



Pilchuck Audubon Profile



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Thanks to many for Swift Night Out

By Judy Alles, Publicity Chair, Pilchuck Audubon Society



Fans of Monroe's Vaux's Swifts show their pride in a parade through downtown. Photo by Jim Scolman.

Thanks to all the volunteers who made Swift Night Out such a rousing success. Whether behind the scenes or on the frontlines, your work was vital to the event's success.

The crowd was big – more than 1500 folks – and the weather was beautiful. The swifts put on a spectacular show!

Robin Fitch, principal at Frank Wagner Elementary, made a delightful emcee. And, once again, Leann Jacobson, her daughter and a faithful crew (Connie Young and others) outdid themselves with the spaghetti dinner. It was delicious. Larry Schwitters gave another fantastic lecture that entertained and educated everyone. His yearly presentation is a definite "must-see" portion of the event.

The booths were well done, interesting and informative. Neil and Carleen's Zimmerman's bird skins were a big hit. What an experience for folks – children, especially – to touch and see the birds close up. And, speaking of birds close up, thanks to Jeff Guidry and Freedom the eagle for appearing at the Sarvey Wildlife Center booth. They were a super special addition to a really interesting booth.

The Save Our Swifts and Pilchuck Audubon booths were active throughout the evening. Special thanks to Monroe Digital Copy Center for their donations of tablets, coloring books and puzzles for our visitors. They are gems, for sure.

Thanks to the many docents, who got brochures into willing hands and answered questions throughout the event – and the entire month. They are an essential part of this endeavor.

A special thanks to the YMCA for providing fun games for the kids, as well as extra tables. And, aside from the swifts, possibly the most important folks of all: Mike Farrell and his crew from the Monroe Parks and Recreation Department. They provided portable toilets and garbage cans. Pretty essential items at such a big event!

So, again, thanks to one and all for your work to make Swift Night Out such a success! Oh, and a special shout-out to the Cooper's Hawk for spending the evening elsewhere!

October program meeting
Friday, October 14, 7 p.m.

Birds, banding and believing in the power of observation

Cindy Easterson, Puget Sound Bird Observatory secretary, will describe her transformation from desultory birder to unlikely citizen scientist. She's an "always-learning" birder and will offer ways we can use our birding skills to add to the body of knowledge in avian science.

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.

Plan now for upcoming Christmas Bird Count

December may seem a long way off. But, it's really not. And, we're already planning our two annual Christmas Bird Counts.

Duane Karna is the new organizer and compiler for the Edmonds South County Count. Scott Atkinson returns as leader of the Everett North County Count.

The dates for the counts will be nailed down soon. The CBCs usually take place in mid-December to early January. Watch the "programs" section of the PAS web site for updated information and plan to participate in one or both counts. In fact, why not make it one of your regular holiday activities?

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President's message

By Mike Blackbird, President, Pilchuck Audubon Society



Few can deny the magisterial bearing of the Bald Eagle. With few predators (other than man), the Bald Eagle dominates its environment. It doesn't have to blend in to survive. It can afford its beautiful white head and tail. Even non-birders are awed by its majesty. With its power equal to its will, the Bald Eagle's imperiousness is warranted. Therein lies a dilemma because the Bald Eagle is also emblematic of the tribulations that ensue when man interferes with the natural order of things.

In 1782, Congress designated the Bald Eagle as our national symbol. Regrettably, being a national symbol didn't translate into a bright and lofty future. Farmers and ranchers saw the eagle as a predator of livestock. Fisherman didn't care for the competition. All indiscriminately slaughtered eagles at every opportunity.

For more than a century, but ending in 1940, the lower 48 states had a bounty on Bald Eagles. Alaska had a \$2 bounty on Bald Eagles from 1917-1945 and again from 1949-1953. In 32 bounty years, Alaskans killed 100,000 Bald Eagles.

Lifting the bounties didn't much improve the eagle's circumstances. By 1960, it was estimated the Bald Eagle population in the continental US had declined by 50%. Pitifully, DDT caused nest failures of 55-96% of the remaining population.

The situation looked grim for the survival of the species. But, with the end of bounty hunting, the removal DDT from the market, and being put on the endangered species list, Bald Eagles recovered dramatically. Today, at least in our part of the world, the Bald Eagle has rebounded to the point of creating a significant natural imbalance.

With the crashing of the salmon fishery, one of the major food

sources for the eagle, it has turned to rapaciously exploiting any available food source. Great Blue Herons have suffered from the predation of the eagles to the point of abandoning their nestlings and nests, even entire colonies.

Bald Eagles caused Caspian Terns to relinquish their colony on East Sand Island at the mouth of the Columbia during this last breeding season. The net result was not one Caspian Tern egg hatched this year.

Each of these situations was a ramification of human interference. Human activity almost wiped out the Bald Eagle. Manmade law prevented its final extinction. Man overfished the main food source of the eagle, causing it to turn to easier, available prey. Even the largest Caspian Tern colony on the west coast is a result of man's effort to reestablish the Columbia River salmon and steelhead runs. With hatchery salmon and steelhead smolts streaming down the river to the Pacific, Caspian Terns were stimulated by such largesse to increase exponentially at the expense of the smolts.

I would contend that the Bald Eagle should also be considered a symbol of man's intentions, whether ill or good, as proof of the Law of Unintended Consequences - most of which are failed consequences, and a lamentable recommendation for future success. Nothing good comes from meddling in the affairs of Mother Nature.

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. For more info, contact Kathleen Snyder at 425.438.1505.

About Pilchuck Audubon Society

The Pilchuck Audubon *Profile*, official newsletter of Pilchuck Audubon Society is published monthly.

Pilchuck Audubon Society (PAS) is a grass-roots environmental organization with members throughout Snohomish County and Camano Island, Washington.

Our mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife, for the benefit of the earth's biological diversity.

Through education, advocacy, and community activism, PAS is committed to bringing people closer to wildlife in order to build a deeper understanding of the powerful links between healthy ecosystems and human beings, and to encourage the involvement of our members

in efforts to protect the habitat this wildlife depends upon for survival.

We serve as a local chapter of the National Audubon Society. PAS is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, non-profit organization incorporated in the state of Washington.

Newsletter submissions

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

To contact Pilchuck Audubon Society, call 425.252.0926.

The *Profile* is available at www.pilchuckaudubon.org



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Trip calendar

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

Tuesday, October 4

Fir Island

Meet at 8 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. Waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors and autumn songbirds. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tuesday, October 11

Silvana roads

Meet at 8 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. Pipits, Snowy Owls, falcons, all the winter LBJs. If time allows, we may visit the Port Susan Nature Conservancy site. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tuesday, October 18

Point No Point

Meet at 7:25 a.m. at the Edmonds Marsh (south of West Dayton St., turn left just before the railroad tracks). We'll take the ferry to Kingston and bird the voyage, the docks, Point No Point, and Foulweather Bluff. Always lots of surprises, both in the air and on the water. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Sunday, October 16

Snoqualmie Pass

Meet at 8 a.m. at Everett Mall – in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. This is a do-over of last year's trip that was washed out. The map shows a few short nature trails we can visit along the pass, each easily accessible from I-90. We may also briefly visit the ski resort's water treatment plant. Having never been there, I don't know if there is access. There is a fee of \$5 per car for a Forest Pass. All day. Pack lunch, water, hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, good walking boots and foul weather gear. We'll probably make an additional stop on the way home for a little socializing over dinner.

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

Sat., Oct. 22 Mushroom hike with Greg Hovander

By popular demand, the mushroom hike is back! We'll meet at 9 a.m. at the Sultan park-and-ride at the east end of town for this is all-day hike. We'll start at the Scenic Trailhead near Steven's Pass and walk the gentle grade of the Iron Goat Trail westward with mycologist and pharmacist Greg Hovander. He's a walking encyclopedia of mycological knowledge. Not only can he identify hundreds of fungal species, but he can tell you their medicinal qualities, their nutritional value and cooking methods. And, on top of that, he is a *fun guy!*

Space is limited to 12, so contact Kathy Johnson as soon as possible to reserve your spot.

Leader: Kathy Johnson, 360.659.7252 or katherine@earthlink.net

Final Birdathon numbers

We've closed the books on the 2011 Birdathon fundraiser. Six participants raised \$3300. Not bad in this economy!

Just think what six additional birders could do next year. Please consider joining the fun in 2012.

Tuesday, October 25

South Whidbey Island

Meet at 7:15 a.m. at the Eastmont Park and Ride (I-5, exit 189) on the east side of the freeway. We'll aim for the 8 a.m. ferry from Mukilteo. Species counts are always high here. Crockett Lake is exciting and the scenery is gorgeous. Pack a lunch.

Leaders: Wilma Bayes, 360.629.2028
Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

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.

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

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.

Get your order in for November seed sale

Mark your calendar for the next PAS birdseed sale, Saturday, Nov. 5. To order birdseed and related supplies, 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. Jay Ward and other volunteers will be on hand to collect payment and help load the seed.

Bering Sea Fisheries is located on the Snohomish River, east of I-5. From I-5 northbound, take exit 193 (Pacific Avenue) and head north on Walnut Street. Turn right on Hewitt Avenue. Hewitt becomes Highland Drive. After about a mile, turn right onto California Street. California becomes Railway Avenue. Bering Sea Fisheries is ahead on the right.

From I-5 southbound, take exit 194 (Everett Avenue). At Everett Avenue, turn left. Follow Everett Avenue to Harrison Avenue and turn right. At Railway Avenue, turn left. Bering Sea Fisheries is ahead on the right.

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.

Please remember: the price of seed fluctuates. So, the price the day you pick it up might be slightly different from what you were told when the order was placed.

Have fun, be entertained and get smarter

Northwest heroes: partners in conservation **Saturday, October 1** Legion Park, Everett

Please join the Cascade Land Conservancy for an event honoring the community of heroes improving the quality of life in Snohomish County. Come to Legion Park in Everett on Saturday, October 1, 1:30-4:30 p.m. for an awards ceremony, live music, family activities and ice cream to honor leaders and partners in conservation and community building.

Legion Park is located at 145 Alverson Blvd., Everett.

For more information, contact Diedra Petrina at 509.962.1654 or diedrap@cascadeland.org.

Killer Whale Tales **Saturday, October 1** NW Stream Center, Everett

See our southern resident orca whales "swimming" on the walls at the Northwest Stream Center. Thanks to amazing videography by Jeff Hogan from Killer Whale Tales (www.killerwhaletales.org), you can learn how to identify each of the 86 members of the southern resident pods, who call the Salish Sea their home.

The presentation runs from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 1, at the Adopt-a-Stream Foundation auditorium in McCollum Park, 600 128th Street SE, Everett.

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.

San Juan Islands cruise **October 3-5** Leaving from Sequim

Join the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society for a three-day wildlife cruise through the spectacular San Juan Archipelago. Cruise from Sequim to Roche Harbor Resort and San Juan Island, whale-watching along the way. Picnic on Sucia Island, and cruise back to Sequim via dramatic Deception Pass.

For more information, visit www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org or contact 360.681.4076 or rcoffice@olympus.net.

BirdFest and Bluegrass **October 7-9** Ridgefield, Washington

Join the Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge and the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Staff as we celebrate the coming of fall and the wildlife that make the Refuge their home. BirdFest and Bluegrass is an opportunity to enjoy the sights and sounds of fall migration and Bluegrass music throughout Ridgefield.

Enjoy family activities – like building a birdhouse or making a bird feeder. Peruse a photography display and meet the photographers. Meet owls, falcons and a vulture from the Audubon Society of Portland. Wander the birders' marketplace. Go on a field trip. Take a class. Have a ball!

For more information and a complete schedule of events, visit www.ridgefieldfriends.org.

Fall Audubon Chapters of Washington (ACOW) **October 8** Moses Lake

During the 1970s, local Audubon chapters became involved with environmental lobbying efforts at the state level. Chapter representatives began gathering twice a year to discuss issues and share ideas and inspiration. The gathering of chapters, known as the Audubon Council of Washington (pronounced "a-cow") continues today.

The fall ACOW meeting will be Saturday, Oct. 8, at the Grant County Fairgrounds in Moses Lake. The main goal is to determine the future of a state Audubon presence in Washington.

There will be optional self-guided field trips on Saturday evening/Sunday morning. Please bring your Central Basin Birding Trail Map to facilitate your birding.

Several folks from PAS are already scheduled to attend this meeting. But, the more the merrier. For registration information, visit www.spokaneaudubon.org. To learn more about possible carpooling opportunities, contact Kathleen Snyder, PAS Secretary, at 425.438.1505.

All about bats **Friday, October 14** NW Stream Center, Everett

Join bat expert Barbara Ogaard of Sarvey Wildlife Rehab Center for a voyage into the mysterious world of bats. See live bats up close and learn facts from myth. Do vampire bats really exist? Did you know bats are the sole pollinators of bananas? Discover how important bats are to the environment and the ecological role they play. Barbara and her bats will engage and entertain all ages. At the close of the program, you will go outside and call some bats.

The presentation runs from 7:30-8:30 p.m. on Friday, October 14, at the Adopt-a-Stream Foundation auditorium in McCollum Park, 600 128th Street SE, Everett.

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.

Learn about bobcats **Friday, October 21** NW Stream Center, Everett

The Adopt-a-Stream Foundation invites you to join Kestrel Skyhawk from the Sarvey Wildlife Rehabilitation Center for a presentation of the local habitats, feeding habits and family structure of bobcats.

The program runs from 10-11:30 a.m. on Friday, October 21, at the Adopt-a-Stream Foundation auditorium in McCollum Park, 600 128th Street SE, Everett.

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.

(See "Festivals" on page 8)

Jan van Niel retires from PAS board post

By Susie Schaefer, Vice President, Pilchuck Audubon Society

It was hard to open the email Jan van Niel sent the PAS Board last month – even though it wasn't unexpected. Jan had been making noises about retiring for some time. But, seeing it in black and white was still a shock to my system.

When I first joined PAS in 1980, Jan was the president. If my memory serves me correctly, he immediately enlisted my help at a giant PAS fundraising recycle sale. There, I started to get acquainted with Jan and Sally and their two teenaged daughters, Christie and Lisa.

Since then, I've done tons of birding trips and gone to more meetings with Jan than I



Jan and Colleen van Niel

could ever count. I watched the girls grow up and have their own kids. I had to say an early (and untimely) good-bye to Sally. And, I happily celebrated with Jan as he and Colleen started and new and happy life together.

And, all these years, Jan has worked on PAS conservation issues. When Sally died, he took over the PAS Conservation Committee and served as our representative on the State Audubon Conservation Committee.

Thank you, Jan van Niel, for all the years and dedication you have given to Pilchuck Audubon.

Allen Gibbs takes over as conservation chair



Allen Gibbs, new PAS Conservation Chair

Pilchuck Audubon is pleased to introduce Allen Gibbs as the new chapter conservation chair. Allen is a Wenatchee native and studied political science and East Asian studies at Western Washington University in Bellingham, as well as advanced studies at several Washington, DC, area universities.

He retired from the US Forest Service after 38 years, plus four years of additional federal service. He now works as a consultant in public and government relations.

Allen joined Central Washington Audubon in the early 1980s and later was a member of the Coeur d'Alene and Washington, DC, chapters. He joined Pilchuck Audubon in the late 1990s.

In his spare time, Allen enjoys Pacific Northwest history, research and writing projects. His favorite bird is the Western Tanager and his current favorite book is *Tree of Smoke*, by Denis Johnson.

Thanks for taking on the conservation chair position, Allen. We look forward to drawing on your wealth of knowledge!

If you're interested in joining the PAS Conservation Committee, or have issues or concerns to share with Allen, feel free to contact him at allen.gibbs@pilchuckaudubon.org.

E-Cycle Washington recycles electronics

Did you know the E-Cycle Washington program has safely recycled more than 39,000 **tons** of televisions, computers, and monitors? In June alone, King County collected more than one million pounds of products for recycling. That's a lot of electronics filled with lead, mercury and other toxins not heading to landfills here or abroad.

The program, created by a 2006 campaign spearheaded by Washington Environmental Council (WEC) and Zero Waste Washington, has been successful because of its comprehensive and convenient network of free collection sites. While celebrating this success doesn't mean the work is over (WEC would like this program to be extended to other electronics and extend the producer pay model to other realms), it does mean that we are making real, significant progress.

To learn more about E-Cycle Washington and WEC, visit www.ecyclewashington.org and www.wecprotects.org.

New demo garden sign nearly complete

The Edmonds Wildlife Habitat Native Plant Demo Garden in Edmonds conducted an open house on September 11. It was featured on the backyard wildlife habitat tour in conjunction with Puget Sound Bird Fest. And, after a couple years of growing, the garden really looks beautiful and made a great impression on all who came through that day.

Special thanks to the volunteers who helped with the cleanup on September 3, as well as to those who greeted visitors during the open house.

Please be sure to drop by the next time you're in Edmonds. Soon, a new educational sign will be installed by Rich Lindsey and his crew from Edmonds Parks. This beautiful sign was produced by Michael Johnson, under the direction of Cindy Easterson.

Watch future issues of *The Profile* for details on a special event at the garden this fall.

Smart Growth report

By Kristin Kelly, Smart Growth Director

Feast with Friends

The fifth annual Feast with Friends was the most successful yet! Thanks to our sponsors, attendees and everyone who donated time, products and talents. The food was delicious and the wines and music added a special touch to a great evening. Several folks said they'll bring more friends next year – and that makes me happy.

Proceeds from this event help keep the Smart Growth Program alive and my work for Futurewise going strong in Snohomish and Skagit counties.

SnoH2Omish: Learning about our Water Resources

The third Livable Snohomish County Summit and Candidate Forum is Saturday, October 29, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the PUD Building, 2320 California Street, Everett. This FREE event is sponsored by Pilchuck Audubon Society, Futurewise, Transition Port Gardner, Citizens to Protect the Upper Snohomish River Valley, the Snohomish Chapter of Sierra Club and KSER 90.7FM Radio. Dubbed *SnoH2Omish: Learning about our Water Resources*, it's an opportunity to learn about protecting our most valuable resource: water!

We'll kick it off in the auditorium with presentations from Zsofia Pzastor and Terri Strandberg. Zsofia, from Sustainable Development Task Force, will discuss low-impact development. Terri, from Snohomish County Planning, will give an overview of new regulations affecting water and land use.

Rounding out the morning, we've scheduled breakout sessions from a variety of experts, including Lois Ruskell (Snohomish Conservation District), John Anderson (Sound Salmon Solutions), Heather Trim (People for Puget Sound), Terry Williams (Tulalip Tribes), Alan Shank (farm planner), Morgan Schneider Ruff (Puget Sound Partnership) and Sheila McKinnon (WSU Extension).

We'll also show a timely documentary, *Tapped*. *Tapped* is a behind-the-scenes look at the unregulated and unseen world of the bottled water industry. From plastic production, to the ocean where many bottles end up, this film trails the path of the bottled water industry and the communities which became the unwitting chips on the table. This revelatory film

features those caught at the intersection of big business and the public's right to water.

The summit is completely free. However, we encourage you to pre-register, so we can be sure to have a free sack lunch available for you. Wander through a host of informational tables and exhibits at lunchtime and throughout the day.

The featured event in the afternoon is a candidate forum. All six candidates for county executive and county council (districts 2 and 3) will be there: incumbent Aaron Reardon and Mike Hope (running for county executive), incumbent Brian Sullivan and Glen Sayes (running for county council district 2) and incumbent Stephanie Wright and Kathy Vaughn (running for county council district 3). The forum will be moderated by Ed Bremer from KSER 90.7FM and will center around environmental and land use issues.

If you have a question for the candidates, please submit it to me at kristin@futurewise.org no later than October 10.

Another round of breakout sessions is scheduled after the candidate forum. Dr. Ralph Bennett will share an audio-visual tour of a one-million-gallon-per-day water bottling plant. Joanne Hedou will discuss flooding and farms. Other speakers include Kerri Cechovik from Washington Environmental Council, Suzie Wong Swim from Snohomish County Surface Water Management, Mark Hintz and Jerry Hebert on MacroSound Water Treatment Technology, Stef Frenzel and Gary Purves on the Suite-WA Living City Design for Everett and a representative from Pilchuck Audubon Society.

The afternoon will feature a screening of *Flow*, Irena Salina's award-winning documentary investigation into what experts label the most important political and environmental issue of the century: the world water crisis. Salina builds a case against the growing privatization of the world's dwindling fresh water supply with an unflinching focus on politics, pollution, human rights and the emergence of a domineering world water cartel.

Yes, it is a full day! I hope you can attend! The auditorium only holds 300 folks, so RSVP soon at kristin@futurewise.org.

Rainier weekend hike really blossoms

By Jonathan Blubaugh

Our plans to hike the loop along the Ohanapocosh River on August 21 morphed into a trip to Sunrise instead. And, may I just say: "I told you so!" I've often said it's good to schedule late summer bird hikes in alpine areas because that's when the wildflowers are at their best. Well, you should have been there because the flowers were better than ever!

Along the shoulders and at every meadow and vista, the flowers were profuse. I didn't keep notes on the flowers, but I should have. We saw Indian paint brush, western pasque flower, aster, red columbine, heather, dandelion, daisy, lupine, penstemon and tiger lily.

It reminded me of my grandmother's Arizona



Highways magazines (she lived in Monroe). The covers always showed unbelievably lush cactus blossoms and wildflowers. It was really kind of a fraud: few visitors ever see such displays in desert Arizona. But, that's the way it was at Rainier in the last week of August this year. Flowers everywhere you turned.

There were very few birds. We saw more at the Everett Mall mitigation ponds before we left than we did for the rest of the trip.

Here's the paltry list of birds were encountered: a Great Blue Heron, an adult Red-tailed Hawk, 7 eclipse Mallards, 3 American Crows, a Common Raven, an American Robin, a chickadee and 5 Dark-eyed Juncos.

Birding highlights

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

I recently received an inquiry from a member of the Greater Ozarks Audubon Chapter who was visiting our area. She wanted to know about the Vaux's Swifts in Monroe. I explained how the little wonder birds pass through twice each year and about the Swift Night Out event on Sept. 10. She told me that on Sept. 9, her chapter was observing the birds return to a chimney in her Missouri town. She was surprised they return here at the same time.

There were no swifts reported by our sightings team, but there certainly are a lot of other species. Carole and Larry Beason, of Lake Bosworth, listed 41 species, which included 30 Barn Swallows, 2 Belted Kingfishers, 10 Black-headed Grosbeaks, 4 American Goldfinches, a Gray Jay, 6 Lesser Scaups, an Osprey, 10 Brewer's Blackbirds on the dock, 2 Red-breasted Sapsuckers, 2 Western Tanagers and 2 Wilson's Warblers.

John Davis listed 43 species on his walks through Forest Park. His report included 3 American Goldfinches, a Bewick's Wren, a Black-throated Gray Warbler, 3 Cedar Waxwings, 2 Northern Rough-winged Swallows, an Olive-sided Flycatcher, 2 Orange-crowned Warblers, 2 Pacific Wrens, 2 Swainson's Thrushes, a Violet-green Swallow, 2 Warbling Vireos, 2 Western Wood-pewees and 2 Wilson's Warblers. I am amazed by the variety of birds he spots there.

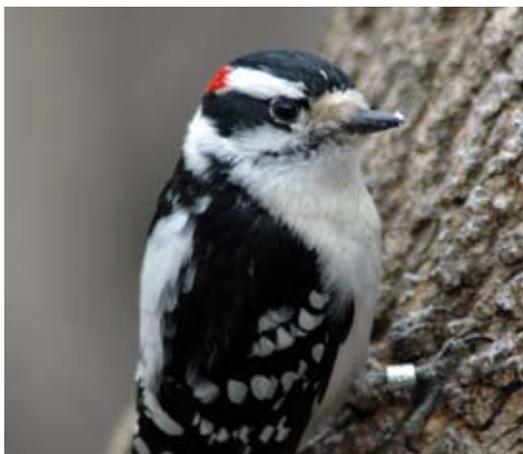
Hilkka Egtvedt also reported a Wilson's Warbler from her Mukilteo home. And, she listed 7 American Goldfinches, 3 Anna's Hummingbirds, a Bewick's Wren, 7 Black-headed Grosbeaks, 4 California Quail, a House Sparrow, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches, a Rufous Hummingbird, 2 White-crowned Sparrows, 2 Band-tailed Pigeons and 7 House Finches for a total species count of 24.

Reporting from Everett, Kriss Erickson listed 9 species which included 2 Northern Flickers, 16 Bushtits, 6 American Crows, 4 Steller's Jays, 8 Black-capped Chickadees, 3 American Robins, 6 Mallards with 16 ducklings, 8 European Starlings and a Bewick's Wren.

Julie O'Donald still has the Western Screech Owl in the green-



Wilson's Warbler, by Paul Kusmin



Downy Woodpecker, by Marg Hestlin



Barn Owl, by Don Metzner

belt near her home in Brier. She also reported a Western Wood-pewee in the greenbelt, plus a Pacific-slope Flycatcher, a Cedar Waxwing and 3 Black-headed Grosbeaks on the service berries, 3 Anna's Hummingbirds and 2 Rufous Hummingbirds in the flowers, 2 Hairy Woodpeckers at the suet (first time in years), a Cooper's Hawk in the trees, 5 Band-tailed Pigeons, 3 Bewick's Wrens and 3 Golden-crowned Kinglets for a species count of 27.

Mary Sinker's report from Stanwood included 32 American Robins (25 juveniles) on the lawn, 15 American Goldfinches at the feeders, 5 Black-headed Grosbeaks, 4 Downy Woodpeckers, 9 Mourning Doves, 5 Red-breasted Nuthatches (including 3 fledglings), 5 Spotted Towhees, 11 Rufous Hummingbirds, 5 Song Sparrows, 2 Winter Wrens, 5 Tree Swallows, 2 White-breasted Nuthatches, 5 White-crowned Sparrows and 2 Wilson's Warblers for a total species count of 32.

Dick Vanderhoff spotted 2 Red-breasted Sapsuckers at Marine Park near Stanwood. He also spotted a Red-tailed Hawk along Marine Drive. His total species count of 14 also included 2 American Goldfinches, 4 Rufous Hummingbirds, 2 Mourning Doves, 3 Black-headed Grosbeaks, 5 House Sparrows on the deck, 3 Spotted Towhees, 10 Steller's Jays in the yard and at the feeders, a Bald Eagle, 2 Golden-crowned Kinglets and 2 Band-tailed Pigeons.

The highlight of my list would be the 2 Barn Owls we spotted in the woods and along the road. My total species count of 28 from my home in Marysville includes 5 Barn Swallows on the wires, 14 California Quail (includes 10 juveniles), 2 Common Ravens flying over, 6 Black-headed Grosbeaks, a Red-tailed Hawk, 10 Tree Swallows on the wires, 2 White-crowned Sparrows, a Cooper's Hawk in the yard and on the feeders, 2 Purple Finches and a Pacific Wren on the deck.

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

Young birders explore during Bird Fest

By Terry Nightingale

As part of Puget Sound Bird Fest, four adults and two young birders surveyed three habitats in Edmonds. After a quick introductory discussion, we made our way from downtown Edmonds to Pine Ridge Park, which is primarily forest, but also includes small and large ponds.

Just like last year, the parking area yielded a hummingbird sighting, as we were treated to a nice view of an Anna's Hummingbird perched at the very top of a Douglas fir tree. After entering the forest proper, we heard and saw many of the usual suspects, including chickadees (both black-capped and chestnut-backed), a Red-breasted Nuthatch, an American Robin, a Northern Flicker and two particularly raucous Steller's Jays.

We were sad to discover the smaller of the park's ponds was completely dry. No birds to be found. Undeterred, we pressed on to the larger pond, which did have some water, though much less than last year. Once again, no birds were in evidence, but we did at least observe a beautiful Blue-eyed Darner dragonfly.

Though the ponds were a bust, we continued on the trail and happened upon a flock of Bushtits, flitting from branch to branch and making their high "plip-plip" calls.



Blue Darner Dragonfly, by Don Metzner

We jumped back into our cars and drove down to the Edmonds waterfront park. We walked along the path and out onto the jetty, where we had a good view of the water in all directions. The sea birds we were hoping for were there: Glaucous-winged Gull, Double-crested Cormorant and a small group of Surf Scoters.

To the north, we could see a Great Blue Heron wading in shallow water and hunting for fish. Some decidedly land-based birds (at least when they're not flying) made an appearance, as well. We heard a Savannah Sparrow "seep-ing" from the tall grass near the beach, and three of the

friendly, neighborhood Rock Pigeons flew out from under the ferry pier to say hello.

An Osprey flew over, calling loudly. And, we heard another Osprey reply from over the water. While our group watched, the Osprey closer to shore then hovered and dove straight down into the water, coming up with a beautiful catch. I couldn't have asked for a nicer display for our young birders to witness!

Overall, it was a beautiful day with lots of bird sightings, and fun was had by all.

Festivals ...

(continued from page 4)

Livable Snohomish County Summit and Candidate Forum

Saturday, October 29 PUD Building, Everett
Please plan to attend "SnoH2Omish: learning about our water resources," on Saturday, October 29, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at the PUD Building, 2320 California Street, Everett. See more info on page 6.

Please register by e-mailing kristin@futurewise.org.

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.

The Big Year could make a big impact



The Big Year, inspired by Mark Obamscik's best-selling chronicle, makes its general release on Oct. 14. In

the film, three birders – played by Owen Wilson, Steve Martin and Jack Black – compete in a contest to see who can spot the most species in a 365-day period.

Audubon Magazine scored an exclusive interview with the three stars for the September/October issue. Look for it at www.audubon.org.

PAS members should be pleased to see the Audubon Society make a few appearances in this positive, engaging look at birding and birders. It's not every day a major film with high-profile talent injects birds and birding into the pop culture mainstream.

If you see the movie, please feel free to submit a review for next month's *Profile*. Send your comments to annette.colombini@pilchuckaudubon.org.

PAS concerned about Monte Cristo cleanup

By Katherine Johnson, Forest Committee Chair, Pilchuck Audubon Society

East of Granite Falls is a ghost town: Monte Cristo, a relic of the mining era of the late 1800s. Although few buildings remain, there are innumerable historic artifacts in the area. The Monte Cristo Preservation Association has worked for decades to mark historical sites, maintain trails and keep the road open for access by property owners and the US Forest Service (USFS). The area is rich with history and brings the period alive for local residents, schoolchildren and tourists.

The mines left different legacy: tons of toxic waste and tailings loaded with heavy metals.

In 2006, the Washington Environmental Council filed a Notice of Intent to sue the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest for failure to meet requirements of the Clean Water Act and other water quality acts by not "cleaning up" the sources of contamination at the Monte Cristo mining sites. The federal court dismissed the suit when the USFS said it would immediately begin the process under CERCLA (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act) to determine the extent to which the Monte Cristo sites needed clean up. If the need existed, the USFS would conduct remedial actions to bring the sites into compliance.

The USFS is now proceeding under CERCLA. Unfortunately, this process is exempt from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which we have come to take for granted, which includes public notification and comment/appeal periods.

PAS recently learned the USFS was poised to begin cutting old-growth trees for a new road to the Monte Cristo town site, in an inventoried roadless area and designated critical habitat for Marbled Murrelets and Northern Spotted Owls. In order to

reduce (but by no means eliminate!) impacts to the Marbled Murrelet, this cutting can only be done after September 15 and before the spring nesting season. So, the USFS has a narrow window in the fall (because the area is generally snow-covered in the spring) when they can cut trees.

Meanwhile, the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) will gather test samples from private lands near Monte Cristo which haven't been studied by the federal government yet. The DOE operates under state (not federal) laws and is following SEPA procedures just to do these studies of pollution levels, which will precede any cleanup. They'll use the access road created by the FS, however. The PAS Forest Committee submitted comments to both the USFS and the DOE.

We are concerned – not only about the effects of road construction on wildlife – but with whether the "cleanup" itself might actually release more toxins than are already present. We believe the agencies involved should study this more thoroughly to ensure they aren't going to make a bad situation worse – before they destroy valuable old growth forests to build the new road.

As of this writing, the Decision Notice hasn't been signed by Jose Linares, USFS Regional Engineer. But, we expect it will happen any day, and the trees will start coming down immediately afterward. Recently, PAS and other environmental groups met with Mr. Linares and other USFS officials to learn more about the project and express our concerns. We are investigating what options, if any, we have, under CERCLA.

More to come!

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</i> <i>1429 Avenue D, PMB 198</i> <i>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</i> <i>1429 Avenue D, PMB 198</i> <i>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</i> <i>POB 420235</i> <i>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: _____