan is to look for the Green-tailed Towhee in the Blue Mountains – possibly the only place in Washington to find them. Susie has been working with the Blue Mountain Audubon chapter and is following their web site. We'll spend three days birding there and two days of travel to Walla Walla. This area is unique and offers great birding. The trip will be limited to three cars (12 people). Please contact Susie Schaefer if you're interested: susie.schaefer@comcast.net.

Sunday, June 24

Mt. Rainier NP Silver Falls Loop

Meet at 8 a.m. at Everett Mall – in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. This is a repeat from last year because we really didn't do the planned loop trail. Six mile loop along the Ohanapcosh River near the park's southeast Stevens Canyon Entrance. The falls are 75 feet high. National Park entrance fee \$15 or Golden Eagle Pass. Pack a lunch. We'll probably make an additional stop on the way home to socialize over dinner. (Usually I use the third Sunday of the month but this month the third Sunday is Father's Day.)

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.

Mark your calendar for 2012 chapter picnic



The annual Pilchuck Audubon picnic is scheduled for Sunday, August 12, at Langus Riverfront Park in Everett. Mark your calendar now and watch for further details in upcoming issues of the *Profile*.

Last year's picnic featured a fun bird walk to Spencer Island, delicious food, fun, games and more. You don't want to miss it!

Have fun, be entertained and get smarter

Amphibians of Mystery

May 4 Northwest Stream Center
Pacific Chorus Frogs are "singing a tune" at the Northwest Stream Center! And salamanders are on the move! Join Naturalist Tom Noland on Friday, May 4, from 10-11:30 a.m., for a lively presentation and see these creatures on the Northwest Stream Center's big screen. Learn interesting facts about some of our most interesting residents who live double lives – one in the water and one on the land.

This is a fun program for the entire family! Cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advanced purchase is required by calling 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.

Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival

May 4-6 Hoquiam, Washington
Each spring, hundreds of thousands of shorebirds stop to rest and feed in Grays Harbor estuary on their migration north. These Arctic-bound shorebirds are among the world's greatest migrants. This concentration of birds offers people a good chance to view a number of shorebird species, and with luck, to see the birds fly in beautiful formations while trying to escape the fastest creature on earth, the Peregrine Falcon.

For more information, visit www.shorebirdfestival.com or phone 360.289.5048.

Lynx and snowshoe hare

May 10 Northwest Stream Center
Deep in the forests of the Pacific Northwest, one of the most beautiful cats in the world is on the hunt for its elusive prey. And, that's where you'll often find UW Wildlife Science Professor Aaron Wirsing tracking that cat – the lynx – who is often on the trail of a snowshoe hare.

Join Aaron on Thursday, May 10, beginning at 7 p.m., at the Northwest Stream Center as he describes the life history of lynx – how long they live, their size, how far they range, where mothers den, a glimpse of kittens and their favorite food – the snowshoe hare.

This program is recommended for ages 12 and older. Cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advanced purchase is required by calling 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.

Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest

May 17-20 Leavenworth
Discover the natural beauty of north central Washington at the tenth annual Leavenworth Spring Bird Festival, May 17-20. The Leavenworth area features spectacular habitats ranging from snow-capped mountains to sunny ponderosa pine forests, to lush riparian zones, to shrub-steppe. Learn about the wide variety of migratory birds that come here for a brief,

but important part of their year: the breeding season.

Hear the songs sung only during breeding season while you stroll, bike, boat, or van during the height of wildflower season. While birding is the heart of the weekend, activities also include wildflower walks, arts events and family activities to ensure fun for birders of all skill levels, with enough built-in "down time" to explore the friendly Bavarian village, too.

For more info, visit www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com.

Freedom, the eagle

Saturday, May 19 Northwest Stream Center
Meet Freedom, a magnificent Bald Eagle, and her keeper, Jeff Guidry, from Sarvey Wildlife Center, at the Northwest Stream Center on Saturday, May 19, beginning at 11 a.m. Together, they will share their inspiring personal story and intriguing facts about eagles and their habitat requirements.

Cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advance purchase is required. Please 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.

Spring nature walk: native plants in bloom

May 25 Northwest Stream Center
Curious about the plants growing in your neighborhood? Want to know which plants are native to this area? Just want to get outside? Join us on Friday, May 25, from 10-11:30 a.m., for a walk in the woods and native plant gardens around the Northwest Stream Center. Naturalists Tom Noland and Lori Powlas will teach you how to identify native plants you are likely to encounter in the area – perhaps even in your own backyard.

Cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advanced purchase is required by calling 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.

Wenas Campout

May 25-28 Near Ellensburg, Washington
For more than four decades, Audubon families have spent Memorial Day weekend at the Wenas Creek Campground. Officially named the "Hazel Wolf Wenas Creek Bird Sanctuary," it's located southwest of Ellensburg, in an Important Bird Area and has been assured protective status by the Washington Department of Natural Resources.

The primitive campground along the north fork of Wenas Creek has exceptional opportunities for birding, botanizing and enjoying spring in the eastern foothills of the Cascades.

Please visit the Wenas web site at www.wenasaudubon.org for a bird checklist, wildflower checklist, outline of field trips and programs, directions to the campground, lots of photos and to see Hazel Wolf's familiar smiling face.

(See "Festivals" on page 10)

Count birds – earn money for PAS

May is finally here. And, you know what that means: Birdathon! Each year, dedicated PAS members have fun while also raising funds for our chapter. They go birding. But, this isn't any ordinary birding expedition – it's much more important because it helps PAS continue its work as champion for the environment. These dedicated

Birdathon participants have spent the past few weeks gathering pledges (either for a flat amount or per species). Then they're free to bird statewide for the entire month of May – as many hours as they have the time and energy for.



If you've been a member of PAS a while, you've read about Birdathon many times. Why not participate this year? It's so easy! You can download the pledge from www.pilchuckaudubon.org or contact Hilikka Egtvedt at 425.347.4944 or chegtvedt@comcast.net and she'll mail you one.

Then, go birding, report your sightings and collect the cash. You'll have fun and PAS will benefit, too. It's a definite win-win!

Happenings at the demo garden in Edmonds

Exciting news from the demo garden in Edmonds: the garden was selected for the Edmonds in Bloom Tour on July 15. We are excited to welcome many visitors that day and to show off the beautiful garden, as well as provide lots of information about native plants and wildlife.



We've seen lots of wildlife at the garden already this spring: coyotes, California Quail, Garter snakes, bumble bees, Downy Woodpeckers, Red-breasted Sapsuckers and the usual chickadees, wrens and towhees. The warblers and vireos should arrive soon.

The team at the demo garden in Edmonds is planning a fun-filled spring and summer. You can follow happenings at the

garden on Facebook. Like us at www.facebook.com/edmondsdemogarden.

We're always looking for volunteers to help with care and maintenance (weeding), as well as with workshops and other events. With the help of a grant from the Washington Native Plant Society, we'll get underway with phase 2 of the garden this

summer and fall (after nesting season) by clearing invasive plants and replanting other areas.

If you'd like to help – or just want more information – please contact Susie Schaefer at 425.771.8165 or susieschaefer@comcast.net. Come on out and see how the garden has changed over the past two years!

PAS names 2011 Volunteer of the Year



Outgoing PAS President Mike Blackbird and new PAS President Kathleen Snyder at April's program meeting.

Mike Blackbird, outgoing president of PAS, was pleased to announce the 2011 Volunteer of the Year at the April program meeting: Annette Colombini, newsletter editor.

Annette has been editor of *The Profile* for the past four years. Her ability to put together a publication of outstanding accuracy and visual appeal from all our various and sundry activities is truly amazing. Anyone who has tried to coordinate volunteers and deadlines can appreciate what Annette has to put up with and how amazing her efforts are.

Thank you, Annette, for your past and future editions of a truly outstanding publication that represents Pilchuck Audubon so wonderfully.

PAS board meetings are open to all

The PAS board meets the second 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.

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

Weekend bird hikers visit Japanese Gulch

By Terry Nightingale

On March 11, I learned a valuable lesson as an Audubon trip leader: **never** schedule a bird walk on the day Daylight Saving Time begins! After a fruitless half-hour waiting for birders at our meeting spot (and noticing morning exercisers were also waiting for the L.A. Fitness staff), my small party decided to head to Japanese Gulch, where we hoped more birders would join us. Jonathan arrived and began helping count the birds we could see and hear from the parking lot off 5th Street, just north of downtown Mukilteo.

The parking lot alone yielded quite a few species, and we were excited for our two young birders to try their hands at viewing the birds through binoculars. It never fails to be spectacular when a Bald Eagle flies overhead, and we saw not one, but three (two adults and an immature). Next was a flock of familiar Pine Siskins – nothing like the incredible numbers we saw near Snoqualmie Pass, but still a decent-sized flock of 75 or so.

Some of the usual urban species were also in evidence: 20 Rock Pigeons flew across the road (I like to call them Rock Doves because it sounds more elegant) and 3 American Robins on the hunt for worms in the grassy field near the parking lot. A Song Sparrow and a Spotted Towhee both announced their presence before we caught sight of them, but we never did spot the Steller's Jay making his raucous calls from the woods.

Next, it was off down the trail to the north from the parking lot. Since we had youngsters among us, we decided to use the least-challenging trail option, the railroad grade trail that follows the actual railroad. Jonathan told us the railway is still



Song Sparrow, by Patty Bruno

in active use today to move airplane parts up the hill to the Boeing manufacturing facility.

It wasn't long before we started to see and hear signs of spring bird activity. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were flitting amongst the trees, and not just making their normal cackling calls, but singing their unique and varied spring songs! One of us even got a glimpse of the brilliant red crown-stripe as a male displayed it. Both Chestnut-backed Chickadees and Black-capped Chickadees were a part of this mixed-species flock, as well as Bushtits, sporting their tiny but long tails as they gleaned insects from the branches and leaves of the trees. The birding highlight of the trip was an Anna's Hummingbird who flew within 10 feet of our party, and proceeded to pollinate a pussy willow flower.

Even without the bird life, Japanese Gulch was a peaceful, relaxing place to take a morning hike. The gentle sound of the creek water rushing down the gulch was reason enough to make the trek. But, of course, the interesting birds were the icing on the cake.

After brunch in Mukilteo, we walked the Lighthouse Park to look for birds on the beach and in the water. As might be expected, gulls were in abundance (30 Glaucous-winged Gulls), Double-crested Cormorants were just slightly less abundant (24 in total), and we were lucky enough to spot sea ducks bobbing on the waves: nine Surf Scoters and 10 Barrow's Goldeneyes. Though the lighthouse was closed for the season, the birds had made it clear that spring was just around the corner and a nice day was had by all.

Rain dampens trip to the Montlake Fill

By Jonathan Blubugh

Our outing to the Montlake Fill on March 18 was pretty much rained out. Attendees were scarce. I was grateful to Terry and Sue for showing up ... and even more grateful when Sue suggested we have breakfast and see if the rain might let up. We ate slowly and it eventually did.

I let Terry and Sue take the lead, seeing as this was my first visit to the Montlake Fill. I'd heard it was a great place for birding, but the closest I'd ever been was a visit to Husky Stadium as a member of the Cougar marching band.

As I understand it, the Montlake Fill was created from material removed to connect Lake Washington to Lake Union 100 years ago. Later, the fill was used as a dump – which has long since closed. The fill now encompasses the marshy western shore of Lake Washington to the ball fields at the edge of the UW campus.

We started out at Duck Pond, inhabited by tame ducks and semi-tame resident Canada Geese.



Gadwall, by Paul Kusmin

Due the non-drought, our list of species is a bit short: three Canada Geese, three Mallards who boldly waddled up to us, quacking for their breakfast. Unlike us, the ducks were completely unaware it was raining. There were also four Gadwalls, a pair of Green-winged Teals, a pair of Northern Shovelers, six Buffleheads, a Northern Pintail, eight American Wigeons, and two Pied-billed Grebes. One of the grebes dove and caught a Three-spined Stickleback, as we were informed by Sue, who as many of you know, is a marine biologist and professor at Bellevue College. There were 12 Double-crested Cormorants, a Bald Eagle,

three American Coots, a Killdeer, an Anna's Hummingbird, six crows, 35 Violet-green Swallows (as of then, the first migrants I'd seen this year), two Black-capped Chickadees, a couple of Bewick's Wrens, a Marsh Wren, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, an American Robin, two Yellow-rumped Warblers, three Song Sparrows, three Red-winged Blackbirds and a House Finch.

Conservation Committee update

By Allen Gibbs, Conservation Chair, Pilchuck Audubon Society

The state legislature drifted slightly into a third special session, passing a supplemental budget for the remainder of the 2011-2013 biennium – with some overlap into FY 2014. Individual environmental coalitions have prepared summaries of successes on behalf of clean air and water, land use planning, and some agency reorganizations. Some work was not completed.

Here are links to web sites for coalitions of which Pilchuck Audubon is a member.

Washington Environmental Council: <http://wecprotects.org/press-room/press-releases/environmental-community-prevents-major-rollback-in-2012-session>

People for Puget Sound: <http://pugetsound.org/policy/legislative-work>

Next year

Mobilizing grassroots organizations such as Audubon continues to be a challenge. When actions suddenly occur in Olympia, good or not, and the coalitions think specific legislators and the governor's office should hear quickly from constituents, the challenge is how to notify members and briefly explain why they should send e-mails or make phone calls. The bigger challenge is how to do this for things that probably most concern Pilchuck members, without ending up with "Chicken Little alerts," or "Crying wolf!" when it may not apply to our membership.

This November, I will ask (via this column) if you'd like to be on my "Legislative Alert" e-mail list for the 2013 session. I promise restraint in forwarding alerts from the environmental coalitions.

Legacy Roads and trails

On the congressional side, at the March program meeting, I asked folks to contact Representative Rick Larsen and urge him to sign a "Dear colleague" letter, cosponsored by Representative Dave Reichert (Republican for the Bellevue-Auburn area) and Oregon Representative Earl Blumenauer (Democrat for the Portland-Gresham area). This was a bipartisan effort. Thanks to those of you who responded to my request.

Congressman Larsen did add his name to the letter addressed to Representative Mike Simpson (Idaho Republican), chair of the House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations, and to Representative Jim Moran (Virginia), ranking Democrat on the subcommittee. The letter asked them to fund the Legacy Roads and Trails program for fiscal year 2013. I'm told that funding will be included.

This money helps regain reliable public access to our national forests via roads and trails, and protects municipal water sources and fish and wildlife habitat from road-related pollution by erosion. It also helps the Forest Service reduce its road system to a more manageable and cost effective size. The usual funding sources for the Forest Service are not sufficient for this work in the Pacific Northwest.

Index-Galena Road: In March, PAS sent a letter of support to the Snohomish County Planning Office, urging reconstruction of the Index-Galena Road on the North Fork Skokomish River Valley. The county is soliciting information as part of its environmental analysis, on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration, which oversees the project. About a half-mile of road is impassable due to flooding in November 2006. It

must be relocated out of the flood plain and onto national forest land. Separately endorsing the project are the Sierra Club, Washington Wild, Washington Trails Association, American Whitewater, The Wilderness Society and The Mountaineers. We've all asked the "footprint" for the new piece of road be as small as possible. Estimated timeline for completion is 2014.

Lake Tye cable wave boarding proposal: Opposition among Monroe residents is increasing, while support grows among non-residents. PAS will submit comments when the City of Monroe begins the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) evaluation and seeks public comment.

Snohomish County shooting range: An information meeting about the status of the proposed Snohomish County Park with a shooting range, archery range, trap shooting and perhaps other activities took place February 25 in Sultan. County councilman Dave Somers and County Executive Aaron Reardon support the proposal for a facility designed for safe use, meeting environmental requirements and benefiting the local economy. PAS supports establishment of the facility, and monitors planning by Snohomish County Parks and Recreation.

Are there PAS members who would like to participate in planning this facility? I'm especially looking for folks who would use it. If that's you, please contact me.



The Tuesday morning birding group stops for a photo at Buck Lake, near Hansville, by Rex Guichard

President ...

(continued from page 2)

promoting sustainable communities and low-impact development. I hope to strengthen our relationships with other conservation organizations and will seek new partnerships with additional groups that share our goals. I want our organization to thrive with energy and passion for birds, while we enjoy each other and the beauty that surrounds us.

We can't do all that we want to correct the problems around us, but we can all do something, starting here at home.

I invite you to join me.

Birding highlights

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

If you have any doubt that spring has sprung, just step outside early in the morning and listen. The sounds are everywhere. Most of the sounds I hear are robins and maybe a few wrens. I also hear a Pileated Woodpecker who seems to get excited every time I open the garage. Also, Black-headed Grosbeaks are returning, along with Cedar Waxwings and Tree Swallows.

Carole and Larry Beason have spotted the Muscovy Duck again, but it is only a single female this time. Their total species count of 46 from their home at Lake Bosworth also included 10 American Robins, 2 Belted Kingfishers, 5 Common Mergansers and 6 Lesser Scaups on the lake, 31 Evening Grosbeaks at the feeders and in the trees, 3 Golden-crowned Sparrows, an Osprey over the lake, 46 Pine Siskins, 2 Red-tailed Hawks, 12 Tree Swallows and 3 Varied Thrushes.

Spring must be the perfect time to walk in Forest Park. John Davis listed 38 different species on his walks in March. The American Robin topped his list with 40 reported. He also reported 5 Bald Eagles, a Belted Kingfisher, 4 Bewick's Wrens, 4 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 2 Hutton's Vireos, 8 Pacific Wrens, 30 Pine Siskins, a Red-breasted Sapsucker, 4 Varied Thrushes, a Wilson's Snipe and a Hermit Thrush.

Hilkka Egtvedt reported 21 Band-tailed Pigeons from her home in Mukilteo. She also listed 4 California Quail, 27 Dark-eyed Juncos, 2 Fox Sparrows, 8 Golden-crowned Sparrows, 20 Pine Siskins, 7 Steller's Jays, a Townsend's Warbler, 2 Varied Thrushes, 2 White-throated Sparrows and a Rufous Hummingbird for a total species count of 28.

Kriss Erickson was the first to report Black-headed Grosbeaks from her home in Everett. She listed 12, along with 6 American Robins, 3 Mallards, 20 Black-capped Chickadees, 14 Dark-eyed Juncos, a Pacific Wren, a Red-winged Blackbird, 6 Western Gulls, 17 Bushtits, a Bewick's Wren, 3 Song Sparrows and a Wood Duck for a species count of 16.



Black-headed Grosbeak, by Paul Kusmin



Evening Grosbeak, by Annette Colombini



Tree Swallow, by Bud Marschner

February 26, 2012-March 25, 2012

Julie O'Donald reported a Merlin perched in a snag, but there may have been three in flight. She also listed a Barred Owl in a tree in the greenbelt near her home in Bier. Her total species count of 26 also included 3 Bewick's Wrens, a Golden-crowned Kinglet, a Killdeer, 2 Pacific Wrens, 21 Pine Siskins, a Townsend's Warbler, 2 Varied Thrushes, a White-crowned Sparrow, a Yellow-rumped Warbler, a Golden-crowned Sparrow and 3 Northern Flickers.

Mary Sinker's report from Stanwood for March listed 53 American Robins, 12 Black-capped Chickadees, a Brown Creeper, 5 Downy Woodpeckers, 12 Evening Grosbeaks, 9 Mourning Doves, a Pileated Woodpecker, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 12 Red-winged Blackbirds at the feeders, 2 Tree Swallows and 2 Pacific Wrens for a total species count of 32.

Dick Vanderhoff's species count of 12 from Stanwood included 3 Northern Flickers, 2 Band-tailed Pigeons, 10 Black-capped Chickadees, 2 Bald Eagles flying over, a Red-tailed Hawk, 5 Spotted Towhees, 10 sparrow species, 12 Steller's Jays, 2 Great Blue Herons, 3 Evening Grosbeaks and 2 Marsh Wrens.

The fields flooded again near my home in Marysville, so the ducks were out in large numbers again. There were at least 150+ Mallards, at least 30 American Wigeons and a few Eurasian Wigeons. The gulls were out again, with about 100 Glaucous-winged Gulls and a few Western Gulls. My total species count of 25 also included 4 Evening Grosbeaks, 36 Pine Siskins, 8 American Robins, 4 Purple Finches, 30-40 American Crows in the fields and a Bald Eagle that flew over my car near my house.

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

In this month's Smart Growth Report, I continue with information on the Transportation for Washington campaign, led our partners Futurewise and Transportation Choices Coalition.

Transportation health impacts – build healthy communities

Traditionally, our transportation system has been shaped without the consideration of the impacts on public health. Mostly, it's been designed to move people and goods efficiently, without understanding the resulting damage to our health and subsequent medical and environment costs.

However, there is a growing awareness, across communities and among policymakers, that transportation systems directly impact physical activity, air quality and their relationships to quality of life and health. Expanding the availability, safety and access to a variety of transportation options by integrating healthy choices into policy has the potential to save lives by preventing chronic diseases, reducing and preventing injury and death related to motor vehicles, improving environmental health, while stimulating economic development and ensuring transportation access for all people. Wise investments in healthy transportation choices will save millions of dollars in future health care costs.

The problem

The current transportation infrastructure focuses on motor vehicle travel and provides limited support for other transportation options for most Americans. In short, opportunities to be physically active have been engineered out of daily life. The healthy choice is clearly not the easy choice for Washingtonians.

Physical activity and active transportation have declined compared to previous generations. The lack of physical activity is a major contributor to the rise in obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke and other chronic health conditions. Public and private medical costs of obesity for our state are now estimated in excess of \$3 billion.

Motor vehicle accidents continue to be the leading cause of injury-related death for many age groups. Pedestrians and bicyclists are at an even greater risk of death than those who travel by motor vehicle. Many Americans view walking and bicycling within their communities as unsafe because of traffic and the lack of sidewalks, crosswalks and bicycle lanes.

Our nation's transportation system – roads, highways, bridges, ferries, ports, public transit, planes and bike and walking paths – is essential for citizens to reach jobs, schools, shopping and recreation. It allows people and goods to get from one place to another. The design and construction of the transportation system shapes communities and affects the health of the people who live, work and play in them. Unfortunately, the lack of a fully dynamic transportation system that includes opportunities to drive, walk, bicycle or use transit exacerbates our poor health status. The negative results of a limited transportation system include the following:

- Reduced opportunity for physical activity, which contributes to more obesity and chronic disease.
- Polluted air, which, in turn, contributes to respiratory and cardiovascular illness and accelerates climate change.
- More traffic accidents and resultant death and injury.
- Increased burdens on vulnerable populations because transportation projects aren't located in low-income areas.
- More noise leads to severed community connections in residential neighborhoods, which creates health impacts.

The solutions

By working together and using collective action to achieve goals, we can develop policies and prioritize funding to address the health impacts of transportation.

Transportation systems should connect the places where people live, learn, work, shop and play by providing safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities. The safety and health of all can increase as more people choose active transportation. This can be achieved through existing grant programs such as Safe Routes to Schools, Bike and Pedestrian Safety and Complete Streets grants programs.

We must shift our focus to avoid costly health impacts early in the design process and the funding prioritization. Transportation projects should work in synergy to promote health and safety. Health impact assessments or cost-benefit analysis should be done for major transportation projects around the state.

Public transportation infrastructure reduces the necessity for single occupancy vehicle trips, curtails the production of automobile emissions, increases incidental physical activity and ensures transportation access for people with physical, economic or other limitations. On average, people who take transit get 20 minutes of physical activity per trip.

Transportation-related air pollutants are one of the largest contributors to unhealthy air quality. Exposure to traffic emissions has been linked to adverse health effects, including premature mortality, cardiac symptoms, exacerbation of asthma, diminished lung function and increased hospitalization.

The facts

- The economic impact of obesity in the US was estimated at \$147 billion (in 2008 dollars).
- Health costs associated with poor air quality caused by transportation are between \$40 billion and \$60 billion per year in the US.
- In the past 15 years, Washington's obesity rate has nearly doubled, making our state the 28th most obese state in the nation.
- In Moses Lake, the community adopted a Healthy Communities Action Plan in direct response to a 127% increase in the adult obesity rate there. New zoning rules require wider sidewalks and other features that improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

A staggering 25.5 percent of adults in Washington are obese, and the number of overweight or obese American children nearly tripled between 1980 and 2004. Health experts agree that a big factor is inactivity – 55 percent of the US adult population falls short of recommended activity guidelines. And, approximately 25 percent report being completely inactive. Inactivity is a factor in many other diseases, including diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Incomplete streets mean many people lack opportunities to be active as part of daily life.

Washington must address its obesity epidemic and encourage individuals of all ages to live the healthiest life possible. We must work to reduce medical costs associated with chronic disease resulting from our current transportation system. Transportation must be part of the overall solution to reduce obesity and other chronic disease.

Festivals ...

(continued from page 4)

Cascades bird banding camp for teens August 6-10 McDaniel Field Station

The Puget Sound Bird Observatory invites teens ages 15-18 to learn birdbanding 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.

Cost is \$500 per person, plus a \$50 materials fee. The fee covers training, materials, text book, meals and group camping equipment.

Adult training is scheduled for August 12-18 at a cost of \$750 per person, plus a \$50 materials fee.

For more information, visit www.pugetsoundbirds.org or contact Emily Sprong at emily@pugetsoundbirds.org.

Feast with Friends Thurs., August 30 AngelArmsWorks, Snohomish

The sixth annual Feast with Friends fundraiser is scheduled for Thursday, August 30, 6:30-9:30 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 info - including sponsorship opportunities - visit www.futurewise.org or contact Kristin Kelly at Kristin@futurewise.org.

Puget Sound Bird Fest September 7-9 Edmonds

Plan on being in Edmonds September 7-9, for the eighth annual Puget Sound Bird Fest. This three-day event includes speakers, guided walks, land and water-based field trips, exhibits and educational activities for children and adults.

Friday evening features an opening reception and keynote address by Paul Bannick, bird and nature photographer. Paul's book *The Owl and the Woodpecker* is one of five finalists for the 2009 Washington State Book Awards in the general non-fiction category. More recently, Paul finished first among professional photographers in the "Birds and their habitat" category in the 2011 Audubon Magazine Photography Awards, with his photo of a Northern Pygmy Owl.

Saturday field trips include a morning birding cruise on Puget Sound with the Edmonds Yacht Club. There will be workshops and presentations all day Saturday at the Frances Anderson Center featuring bird photography, basic to advanced birding techniques, choosing and using bird feeders and nest boxes and current research on Puget Sound bird species. On Sunday, there will be more guided walks and activities at the Willow Creek Hatchery Wildlife Habitat and Native Plant Demonstration Garden. So, mark your calendar to be in Edmonds September 7-9 to celebrate birds and nature!

Visit www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org for more information. If you're interested in volunteering at Puget Sound Bird Fest or serving on a committee, please contact Sally Lider at 425.771.0227 or lider@ci.edmonds.wa.us.

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.

Local PAS membership
<input type="checkbox"/> New member \$28
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal \$28
<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime PAS member \$1000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10 monthly payments of \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 quarterly payments of \$250
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 payment of \$1000
<input type="checkbox"/> Donation \$ _____
Make check payable to: <i>Pilchuck Audubon Society</i>
Mail your check and this form to: <i>PAS Membership Chair 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198 Snohomish, WA 98290</i>

NAS membership (includes PAS membership)
<input type="checkbox"/> Introductory membership \$20
Make check payable to: <i>National Audubon Society</i>
Mail your check and this form to: <i>PAS Membership Chair 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198 Snohomish, WA 98290</i>

NAS renewal (includes PAS renewal)
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal \$35
Make check payable to: <i>National Audubon Society</i>
Mail your check and this form to: <i>NAS, Membership Data Center POB 420235 Palm Coast, Florida 32142</i>

- 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: _____