

Bird Fest, Swifts will highlight fun weekend

Plan on a full weekend of birding activities September 10-12. The sixth annual Puget Sound Bird Fest kicks off on Friday, September 10, with a presentation by Seattle author and naturalist Lyanda Lynn Haupt. Her book, *Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness*, was an *LA Times* and *Seattle Times* Best Book of 2009.

The opening reception gets underway at 7 p.m. in the Plaza Room at the Edmonds Library, 650 Main Street, Edmonds.



The three-day festival continues Saturday with more speakers, guided bird walks, land and water-based field trips, exhibits and educational activities and a tour of certified backyard wildlife habitats.

Saturday field trips include a morning birding cruise on Puget Sound with the Edmonds Yacht Club and an evening bus trip to Monroe to see thousands of Vaux's Swifts.

There will be workshops and presentations all day at the Frances Anderson Center, including sessions focusing on hummingbirds and Trumpeter Swans, bird photography, how to choose and use bird feeders and nest boxes, and an introduction to live raptors from the Sarvey Wildlife Center.

The featured activity at Puget Sound Bird Fest on Sunday is a tour of the new Willow Creek Hatchery Wildlife Habitat and Native Plant Demonstration Garden and certified backyard wildlife habitats in Edmonds.

For more details and a full schedule of events, speakers and field trips, visit www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org.

And, if you are interested in volunteering at Puget Sound Bird Fest or serving on a committee, please contact Sally Lider at 425.771.0227 or liders@ci.edmonds.wa.us.

Save Saturday, September 11 for Swifts Night Out in Monroe

Even if you can't make it to Edmonds, be sure to trek to Monroe Saturday evening for the third annual Swifts Night Out at Frank Wagner Elementary, 639 West Main Street. The festivities begin at 6 p.m. with docents available to answer questions, educational exhibits, kids' activities and more.

At 6:30 p.m., Larry Schwitters will lead a presentation in the school auditorium. Then, grab a blanket, find a spot on the lawn and wait for the show to start! Last year, more than 1000 folks attended, so be sure to get to Monroe early!

**September program meeting
Friday, September 10, 7 p.m.**

Opening ceremony of Puget Sound Bird Fest

Join us at the opening reception of Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds. The featured speaker will be Lyanda Lynn Haupt, author of *Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness*. Everyone welcome!

Location for the September meeting only:

Edmonds Library, Plaza Room
650 Main Street, Edmonds

For more information, call 425.252.0926

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

Birdathon thank you

Thanks to Lissy Villa of the Wild Bird Nest in Lynnwood for providing gift cards for Birdathon prizes.

We appreciate your donation!

In this issue

President's message .. 2	Trip reports 6
Chapter picnic 3	Birding highlights 7
Trip calendar 4	Songbird threat 8
Upcoming festivals 5	Smart Growth Report .. 9

President's message

By Mike Blackbird, President, Pilchuck Audubon Society



Alongside Interstate 90, on the outskirts of my hometown in northern Idaho, a billboard proclaims: *You are now near KELLOGG, the town which was discovered by a JACKASS – and which is inhabited by its descendants.*

Local legend claims that an old prospector, Noah Kellogg, was camped up Milo Creek in 1885. He awoke one morning to find his jackass had slipped its hobble during the night and climbed up the mountainside. Kellogg spent all morning trying to catch his jackass, only to watch it scramble out of his reach each time he approached it.

Finally, out of frustration, the old prospector threw a rock and hit the jackass in the flank. Startled, it kicked out its hind legs and knocked the cap off an outcropping, exposing a vein of lead and silver, which would prove to be 70 feet wide and a half-mile long.

Most likely, the story is apocryphal. But, Noah Kellogg did discover the biggest lead and silver mine in the world. It wasn't long before even more rich mines were discovered in the mountains around the Silver Valley. Between 1885 and 1979, the mines produced 907,000,000 ounces of silver – almost five times what was produced at the legendary Comstock Lode in Nevada.

Unfortunately, extracting the mineral wealth from the Coeur d'Alene Mountains came at significant environmental cost. I won't go into great detail. Suffice it to say that the south fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, dissecting Kellogg and flowing the length of the Silver Valley, ran gray with mine tailings. In my youth, the river was always called the "Lead Creek" – or

"crick," in local parlance. No fish could survive the waters of Lead Creek and no riparian foliage grew on its banks.

The mountains surrounding Kellogg were soon denuded of trees to timber the mines. Eventually, more than a billion board feet of timber was used in the tunnels and shafts of the Silver Valley's mines. I've heard it said that in the Coeur d'Alene Mountains, there was more timber underground than above ground. Forest fires in 1910 and 1931 burned what the mines hadn't claimed.

When the lead smelter was built in 1917, the resulting sulfur dioxide-laden smoke prevented any natural reforestation. The only green on the mountains above Kellogg were Service Berry and, ironically, Syringa, Idaho's state flower.

I suspect there was little doubt in the minds of travelers driving by Kellogg on I-90 that descendants of a jackass surely lived there.

When the Bunker Hill mine and smelter closed in 1981, this little Idaho town, destined to be the second largest Superfund site in the nation, refused to die and fade away like many of the mining towns in the west. Instead, it began reinventing itself in an environmentally and pleasing manner.

When I left Kellogg (after graduating high school to join the navy in the summer of 1960), it was said that, "As long as the river runs gray, men will have silver in their pockets." Returning 50 years later, the lead smelter is long gone. Its two huge 600+ foot smokestacks have been toppled and buried in unmarked graves. Today, a championship golf course

(See "Blackbird" on page 10)

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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Pilchuck Audubon chapter picnic



Claire and Hilka Egtvedt prepare to enjoy the delicious hot dogs cooked and served up by Virginia Clark at the Pilchuck Audubon chapter picnic August 22. Photo by Annette Colombini.



Pilchuck Audubon Society Secretary, Kathleen Snyder, was among the volunteers honored at the chapter picnic on August 22. Photo by Annette Colombini.



Chapter President Mike Blackbird talked to the picnickers about the role of volunteers in the success of Pilchuck Audubon programs such as the Osprey nesting platforms, Save Our Swifts and more. Photo by Annette Colombini.

Good food, good people, good work

The weather wasn't great – and that probably kept some people away. But, the Pilchuck Audubon Society picnic at Jennings Park in Marysville was still deemed a success.

The gathering was a celebration of people: people who give their time to an organization and causes they believe in.

They celebrated with good food: tireless volunteer Virginia Clark worked her magic on the grill. There were fruit, macaroni and potato salads. And more.

They celebrated good people. Volunteer of the year Bill Lider was there. Field trip leader Art Wait was there. Chapter treasurer Carolyn Lacy was there. And more.

They celebrated good work. Chapter President Mike Blackbird talked about projects like the Osprey nesting platforms, Save Our Swifts, Smart Growth wins. And more.

There's always more to do. Being the environmental conscience of Snohomish County is a tough, never-ending job.

But, with fine volunteers like those honored at the chapter picnic on August 22, Pilchuck Audubon Society is bound to be celebrating its good people and their good work for many years to come.

Trip calendar

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

Sunday, August 29

Mountain Loop

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5, exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. We'll hike the Old Government Trail in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Nat. Forest.

Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425.244.7633

Tuesday, September 7

Camano Island

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

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tue., Sept. 14

Point Roberts, Boundary Bay, BC

Meet at 7 a.m. at Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5, exit 200). Park away from the store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. (next to I-5). To cross the border, you need a passport or enhanced driver's license. The birth certificate and regular driver's license combo is no longer valid. Shorebirds, waterfowl, seabirds, raptors and maybe a puffin or phalarope. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Sunday, September 19

Lord Hill Regional Park

Meet at 7 a.m. at Everett Mall – in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. Or, meet us at the park entrance at 7:30. This is a pleasant loop around the hill through the forest and past streams and a pond. Probably just a half-day because it's close by. If we're done early, maybe we can sneak over to Shadow Lake afterward.

Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425.244.7633

Tuesday, Sept. 21

Samish Flats, Samish Island

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5, exit 200). Park away from the store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. (next to I-5). Let's look for waterfowl, seabirds, shorebirds and raptors before hunting season begins in this world-renown birding locale. Bring a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tuesday, September 28

South Whidbey Island

Meet at 7:15 a.m. at the Eastmont Park and Ride (on the east side of I-5 at exit 189). We'll plan to catch 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

Sunday, October 17

St. Helens Volcano

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Everett Mall – in the back, near the transit facility by LA Fitness. Not a hike. Long day. We'll travel to Mt. St. Helens to learn how birds and other flora and fauna have colonized land decimated by the explosion 30 years ago. Possible activities include the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center, the Johnston Ridge Observatory, Silver Lake Wetlands Trail, Eruption Trail, guided walks and ranger talks. Entrance fee is \$11 or \$3 with a Golden Eagle pass

Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425.244.7633

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 Mountain Loop Highway: a fleecing of Snohomish County

By Bill Lider

NOTE: To learn more about the Mountain Loop Highway, attend a PAS-led field trip on August 29. See the trip calendar (above) for details.

Most citizens of Snohomish County are unaware that, for more than 52 years, their property taxes have funded maintenance and repairs of US Forest Service roads in the Darrington Ranger District. In 1958, Snohomish County entered into an agreement to maintain the roads from Robe to Monte Cristo.

Almost all of this stretch of the Mountain Loop Highway and road into Monte Cristo is outside the county's jurisdiction. Why the county entered into this agreement is a mystery. There is no rationale or mandate as to why the county should repair and maintain US Forest Service roads.

In 1958, gasoline was 20 cents per gallon, Dwight D. Eisenhower was president and my favorite television show was Howdy Doody. Much has changed in the intervening 52 years. We are in a recession bordering on a depression,

property values have plummeted, Snohomish County's tax base continues to be eroded by city annexations, the county has laid off and furloughed employees and public services the county provides have been reduced. We should expect climate change and meandering rivers to greatly increase future maintenance and repair costs on these forest roads.

The US Forest Service is planning to construct a new road into Monte Cristo. Under the current agreement, the county is also liable for its maintenance.

Over the past 52 years, Snohomish County has spent millions in taxpayer dollars to survey, design, permit, construct and maintain roads and bridges that are entirely outside of the deeded county right-of-way. Often, the county also pays the US Forest Service employees to write the biological assessments (BAs) and other environmental permitting for projects on forest roads.

(See "Highway" on page 10)

Have fun, be entertained and get smarter

Wednesday Weekly Weeders

Every week Native Plant Demo Garden, Edmonds

During the summer, everyone is welcome to join the Wednesday Weekly Weeders each Wednesday from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Wildlife Habitat and Native Plant Demo Garden in Edmonds. Bring your own tools or use ours.

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

Puget Sound Bird Fest

September 10-12

Edmonds

Plan on being in Edmonds September 10-12 for the sixth annual Puget Sound Bird Fest. The three-day event includes speakers, guided walks, land and water-based field trips, exhibits and educational activities and a tour of certified backyard wildlife habitats.

The opening reception on Friday evening features Seattle author and naturalist Lyanda Lynn Haupt. Her book, *Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness*, was an LA Times and Seattle Times Best Book of 2009.

Saturday field trips include a morning birding cruise on Puget Sound with the Edmonds Yacht Club and an evening bus trip to Monroe to see thousands of Vaux's Swifts. There will be workshops and presentations all day at the Frances Anderson Center including sessions focusing on hummingbirds and Trumpeter Swans, bird photography, how to choose and use bird feeders and nest boxes, and an introduction to live raptors from the Sarvey Wildlife Center.

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For more details, visit www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org.

Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival

Pateros, Washington September 25

Join the North Central Washington Audubon Society and HawkWatch International for a free family event to learn about and celebrate raptors as they journey to winter territories. Shop vendors, see live birds and take a field trip to the spectacular Chelan Ridge Raptor Migration Site.

This amazing, interactive raptor event will take place at Memorial Park in Pateros, Washington, on September 25, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The festival will feature projects for kids, hands-on activities and raptor exhibits. Attendees can go on birding field trips with experts to identify waterfowl and migrating songbirds. During the day, shuttles will run from Pateros to Chelan Ridge where families, bird lovers and learners of all ages will be able to see raptors like Sharp-shinned Hawks up close before they are banded and released.

On Sunday, the North Cascades Basecamp, a festival sponsor, will host a pancake breakfast and then provide a guide for a field trip to Harts Pass, another excellent place to view migrating raptors. Call 509.996.2334 or visit their web site www.northcascadesbasecamp.com for more information. Or, stop by their booth at the festival in Pateros.

This festival is scheduled to coincide with the peak of southbound migration of raptors at Chelan Ridge – the best place in Washington to view fall migrating raptors. This festival is an educational effort focused on raptors and the ecosystems upon which we all rely.

To pre-register for the field trips from Pateros and to reserve a space in the shuttle to Chelan Ridge, please call 509.731.4790.

For more information about this free festival, visit www.ncwaudubon.org or e-mail festival@ncwaudubon.org.

National Audubon names new president

The National Audubon Society has named David Yarnold its new President and Chief Executive Officer, giving new momentum to efforts to connect people with nature and their power to protect it.

A passionate conservationist, Yarnold currently serves as Executive Director of Environmental Defense Fund and President of Environmental Defense Action Fund. Prior to that, he was a Pulitzer Prize-winning editor at the *San Jose Mercury News*.

"David brings proven leadership – in the for-profit and non-profit sectors – to Audubon at a time when efforts to protect birds, habitats and the resources that sustain us are needed more than ever," said Holt Thrasher, Audubon's Board Chair. "His leadership ability, his passion for conservation and grass-roots action, his communications skills and his organizational expertise all make him the perfect fit for the Audubon of 2010 and beyond."

"David is a boundary-crosser, the kind of flexible thinker and values-based executive that a complex conservation and fundraising landscape demands right now," Thrasher

said. "He shares Audubon's traditional passion for birds and its visionary understanding that helping people to protect them will safeguard our own future as well. I have no doubt that David will lead Audubon in expanding its reach to new audiences and elevating its conservation successes to new heights."

"For me, going to Audubon is like going home," said Yarnold. "Community-based education and action that breeds broader changes has always been engaging and rewarding for me and those are the things Audubon does best."

He will assume the presidency of Audubon on Sept 1.

All PAS membership dues and donations are tax-deductible. The PAS tax ID number is 96-6183664. Consult your tax professional for full details.

Rainier not exactly Paradise for weekend hikers

By Jonathan Blubaugh

On July 18, six birders made the trek to Mt. Rainier for a Weekend Bird Hike. We planned to hike to Paradise Glacier. But, just like last time, there was too much snow. Instead, we chose the Skyline Trail, a short – but steep – loop that begins and ends at the Paradise visitors' center.

The parking lots were nearly full. But, people and cars weren't all we found in the parking lot. Amongst the "Do not feed the birds" signs was a tame Clark's Nutcracker – a lifer for a few in our group. We also heard juncos from the parking lot.

We encountered snow about 100 yards down the trail. The trail was well marked by footprints despite being totally snowy. Occasionally, we saw patches where the snow had melted. Those spots were covered with lush, low-growing mountain vegetation including heather, blueberry bushes and tons of flowers.

Along the trail were fantastic rock gardens of Avalanche Lily, Glacier Lily and Western Pasque Flower.

It was partly cloudy. When the sun showed through, it was quite hot with the light reflecting off the snowfields. We



Weekend hikers were treated to gorgeous peek-a-boo views of Mt. Rainier. Photo by Joseph Bales-Kogan.

caught occasional glimpses of the volcano. We were impressed by the number of serious mountain climbers on the trail, as well. They mentioned it was also crowded at the summit.

We didn't go particularly far. It was a steady climb in the snow. And, we began to wonder how difficult going back down in the snow would be. We picked a rocky outcrop for a sunny picnic.

During lunch, we spotted a pair of Hoary Marmots coming and going from their den near the trail. Other mammals we saw included a Black-tailed Mule

Deer, a Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel (looks like a chipmunk) and a Townsend's Chipmunk (a little smaller and holds its tail up high).

The birds we heard or saw that day included a Turkey Vulture, an Osprey at Elbe, a Common Raven, a Steller's Jay, the Clark's Nutcracker, two Black-capped Chickadees, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a Winter Wren, a Violet-green Swallow, a Barn Swallow, an American Robin, two Varied Thrushes, a Yellow-rumped Warbler in breeding plumage, three Dark-eyed Juncos and two Pine Siskins.

Adventurous hikers explore Edmonds parks

By Terry Nightingale

The Weekend Bird Hike on July 24 took us through the parks of Edmonds. Since Jonathan will lead trips through Yost Park during Puget Sound Bird Fest, we chose two other parks to see what we could see.

First up was Pine Ridge Park, which features a wide, flat path through an evergreen forest. The birding started slow, but soon got lively. A Pacific-slope Flycatcher called from somewhere high in the canopy, and we heard the raucous calls of Steller's Jays from deeper in the forest.

Soon, we came upon a small pond with a group of Mallards. The group included immature birds and males in "eclipse" plumage, which meant we could only distinguish them from females by their yellow bills. Further along the trail, we found a much larger pond, where we saw several species of dragonflies and damselflies including a Blue Forktail, Blue-eyed Darners and the beautiful Eight-spotted Skimmer.

Later, we heard an unfamiliar sound. We realized it was three Northern Flickers darting from tree to tree near the path. The



Eight-spotted Skimmer, by Rebecca Richardson

morning sun did much to reveal their coppery beauty, and hearing a couple familiar "kee-aw" calls, we were convinced they were indeed flickers. Not long afterward, we were overtaken by a mixed flock of small birds including Bushtits, Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees and a Downy Woodpecker.

We'd developed quite an appetite, so we decided to investigate a pancake breakfast at the Anderson Center. We managed to pick up a few city-bird species nearby: Glaucous-winged Gull, American Crow, House Sparrow and Red-breasted Nuthatch.

The group decided to pursue another diversion, this one to observe a different sort of winged creatures. The Paine Field air show featured three vintage aircraft, including a Polikarpov U-2/PO-2, the planes used by the secret female Russian bombers during World War II.

Then it was time to get back to birding. Our next stop was

(See "Hikers" on page 11)

Birding highlights

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

Where have all the Chickadees gone? I used to see more **Black-capped Chickadees** than I do now. Most of the counts are down except for Mary Sinker in Stanwood. I only reported three this period and have not seen any since.

Carol and Larry Beason had another good month with a species count of 40 from near Lake Bosworth. Their count included 3 **Black-capped Chickadees** which is normal for them. They also reported 12 **American Goldfinches**, 12 **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, 16 **Canada Geese** on the lake, 7 **Downy Woodpeckers** at the feeder, 2 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 9 **Northern Flickers**, 18 **Purple Finches**, 18 **Pine Siskins**, 2 **Red-breasted Sapsuckers**, 7 **Rufous Hummingbirds** and 2 **Western Tanagers**.

Annette Colombini also reported 3 **Black-capped Chickadees** from her home at Lake Stevens. Her total species count of 19 also included 3 **Turkey Vultures**, 6 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, a **Red-breasted Sapsucker**, 3 **Spotted Towhees**, a **Rufous Hummingbird**, 7 **American Goldfinches**, 10 **American Crows**, 3 **Black-headed Grosbeaks** and her first **Purple Finch**.

Hilkka Egtvedt's report was highlighted by 2 **Osprey** that spent several hours in her Mukilteo neighborhood. She also listed 3 **Violet-green Swallows**, 3 **White-crowned Sparrows**, an **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, 3 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, 3 **Rufous Hummingbirds**, 2 **Bewick's Wrens**, 12 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, 6 **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, 3 **Anna's Hummingbirds** and only 2 **California Quail** for a total species count of 27.

A few more **Black-capped Chickadees** were reported by Kriss Erickson from her home in Everett. She listed 6, along with 3 **Wood Ducks** and 4 **Malards** in her yard. She also reported 8 **Steller's Jays**, 4 **House Sparrows**, 4 **Anna's Hummingbirds**, 2 **Western Gulls** overhead, 4 **American Robins**, 15 **American Crows**, 32 **Bushtits** and 29 **European Starlings** for a total species count of 13.

Adeline Gildow has an ideal location along Juniper Beach for seeing a variety of birds. Her report included 5 **Bald Eagles**, 4 **Great Blue Herons**, 12 Tern species flying over, 2 **Black-capped Chickadees**, 3 **Cedar Waxwings**, 12 **House Sparrows**, a **Ring-necked Pheasant**, 2 **Red-tailed Hawks**, 2 **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, 3 owl species at the end of Juniper,



Black-capped Chickadee, by Shanna Martin



Western Tanager, by Donald Metzner



Great Blue Heron, by Nigel

June 26, 2010–July 25, 2010

4 **Killdeer** and a **Western Tanager** for a total species count of 31.

Julie O'Donald reported some exciting events at her Brier home. First, a **Merlin** flew over and was circling a tree. A few weeks later, 3 **Osprey** flew over the yard. There were 2 adults and a fledgling. The fledgling would flutter and soar while the adults soared effortlessly. And if that was not enough, the **Screech Owl** is out again. Her total species count of 30 also included 4 **Violet-green Swallows**, 2 **Bewick's Wrens**, 2 **Cedar Waxwings**, a **Golden-crowned Kinglet** along the stream, a **Western Wood Pewee**, an **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** and a **Pacific Slope Flycatcher**.

Mary Sinker has the largest number of **Black-capped Chickadees** with 11. Her total species count of 32 from her home in Stanwood includes 10 **American Goldfinches**, 8 **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, 5 **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, 5 **Evening Grosbeaks** (the most reported this period), 2 **Cedar Waxwings**, 19 **Mourning Doves**, 10 **Steller's Jays**, 2 **White-crowned Sparrows**, 6 **Tree Swallows**, a **White-breasted Nuthatch** and 2 **Winter Wrens**.

Dick Vanderhoff's report from his Stanwood home listed 10 **Steller's Jays**, 6 **American Goldfinches**, 5 **House Sparrows**, 10 **Grosbeak** species, 5 **American Robins**, 2 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, a **Pileated Woodpecker** at the feeder and in the trees, 4 **Winter Wrens**, 2 **Northern Flickers** and 12 **American Crows** chasing a **Red-tailed Hawk** for a total species count of 16.

One of my favorite birds returned again this year. The male **Western Tanager** joined his partner who came much earlier. Nothing too unusual this month, except of the low count of **Black-capped Chickadees** and **California Quail**. I used to see 9 to 11 quail at one time and now I have only 2. My total species count of 26 also included 3 **American Goldfinches**, 3 **Chestnut-backed Chickadees**, a **Hermit Thrush**, 2 **Barn Swallows** and 5 **Tree Swallows** on the wires, 4 **Northern Flickers** (they have been really busy), 4 **Hairy Woodpeckers**, 2 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 2 **Red-tailed Hawks** overhead and a **Barred Owl**.

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

"Toy" a new threat to songbirds and wildlife

By Bill Lider

Plastic BB machine guns are among the newest recreational threats to songbirds and wildlife. These guns are marketed to children as toys under misleading names such as "airsoft" rifles.

On June 10, a group of about 10 teenage boys were playing "war games" on the Church of the Good Shepherd property behind my house. They were using airsoft BB machine guns and spraying my backyard wildlife sanctuary – including trees with nesting chickadees and other wildlife – with plastic BBs. The boys were dressed in camouflage with masks over their faces.

These war games are sanctioned by the church, which refuses to halt their BB machine gun activities. The sheriff's department told me that even though this area is entirely within the "Unlawful Shooting Zone" defined by Snohomish County Code SCC 10.12.020, they consider the machine guns to be "toys." As a result, the department won't halt their use. Sheriff's deputies even told the group at the church that it was okay to continue shooting next to my property.

I've observed other teenagers using these machine guns for target practice in my neighborhood. I've had to pick up their BBs from my garden. These machine guns appear to be gaining popularity throughout the county.

SCC 10.12.020 prohibits using a BB gun out of doors anywhere in the south county and other designated no-shooting zones. However, the code does not specifically name which types of ammunition are covered under the ban: plastic, copper, depleted uranium, etc. The code also prohibits the use of pellet guns, slingshots and all firearms. The penalty for violating this ordinance is a misdemeanor.

BB machine guns are made to look like replicas of assault rifles, sniper rifles, etc., and are difficult to distinguish from the real thing. They rapid fire plastic BBs using compressed air. They fire like a machine gun in three-round bursts. And, semi-automatic operation is possible. These guns often achieve muzzle velocities



Airsoft plastic BB gun

between 150 and 650 feet per second, with rates of fire between 100 and 6000 rounds per minute – fast enough to penetrate skin or kill a songbird. This fire rate and ammunition can be devastating to small songbirds such as chickadees and nuthatches, and the noise scares away other wildlife.

A quick internet search yields countless eye injury claims from BB machine guns. These rifles are not children's toys!

Imagine this scenario:

A police officer responds to a call. A man carrying an assault rifle, wearing a bandana over his face and camouflage fatigues runs out from behind a bush and points the rifle at the officer. The officer draws his gun and orders the man to drop the weapon. The man does not immediately comply and the officer shoots, killing a teenage boy with an airsoft rifle.

Teenagers aren't generally known for their good judgment.

Please contact the Snohomish County Council and ask them to clarify the county code to include a ban on all BB guns, regardless of their ammunition, in the existing no-shooting zones in Snohomish County.

For more info on these BB machine guns, visit:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/airsoft>

<http://injury.findlaw.com/personal-injury/personal-injury-a-z/airsoft-guns.html>

www.airsoftgunhelp.com/airsoft-gun-safety-htm

Leader sought for new Development Committee

PAS is looking for a someone to head a vital new Development Committee – someone who understands the importance of and creativity of fundraising. This committee chair will serve a two-year term on the board of directors and act as liaison between our various fundraising activities and the board.

Currently, a few wonderful volunteers who take on our merchandise and book sales, Bird-a-thon fundraiser and generate fundraising letters. However, we need someone to coordinate these, plus look at new ways to expand our fundraising activities. And, if anyone can help with writing grants, we'd love to talk to you, too.

Call Kathleen Snyder for more info: 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

Smart Growth report

By Kristin Kelly, Smart Growth Director

Much ado about something

Many of you, I suspect, have read the articles and letters to the editor in *The Herald* about the Snohomish County Council's decision not to retain Hearing Examiner Barbara Dykes. I spoke with Councilmember Dave Somers about the decision. It's not appropriate for me to recount our discussion in detail. But, I can say the decision wasn't made easily. And, according to Somers, it was not influenced by the development community, which has been vocal and strategic about getting Dykes replaced. Somers said there were other reasons and the decision to replace Dykes wasn't based on just a few decision Dykes made in the public interest.

For more than a year, after several controversial development permit hearings and appeals, Dykes sided with the public interest over the development interests – and sparked the ire of developers and the Master Builders Association (MBA). The MBA sent a letter to the county council which stated that Dykes was not doing her job correctly. In rebuttal, Futurewise and Pilchuck Audubon Society sent a letter which defended Dykes' rulings.

There have been a number of appeals – both at the permit and legislative level – over the past several years. Given that fact – and to try to quell the perceived problem with Dykes – the county council formed the Land Use Working Group to develop recommendations to improve the system. I was not appointed to the group. But, I've attended nearly every meeting and submitted lengthy comments to the report. (You can read the full report on the county's web site: www1.co.snohomish.wa.us. Search by "land use decision process.")

During this process, a vocal land developer made it clear that Dykes was at the center of the problem. However, if recent letters to the editor are any indication, it's apparent that folks outside the development world believed Dykes did a wonderful job to ensure the county obeyed its own regulations. And, from my perspective, the county planning department has been remiss in that regard.

Whether we like it or not, Barbara Dykes is no longer the Hearing Examiner for Snohomish County. It is time to move forward.

The council made the wise decision to replace Dykes with someone of equal competence and integrity: Millie Judge. Judge worked for the Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney as lead civil attorney. And, along with Barbara Dykes, she helped write the land use codes. She knows them inside and out. She ran for county executive against Aaron Reardon in 2003, and has been involved in most of the environmental issues and laws county must abide by. In addition, she's served as pro-tem Hearing Examiner for several years. I am happy she'll be the hearing examiner. I believe she'll do a great job ensuring codes are followed.

Sustainable Lands Strategy

The Snohomish County Council recently launched a new initiative to enhance agricultural land and restore habitat for threatened salmon. The initiative, called the Sustainable Lands Strategy, will propose new policies for resource lands that support farms and fish in Snohomish County. I am happy to be serving on the sustainable lands committee, along with local farmers and tribal representatives.

The discussion began at last year's Focus on Farming conference, where the county hosted a day-long farming policy session. This year, Councilmember Dave Somers found funding to form the committee. The first goal of the committee is to develop recommendations for the county council that could include comprehensive plan policies for ensuring the best protection of both farms and fish. I'll do my best to help both sides because local residents want locally grown food and record salmon returns.

County planning policy update

Under the state Growth Management Act, counties and cities must develop policies to guide land use, services, infrastructure and capital facilities. In addition, Kitsap, Pierce, King and Snohomish counties must comply with the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 for long-range planning.

Snohomish County Tomorrow – comprised of representatives from each city, local tribes and Snohomish County – works to recommend planning policies to the county council. This year, the county must update its county planning policies to be in compliance with Vision 2040. The county is currently rewriting many of the policies. The comprehensive plans developed by the county – and its cities – must also comply with the Growth Management Act. Confused? I hope not!

I'm tracking this process and have submitted comments to county and city planning directors about possible amendments. The process will continue on to the Snohomish County Tomorrow steering committee. And, by early next year, it will be adopted by the county council. I will update you when the council schedules a public hearing.

On the horizon

There are numerous land use and environmental issues in our area. But, there is only one me. Therefore, I must prioritize my efforts to achieve the best solutions. In 2011, I'll focus on six issues:

- The sustainable development of the Carthcart Urban Village site
- Ensuring the county land use amendment process does not allow for unnecessary urban expansions or the conversion of resource lands into other uses
- Building support, along with Cascade Land Conservancy, for a Transfer of Development Rights Program to protect county farmland
- Serving on the Sustainable Lands Strategy committee to preserve farming while balancing the need for salmon habitat restoration
- Ensuring county planning policies meet the expectations of the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040
- Improving the Livable Snohomish County Coalition web presence and planning a possible summit

It's been a busy year for me and 2011 will be the same. I'll continue to count on you to help me as these processes go forward.

Blackbird ...

(continued from page 2)

invites golfers to play where once 1000 men produced lead and zinc to help win WWII.

No longer Lead Creek, the south fork of the Coeur d'Alene River runs clear, replete with trout and riparian foliage. In the late 1970s, and for the next 20 years, each spring, high school kids planted 300,000 conifer seedlings on the mountains surrounding Kellogg. Once denuded and barren mountains are now cloaked in green velvet of 30-foot evergreens.

There are still working silver mines in the valley, but on a much smaller scale – employing few miners. However, mining is still a way of life in Kellogg. But, now, car buyers from across the northwest are the vein being mined. Every year, Dave Smith Motors is the number one or two car dealer in the USA. And, certainly the number one dealer in the northwest.

Where the town dump was once located is now the base of the longest gondola ride in the western hemisphere –

Highway ...

(continued from page 4)

This is not unlike using county taxpayer dollars to repair roads and bridges in other cities or counties. I am sure the City of Everett would be tickled pink if Snohomish County were to help fund the maintenance of its streets. But, would that be in the taxpayers' best interest?

The economic value of the Mountain Loop Highway to Snohomish County is negligible. Even the US Forest Service concluded, in its Mountain Loop Highway EIS, there was no economic benefit to either Granite Falls or Darrington – the two largest towns on either end of the forest road.

The lack of economic benefit to these towns is also confirmed by reviewing sales tax receipts from the Department of Revenue which show no change in sales in the towns when the Mountain Loop Highway is open, closed for winter, or washed out for years.

The federal government has deeper pockets to pay for road maintenance and bridge replacement than the county does. The federal government should be subsidizing county roads, not the other way around. In essence, county taxpayers have paid for this road twice: once with their federal income tax dollars and again with their property taxes to the county.

The US Forest Service should reprioritize its road budget from constructing roads in roadless or unsustainable areas and take over maintenance of its own roads and bridges. The county money saved could then be used on more critical projects in densely populated areas.

We are not advocating that this portion of the Mountain Loop Highway be closed. We are advocating that all road maintenance, repair and construction costs be returned to the owner, the US Forest Service. No recreational opportunities will be lost as a result of returning the road's maintenance responsibilities to the Forest Service.

The County Public Works Sub-Committee will brief the county council on this issue Sept. 7, at 9 a.m., in the council chambers on the eighth floor of the County Administration Building at 3000 Rockefeller Avenue. The briefing is open to the public and PAS members are encouraged to attend. Contact Owen

traveling up the mountainside to the Silver Mountain ski bowl. Kellogg is now a destination ski resort in winter and mountain biking in summer.

During the first week in August, I returned to Kellogg to attend my 50th high school class reunion. Kellogg is still a work in progress. But, to know what it was when I left in 1960 – and to see what it has become today – is an emotional experience.

Being with classmates, most now grandparents and great-grandparents, some of who I last saw on graduation night 50 years ago, surrounded by an environment none of us ever could have imagined possible, I realized the truth of what Julie Whitesel Weston, KHS class of 1961, wrote in her book about our hometown, *The Good Times are All Gone Now*, when she paraphrased Wallace Stegner: "If I haven't always known who I was or am, I do know where I came from: Kellogg, a small mining town in northern Idaho."

Carter at Snohomish County (425.388.6460 or owen.carter@co.snohomish.wa.us) if you plan to attend, as the date or time could change.

The agreement between the county and the Forest Service can be terminated by the county with a 60-day written notice to the Federal Highway Administration (known as the Bureau of Public Roads in 1958). Please contact your county council representative and urge him to cancel this agreement. Or, at a minimum, ask the council to require the US Forest Service fully reimburse the county in advance by setting up an escrow account to cover the cost of construction and maintenance of forest roads outside the county's deeded right-of-way.

County council members are best contacted by e-mail:

District 1: John.Koster@co.snohomish.wa.us

District 2: Brian.Sullivan@co.snohomish.wa.us

District 3: Vacant

District 4: Dave.Gossett@co.snohomish.wa.us

District 5: Dave.Somers@co.snohomish.wa.us

PAS board meetings are open to all

The Pilchuck Audubon Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month, at the Sno-Isle Natural Foods Coop meeting room (2804 Grand Ave., Everett), beginning at 6 p.m. All are welcome to attend to learn more about the chapter's goals and priorities. For more information, contact Kathleen Snyder at 425.438.1505.

Hikers ...

(continued from page 6)

Maplewood Hill Park in Edmonds. This small park is in a canyon on the outskirts of town. If you go, I recommend staying on the main trail and not going too far into the woods. In fact, turn back once you reach the creek bed.



Northern Goshawk, by Paul Kusmin

Nobody warned us, so we continued further down the canyon. Gradually, the trail got thinner and steeper until we were literally scaling the side of the canyon.

We emerged at the top of the slope and had to hike back up the canyon via the road. Still, we had a few nice bird finds, including hearing an Olive-sided Flycatcher and seeing three Anna's Hummingbirds.

As we left the park, we saw a mostly white bird fly over us and onto a tree limb. He had distinct white and black stripes on the face – and what appeared to be a small rodent in his talons. We only saw him for about 30 seconds, and the best identification we could make was a Northern Goshawk. We'd heard tall tales of goshawks before, so we were cautious to consult all available

bird guides (four in total) and investigate other possibilities. None came close to what we had seen. We didn't make it to Yost Park. But the goshawk sighting was a fitting, if controversial, end to a great day of birding.

Our finds for the day included a Great Blue Heron, two Steller's Jays, four American Crows, 13 Mallards, two Downy Woodpeckers, three Northern Flickers, two Pacific Slope Flycatchers, eight Black-capped Chickadees, a Chestnut-backed Chickadee, three Red-breasted Nuthatches, seven Bushtits, a Bewick's Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglets, an American Robin, four Spotted Towhees, a Song Sparrow, a Dark-eyed Junco, two Black-headed Grosbeaks, six Red-winged Blackbirds, a Brown-headed Cowbird, a House Sparrow, a Glaucous-winged Gull, a Northern Goshawk, three Anna's Hummingbirds, an Olive-sided Flycatcher, a White-crowned Sparrow and a House Finch.

Needed: your e-mail address

PAS needs your e-mail address so we can notify you when a new issue of the *Profile* is available online.

Please contact Kathy Piland at kathy.piland@pilchuckaudubon.org or leave a message at 425.252.0926.

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 (10 issues) to PAS's *Profile* newsletter. Cost is \$25. A special limited income category is also available for \$16.

Local PAS membership

- New member \$25
- Renewal \$25
- Lifetime PAS member \$1000
 - 10 monthly payments of \$100
 - 4 quarterly payments of \$250
 - 1 payment of \$1000
- Donation \$ _____

Make check payable to:
Pilchuck Audubon Society

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

NAS membership

(includes PAS membership)

- Introductory membership \$20

Make check payable to:
National Audubon Society

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

NAS renewal

(includes PAS renewal)

- Renewal \$35

Make check payable to:
National Audubon Society

Mail your check and this form to:
NAS, Membership Data Center
POB 52529
Boulder, CO 80322-2529

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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

* Consult your tax professional for full details.