

2011 Christmas Bird Counts scheduled



In the 1800s, there was a holiday tradition known as the Christmas "Side Hunt." Folks chose sides and went afield with their guns. Whoever brought back the biggest pile of feathered (and furred) quarry won.

Around the turn of the 20th century, many observers and scientists were becoming concerned about declining bird populations.

In 1900, ornithologist Frank Chapman, an officer in the budding Audubon Society, proposed a new tradition – a "Christmas Bird Census" – to count birds, rather than hunt them.

Thanks to the inspiration of Frank Chapman and the enthusiasm of 27 birders, 25 Christmas Bird Counts were held that day. The locations ranged from eastern Canada to California, with most in or near the population centers of the northeast. Those original 27 Christmas Bird Counters tallied around 90 species on all the counts combined.

More than 100 years later, the Christmas Bird Count is still going strong. Pilchuck Audubon Society members and friends are invited to help gather data during this year's counts. There are two counting circles in our area: the north county (Everett) and the south county (Edmonds). Within each circle, there are counting areas. Each counting area has a leader who reports findings to the compiler.

North county (Everett) count is December 17

The north county count, led by compiler Scott Atkinson, is scheduled for Saturday, December 17, and includes north Everett, much of the Snohomish River Delta, Jetty Island, Spencer Island, most of the Tulalip Indian Reservation and Marysville. For more information, please contact Scott at scottratkinson@hotmail.com or Susie Schaefer at susie.schaefer@comcast.net.

A potluck for north county participants will follow at Art and Shirley Wait's home in Snohomish.

South county (Edmonds) count is December 26

After several decades as the south county compiler, Jan van Niel stepped down from that post, but will still act as an area leader. Duane Karna has taken over as compiler for the south county count, which is scheduled for Monday, December 26.

The south county count circle reaches from south Everett to Woodway on the west and roughly from the SW corner of Snohomish to Cathcart to Bothell on the east. Three of the count areas extend into King County and include the northern parts of Shoreline and Lake Forest Park, most of Kenmore and a large part of Bothell.

The south county circle also includes the SE corner of Whidbey

(See "CBC" on page 6)

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

Conservation of the Philippine Eagle

The Philippine Eagle is a critically endangered endemic species. Hans Landel, Edmonds Community College biology instructor, will discuss his experiences as a volunteer for the Philippine Eagle Foundation and their efforts to ensure the survival of this magnificent bird of prey.

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.**

Birdseed sale on now

The birdseed sale is on! To order, contact Carolyn Lacy at carolynlacy137@frontier.com or 206.245.5836. Orders must be placed by Tuesday, Nov. 1.

Orders can be picked up in Everett between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5, at Bering Sea Fisheries, 3862 Railway Avenue. Volunteers will be on hand to collect payment and help load the seed.

If you'd prefer to pick up your seed in Edmonds, let Carolyn know when you place your order. You'll need to arrange a pickup time with Paul or Laura Spehar at 425.672.2150.

Remember: the price of seed fluctuates. The price on pick-up day might be slightly different than what you were told when the order was placed.

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President's message

By Mike Blackbird, President, Pilchuck Audubon Society



On a recent trip to Vancouver Island, Florence and I stopped at the little port town of Chemainus, renowned for its murals. While the murals were everything the Chamber of Commerce claimed them to be, most interesting

to me was watching a freighter being loaded with lumber destined for China, where 5000 years of deforestation caused it to look to the Pacific Northwest for timber products.

For much of its history, the economy of the Pacific Northwest has been resourced based and, as a consequence, subject to the unpredictability of boom or bust economies. A prime example, in our own backyard, is the timber town of Hoquiam on Grays Harbor. During one timber recession, the town lost one-third its population and the county's unemployment rate was three times the national average.

Hoquiam had one renewable resource that, unlike trees, doesn't require 40 years to reach marketable maturity – and renewed itself annually. Failing to recognize it, the city's civic leaders almost allowed it to suffer the same fate as the forests of China. Perhaps the most important stop for migrating shorebirds on the 10,000-mile length of the Pacific flyway is the mud flats of Bowerman Basin on the edge of town. Development has eliminated most of the wetlands critical to shorebird migration along the west coast, making Bowerman Basin even that much more critical to migrating shorebirds.

Civic leaders in the latter years of the 1980s were convinced that shorebirds and mudflats could hardly fill the void of a diminishing timber industry. The Corps of Engineers, having already filled in 4,000 acres of mudflats, was determined to finish filling in the last 1000 acres. With no guarantee of future business, the conventional wisdom was that perhaps

1000 acres of filled in mudflats would become a staging area for shipping timber to Asia.

Conservationists, with a broader, long-term view of nature as an economic opportunity, united, determined to save these last thousand acres that hosted the largest concentration of shorebirds in the west. In great part through their efforts, 1,500 acres of interstitial mudflats, salt marsh and uplands became the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge in 1988. In 1996, the refuge was designated as a hemispheric reserve by Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network.

I had been a casual birder for many years when I attended the first Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival. Still living in Idaho at the time, I'd never been to Hoquiam. When I registered for the festival and the birding trip to Bowerman Basin, I don't remember any mention that rubber boots were a must for wading through the wetlands to get to the mudflats. When I showed up on Saturday morning, I was wearing running shoes and Levis. All the other birders were girded with knee-high rubber boots. But, hey, what's a little mud after driving 400 miles to see thousands of shorebirds, some on a 15,000 mile journey, stoke up for the trip? Covered in mud up to my knees, watching thousands of shorebirds on this extraordinary rite of spring was akin to a religious experience, converting this causal birder to a committed activist.

The Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival is one of the foremost birding festivals in the country, all because conservationists refused to stand by as civic and political leaders were convinced that filling in wetlands would result in economic salvation.

(See "Blackbird" on page 5)

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



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Trip calendar

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

Tuesday, November 1 **Snohomish and outskirts**
Meet at 8 a.m. at the Snohomish Park and Ride at the junction of Hwy 9 and Bickford Ave. Enjoyable and relaxed trip. We usually have high species counts and surprises. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Art Wait, 360.563.0181, Virginia Clark will advise

Tues., Nov. 8 Birch Bay/Semiahmoo/Drayton Harbor
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. and next to I-5. Should see migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Saw dowitchers, yellowlegs and dunlin last November. Also long-tailed and Harlequin ducks. Wilma will provide lunch at her beach cabin.

Leaders: Wilma Bayes, 360.629.2028, Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tuesday, November 15 **North Everett-Marysville**
Meet at 8 a.m. at Legion Park off North Marine Drive in Everett. Explore the Everett waterfront and Snohomish River estuary, including local sewage facilities. View eagles, hawks, waterfowl, shorebirds and gulls. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Art Wait, 360.563.0181

Sun., Nov. 20 **Tulalip-Hibulb Cultural Center and Nature Preserve**

Meet at 9 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. and next to I-5. We'll carpool to the cultural center and survey the 50-acre natural history preserve. We'll decide what to do next depending on the weather and the will of the group. Options include warming up with coffee and cocoa, or birding the nearby tidal estuary off of SR-529.

Monroe Swift Watch up for community award



The Monroe Swift Watch is among a field of impressive nominees for KSER radio's Voice of the Community Award. This is an annual award to recognize local voices that speak up about community or cultural concerns with positive results for residents of Snohomish and Island counties.

Nominations are accepted from the community and a committee of community and KSER representatives identifies finalists and winners. This year, two awards for community and cultural impact will be presented to individuals and groups. The Monroe Swift Watch has been nominated for community impact in the group category.

The award winners will be announced at KSER's 20th Birthday Bash on Saturday, November 5, 7 p.m. in the Weyerhaeuser Room on the top floor of the Everett Station, 3201 Smith Avenue. The public is welcome to attend. Admission is \$15. Tickets are available at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/199509.

KSER 90.7 is an independent public radio station providing Snohomish and Island counties with local news, information and a wide range of cultural and music programs. KSER is listener-supported, commercial-free and exists to advance

Then at noon when the cultural center opens, we'll peruse the exhibits (optional). This is a half-day hike, so pack a lunch or plan to join us for a hot lunch in Everett or Marysville.

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

Tuesday, November 22 **Deception Pass, Lake Campbell, Rosario Beach, Cranberry Lake**

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. and next to I-5. Oystercatchers, loons, mergansers, LBJs, etc. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tues., November 29 **Reifel Bird Sanctuary, BC**

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. and next to I-5. The refuge is on Westham Island at the mouth of the Fraser River – in Canada. Expect waterfowl underfoot and chickadees and nuthatches fed in the hand, plus surprise species. Bring your passport or Enhanced Driver's License. You can no longer cross the border into the US with only a birth certificate and driver's license. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

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.

the common good in the community through public radio and other services dedicated to arts, ideas and civic engagement. For more information, visit www.kser.org.

Attn: Monroe residents

If you live in the city limits and have concerns about the proposed Lake Tye wakeboard project, please 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

Have fun, be entertained and get smarter

Grizzlies: the wildness, spirit of Yellowstone **November 3 NW Stream Center, Everett**

Join Michael Leach of Yellowstone Country Guardians as he tells the story of the Yellowstone grizzly at the NW Stream Center on Thursday, November 3, at 7 p.m. His presentation will stir those who know and love Yellowstone Country to re-commit to its future and motivate others to discover the wonder and beauty of this wilderness paradise.

This presentation will uncover the threats to the Yellowstone Ecosystem and emphasize the importance of keystone species – like grizzlies and wolves – and deepen understanding of island biogeography, the plight of the Yellowstone bison and Yellowstone's hope for the future.

Cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advance purchase required. For more info, call 425.316.8592 or visit www.streamkeeper.org.

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.

KSER 20th Birthday Bash, awards presentation **November 5 Everett Station**

Celebrate the voices making a positive impact in our community at KSER's 20th Birthday Bash on Saturday, November 5, 7 p.m. in the Weyerhaeuser Room on the top floor of the Everett Station, 3201 Smith Avenue.

The public is welcome to attend this event, which also includes an award ceremony for the 2011 KSER Voice of the Community Awards. The Monroe Swift Watch is among a field of nominees for this annual award to recognize local voices that speak up about community or cultural concerns with positive results for residents of Snohomish and Island counties.

Admission is \$15. Tickets are available at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/199509.

For more information, visit www.kser.org.

Importance of snags in your neighborhood **November 9 NW Stream Center, Everett**

Serious gardeners, property owners, arborists and other conservationists are invited to learn about the role snags play as "wildlife trees" and their importance to sustaining local biodiversity of various species at a special presentation on Wednesday, November 9, 3 p.m., at the NW Stream Center.

Instructor Chris Anderson, a wildlife biologist with the WDFW, will present examples of local wildlife species that depend on snags and dying trees for their life needs, as well as how snags are an integral habitat feature that allows for a whole web of wildlife species to persist in areas where they would largely not be found otherwise.

Management considerations that assist in the retention of snags and similar dying trees on your property will be presented (you can bring pictures of your problem trees and ask questions about solutions after class).

Find out what steps to take to find the best help to assess and manage perceived hazard tree situations, while considering wildlife value.

Everyone who attends will receive a free copy of *Wildlife trees: the importance of snags in your neighborhood ... dead wood brings new life*.

Cost is \$5 for PAS members. Advance purchase required. For more info, call 425.316.8592 or visit www.streamkeeper.org.

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.

American Alps Legacy Project proposal **celebration**

December 9 Mountaineers Club, Seattle

You're invited to a celebration of the American Alps Legacy Project proposal for extending the North Cascades National Park on December 9, from 6-9 p.m., at The Mountaineers Club's committee rooms, 7700 Sandpoint Way, Seattle.

The celebration will feature an explanation of the proposal, as well as mountain climbers Jim Wickwire, John Roskelly and Steph Abbegg, who will share their experiences climbing in the North Cascades.

The proposal seeks to protect 230,000+ acres of pristine wild country from Bacon Creek near Marblemount to Washington Pass by adding it to the North Cascades National Park.

Light refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to nccorg@gmail.com.

Port Susan Snow Goose and Birding Festival **February 25-26 Stanwood, Washington**

The geese are heading back and plans are in the works for the 2012 Port Susan Snow Goose Festival on February 25-26. Watch the official festival web site – www.snowgoosefest.org – for an upcoming list of field trips, seminars and other activities.

PAS sponsors the event, so we hope lots of members and friends will join us in Stanwood, as well as volunteer to help out. Please contact Susie Schaefer at 425.771.8165 or susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org if you can help.

Birds and whales of San Ignacio Lagoon **March 5-13, 2012 Baja, Mexico**

Join Cabrillo Marine Aquarium March 5-13, 2012, for a trip that truly is the journey of a lifetime, especially for bird fans!

Gray whales return to San Ignacio Lagoon to mate and give birth. During this nine-day excursion, you'll spend three exciting days anchored in the lagoon where friendly gray whales and curious calves swim within arm's length of the skiffs.

For birders, this is a chance to see albatrosses, osprey, frigate birds, a variety of herons and egrets, not to mention all the birds that hang out in the mangroves found in San Ignacio. The trip also includes naturalist-led visits to uninhabited desert islands where passengers will have the chance to see even more birds, unique habitats and tons of other wildlife.

Contact Carolyn Kraft (310.548.7562 or cmaprograms@gmail.com) or visit the aquarium web site at www.cabrillomarineaquarium.org for more info.

Snags can provide important wildlife habitat

Some trees provide more wildlife habitat when they're dead than when they're alive. Standing dead and dying trees, called "snags" or "wildlife trees," are important for wildlife in natural and landscaped settings.

Birds, small mammals and other wildlife use snags for nests, nurseries, storage areas, foraging, roosting and perching. Live trees with snag-like features, such as hollow trunks, excavated cavities, and dead branches can provide similar wildlife value.

Snags occurring along streams eventually fall into the water, adding important habitat for fish and other life. Snags can attract wildlife species to your property that you might not otherwise see.

More than 100 species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians need snags for nesting, roosting and denning. Hollow snags and large knot-holes are used by Douglas squirrels, northern flying squirrels, porcupines, raccoons and even black bears. Several species of owls and woodpeckers also use large cavities. Bluebirds, chickadees, swallows, wrens and other songbirds use smaller cavities. Brown Creepers, nuthatches, bats, lizards and mourning cloak butterflies will roost behind loose bark and bark slits for winter warmth and shelter.

Some 45 of wildlife species forage for food in snags, which are often loaded with insects. Woodpeckers, sapsuckers, flickers, nuthatches, and a myriad of other insectivorous species regularly make snags their dining rooms. Mice, squirrels, jays, crows and other wildlife use snags more like kitchens, for food storage areas.

Some snags make ideal hunting perches for hawks, eagles and owls. The more open resting perches that snags provide are preferred by swallows, Band-tailed pigeons, Mourning Doves and other colonial birds. And, of course, the resonating surfaces of some snags are perfect for woodpeckers to

Blackbird ...

(continued from page 2)

Today, there are birding festivals throughout the year, at least one in every state of the union. Chambers of Commerce across the country are likely indifferent about birds and birders, but they are beginning to recognize that birdwatching is a major economic force.

More importantly, though, I would contend that birding festivals are the ideal venues to expose the public at large to birds, encouraging people to embrace the natural world, and make it an integral part of their lives.

I can think of no better example of my thesis than the 1,500 people who attended the fourth annual Swifts Night Out in Monroe on September 10 – and stood and applauded as the last of 3,500 Vaux's Swifts swirled into the chimney to roost as darkness fell the second Saturday in September.



A Pileated Woodpecker takes advantage of all a dead snag has to offer. Photo by Gale McCullough.

announce their presence with their hammering bills during courtship season.

Unfortunately, these dead or dying trees are cut down without much thought to their wildlife value and the management options that can safely prolong their existence. Of course if not managed properly, snags can pose a risk to people and structures. If a dead or dying tree threatens something that can be moved, consider moving it before cutting the tree down.

An alternative to eliminating the entire tree is to remove only the dangerous sections. Consulting with a certified arborist experienced in wildlife snags is recommended. These professionals can determine what part of a tree is a hazard and provide management options to reduce or eliminate risk.

When a tree must be cut down, maximize its habitat value by placing as much of the debris as possible near the area where the tree was removed. In hot, dry areas, move the material into the shade of nearby trees or shrubs.

You can create a snag from trees that are hazardous or problematic, like ones with forked tops or disease or invasive roots threatening a drainage or septic system, or individual trees in a group that needs thinning. Like landscaping rocks and boulders, snags can add interesting, artistic angles to your property.

More information about snags, including details about how to safely create a snag, or enhance existing dead or dying trees, is available at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/snags/>.

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.

Another way to donate

Taxpayers older than 70.5 years may make tax-free distributions up to \$100,000 to a charity from an IRA. This counts toward the minimum distribution requirement. It's 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.

Smart Growth report

By Kristin Kelly, Smart Growth Director

"What is smart growth?" As director of the Smart Growth program, that's a question I hear occasionally.

Smart Growth America defines it: *"Smart growth is a better way to build and maintain towns and cities. Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools. This approach supports local economies and protects the environment. At the heart of the American dream is the simple hope that each of us can choose to live in a neighborhood that is beautiful, safe, affordable and easy to get around. Smart growth does just that. Smart growth creates healthy communities with strong local businesses. Smart growth creates neighborhoods with schools and shops nearby and low-cost ways to get around for all citizens. Smart growth creates jobs that pay well and reinforces the foundations of our economy. Americans want to make their neighborhoods great, and smart growth strategies help make that dream a reality."* (www.smartgrowthamerica.org)

There are many elements of building a successful community: transportation, building design, services, jobs, affordability, complete streets and a protected environment. I work to support these elements at the county and city levels.

We, as citizens of Washington, are fortunate the Growth Management Act was adopted by the legislature in 1991. It provided policies and codes to help counties and cities plan appropriately for growth. Even so, bad things have happened and continue to happen – which is why the Smart Growth program is important.

Because economy has impacted the housing industry, the rush to clear land and construct new housing developments has slowed. So, it's easy to forget planning work is still taking place and we need to keep track of it.

The support – both financial and citizen involvement – of Pilchuck Audubon Society members is critical to the Smart Growth program. Each year, I develop a work plan. It grows as the year progresses – because, when working with government, circumstances change quickly. But, here's what I've put together for 2012 so far:

Advocate for minimum urban growth area expansions to protect rural and resource lands. Include climate change policies in the next 10-year comprehensive plan update (a three-year process beginning with Snohomish County Tomorrow in 2012) to determine population allocations in the county's rural areas, urban growth areas and cities.

Ensure success of salmon habitat restoration projects. Preserve more land. Find net gains (both in quantity and quality) in farmland to offset loss for restoration projects through continued involvement on the Sustainable Lands Strategy (SLS) executive committee.

SLS was formed in 2010 to recommend ways to achieve net gains in salmon habitat restoration with no net loss of farmland and farming. The committee, comprised of six representatives from agriculture, the tribes, conservation and governmental agencies, makes these recommendations to the county executive and council. A non-regulatory framework was developed earlier this year. Now we're working on policies and regulations to guide the process. After that, we'll concentrate on implementation.

Work with the Housing Consortium of Everett, the county and

key cities to develop an affordable housing demonstration project (using inclusionary or incentive zoning) along a major transit line. This will involve finding a developer and funding, as well as advocating for policies and regulations for success.

Work with Cascade Land Conservancy to build support for a successful Transfer of Development Rights Program in the county to protect farmland and to direct growth into existing cities and urban growth areas, focusing on urban centers.

Ensure that, in the county's response to the National Marine Fisheries Service biological opinion on how and where implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program for floodplain development will occur, new or amended county regulations won't be considered a "take" and will meet state laws. This could involve further amendments to the county's Critical Areas Ordinance and Shoreline Master Program.

Organize and build statewide support for adoption of the forthcoming Environmental Priorities and the Transportation for Washington campaign.

The campaign focus includes the following:

Fix it first, save lives. Fix crumbling bridges and roads first. Then ensure new investments don't cause more sprawl, pollution and increased costs.

More transit. An increase in transportation choices will reduce traffic congestion, improve freight mobility, decrease pollution, increase access to jobs and destinations and improve mobility for vulnerable citizens.

Build healthy, sustainable communities. Development and transportation go hand-in-hand. We need a more efficient transportation system to support affordable and healthy neighborhoods and connect citizens to jobs, communities and each other. It's a lot of work. I hope I can count on your help!

CBC ...

(continued from page 1)

Island – an area that hasn't been covered in recent years. Duane is looking for a leader to establish a small team of observers to count birds there. The area extends roughly from Glendale to Possession Point, a distance of about 3 miles along the shoreline. A map of the area will be provided.

A pizza party is in the works for south county participants. The exact location for this gathering will be announced prior to count day.

If you can't make it out to count, but would like to count the birds at your feeder, that's also an option. Feeder counters report the total hours of observation and the *total number of birds seen at one time*, not the total number of birds seen during the observation period. Counts are then reported to the lead person in your area.

Volunteers – including students – are welcome to participate. If you're interested in counting in the field or at home or in leading the south Whidbey Island count – or if you'd like to know who the leader is in your area – contact Duane at karnadk@comcast.net or 425.776.5756.

The Audubon Society requests observers older than 18 years pay a \$5 fee to support data compilation and publication. Participants in the feeder counts do not pay this fee.

Birding highlights

August 26, 2011–September 25, 2011

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

The trees don't know it's fall, but the birds certainly do. This month it's warblers. Warblers were spotted almost everywhere in the county. They are getting ready for their journey to warmer climates.

Six Black-throated Gray Warblers were reported by Carole and Larry Beason from Lake Bosworth. They also spotted 4 Wilson's Warblers in the lilac bushes. A Western Scrub Jay visited their yard and stayed for several days – it was a first for them. Their total species count of 48 also included 3 Belted Kingfishers, 36 Barn Swallows, 19 Canada Geese on the lake, 5 American Goldfinches, an Osprey, 36 Red-winged Blackbirds, 6 Rufous Hummingbirds, 33 Tree Swallows, 3 Violet-green Swallows, 4 Wood Ducks and a lone female Muscovy duck.

From Lake Stevens, Annette Colombini's report included 2 Northern Flickers, 4 Spotted Towhees, 6 Dark-eyed Juncos, 20 American Crows, 3 Black-capped Chickadees, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 2 Common Ravens and 5 American Robins for a species count of 8.

John Davis's report from Forest Park included 6 Orange-crowned Warblers, 2 Wilson's Warblers and 2 Black-throated Gray Warblers. His total species count of 40 also included 3 Anna's Hummingbirds, 2 Brown Creepers, 2 Golden-crowned Kinglets, a Pacific Slope Flycatcher, a Western Tanager, 10 Vaux's Swifts, 2 Swainson's Thrushes, 3 Pacific Wrens, 8 Cedar Waxwings and 2 Pileated Woodpeckers.

Gail Dibernardo reported a Townsend's Warbler and a Wilson's Warbler in her yard in Brier. She also listed 12 Dark-eyed Juncos, 32 Bushtits, 3 Anna's Hummingbirds, an American Goldfinch, a Fox Sparrow, 2 Pileated Woodpeckers, 4 Spotted Towhees, a Red-breasted Sapsucker, 5 Chestnut-backed Chickadees and 4 Song Sparrows for a total species count of 15.

Hilkka Egtvedt had an interesting sighting of an Osprey sitting in a tree eating a fish. She watched it for about an hour from her home in Mukilteo. On the same day, she spotted a Barred Owl in her apple tree. Her total species count of 28 also included 7 American Goldfinches, 2 Anna's Hummingbirds, 3 Black-headed Grosbeaks, about 200 Canada Geese flying over, a Eurasian Collared Dove, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches, a Rufous Hummingbird, 4 Dark-eyed Juncos, 2 Spotted Towhees and a White-crowned Sparrow.

Kriss Erickson's total species count of 8 from Everett included 3 Steller's Jays, 6 Black-capped Chickadees, a Bewick's Wren,



Black-throated Gray Warbler, by Matt Knoth



Orange-crowned Warbler, by Paul Kusmin

3 Northern Flickers, 6 Bushtits, an Anna's Hummingbird and 4 American Robins.

Many of the species reported by Adeline Gildow are spotted along Camano Island's Juniper Beach near her home. She spotted 6 Great Blue Herons, 3 Bald Eagles, 6 Caspian Terns, 28 Canada Geese flying over, 2 Killdeer, an Osprey flying over and many gull and duck species. Her total species count of 31 also included 3 Belted Kingfishers at Warm Beach, 3 Swainson's Thrushes in her neighbor's yard, 2 Evening Grosbeaks, 8 American Goldfinches, 4 Mourning Doves, a Red-tailed Hawk and 3 Rufous Hummingbirds.

Julie O'Donalds report from Brier included 20 Pine Siskins at the stream, a Rufous Hummingbird on a fuchsia, 4 American Robins, 2 Anna's Hummingbirds, 2 Bewick's Wrens, 4 Dark-eyed Juncos, 3 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 10 Bushtits, 3 Spotted Towhees, 4 Northern Flickers, a Pileated Woodpecker and 5 House Finches for a total species count of 20.

Two more Wilson's Warblers were spotted by Mary Sinker in Stanwood. She also listed 10 American Goldfinches, 43 American Robins (that might be a record), 12 Band-tailed Pigeons, 5 Downy Woodpeckers, 9 Mourning Doves, 5 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 4 Rufous Hummingbirds, 2 White-breasted Nuthatches, 5 White-crowned

Sparrows, a Red-tailed Hawk and 2 Pacific Wrens for a total species count of 30.

Dick Vanderhoff's report from Stanwood included a Rufous Hummingbird, a Bald Eagle, a Red-tailed Hawk and 200 Canada Geese flying over for a total species count of 4. Mkes me wonder if those were the same 200 Canada Geese spotted by Hilkka Egtvedt.

The Pine Siskins have finally returned to our yard in Marysville. I can remember when there were so many, the grass looked like it was moving. This time, about 15 landed at the little waterfall above the pond. I also spotted a Townsend's Warbler at the pond. My total species count of 26 included an American Goldfinch, 6 American Robins, 4 Barn Swallows and approximately 50 Tree Swallows along 100th Street, 9 California Quail (4 adults and 5 juveniles), 4 Northern Flickers, 2 Common Ravens, 10 Mallards at the pond, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches and a Cooper's Hawk that just didn't want to leave.

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

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

November program meeting
 Friday, November 11, 7 p.m.

**Conserving the
 Philippine Eagle**



Everett Firefighters Hall
 2411 Hewitt Avenue, Everett
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