

# Pilchuck Audubon Profile

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## Lobby Day planned for January 26



Mark January 26 on your calendar and plan to be in Olympia for Lobby Day. The environmental community wants to make a strong statement that being green isn't limited to frogs in Washington. There are citizens all over the state who are committed to conservation.

Leaders of the Environmental Priorities Coalition list the following as legislative priorities for upcoming session: a safe baby bottle act, working for clean water and sustaining environmental protections in the state budget.

The coalition reports: "We are asking our leaders in Olympia to stand up for a strong economy while still protecting our environment. All together, these three priorities will make sure we have clean water, create new jobs, reduce the threat of toxic chemicals and maintain core environmental protections in a time of slashed budgets."

Lobby Day includes face-to-face meetings with legislators, lobbying training, issue briefings, keynote speakers and an evening reception.

The coalition is offering training to help prepare for Lobby Day. Training will take place on Saturday, January 9, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. in the Gwinn Room at Seattle Pacific University. The training is interesting and helpful, but is not required. If you'd like to carpool to the training, contact Laura Spehar at 425.672.2150.

For more information about Lobby Day and representing PAS there, contact Mike Blackbird, Jan VanNiel or Susie Schaefer. And watch for the status of the Environmental Coalition's priorities in upcoming issues of the *Profile*.

**January program meeting  
January 8, 7 p.m.**

### ***Backyard birding with a purpose!***

Alan Mearns will show how backyard bird observations are important in showing how bird life is changing through the seasons and across the years.

Learn more in Alan's article on page 5.

#### **Note location**

Everett Firefighters Hall  
2411 Hewitt Avenue, Everett

**For more information, call 425.252.0926**

**Watch [www.pilchuckaudubon.org](http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org)  
for the most up-to-date information.**

## **Plan now for 2010**

Birding festivals galore are scheduled for the coming months.

From the Arlington-Stillaguamish Eagle Festival to the Sandhill Crane Festival in Othello to the Port Susan Bay Snow Goose Festival, a birder's dance card could fill fast.

Don't get lost in the shuffle. Get all the details to help map out your adventures on page 4.

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# President's message

By Mike Blackbird, President, Pilchuck Audubon Society



The Thanksgiving Day edition of the *Seattle Times* had an article with the headline: "Is bad driving really just in our genes?"

It reported research that indicated some people have a gene variation giving them less of a brain protein linked to memory retention and perform worse in a driving simulation than others. Apparently lousy drivers can blame their lack of awareness, slow reaction time and ill-considered risk-taking on their genes.

The article begs the question: if science can remove a gene to create safe drivers, doesn't it then follow that they should be able to remove the lack of awareness, slow reaction time and ill-considered risk-taking gene from climate change deniers?

Once identified, scientists will need an experimental group to see if removal of the climate change denial gene is effective. Forget lousy drivers, perhaps the ideal group would be some members of congress. Though thinking it through, even if the denial gene were removed, it would be to no avail for many recalcitrant members of congress.

In *The Devil's Dictionary*, Ambrose Bierce defines: "POLITICS, n. A strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles. The conduct of public affairs for private advantage."

I'm far from being the cynic Ambrose Bierce was, but he does touch on a truth. Few politicians, republican or democrat, can see past the next election. One gene they all have is the finger-in-the-wind gene which tells them which way the political wind is blowing. Consequently, they pay close attention to the polls.

Unfortunately, recent polls have indicated that more and more Americans are growing skeptical about global warming. It doesn't help that emails between climate change scientists appear to indicate they're hiding data refuting climate change.

Such news only encourages climate change deniers in congress. Scientific doubt is compounded by political leaders bent on ignoring mounting evidence of climate change by finding scientists who agree with them. They're further encouraged when they call into question that the idea of global warming is "settled science" and are derided for it.

There are those voices in the environmental movement who would argue that dissent in times of such great public import should be silenced. Science must never be silenced even if it disagrees with our position, which makes it easier to ignore science because science lives off doubt. Every answer generates more questions.

Global warming is a serious threat and it can only be averted by politicians. Politicians rely on certainty. Because there are no certainties in science, prevailing theories have to be tested against the evidence, refined, and the cycle started over again. That's the job of scientists.

The job for the rest of us in the environmental movement is to affect public opinion to motivate politicians to act to curtail global warming because one thing is certain: the next election.

## 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](mailto: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](http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org)

### Board of directors

President	Mike Blackbird .....	425.670.2491
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Treasurer	Carolyn Lacy .....	360.668.2494
Secretary	Kathleen Snyder .....	425.438.1505
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Volunteer Coordinator	* Open *	
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Bird Sightings	Mara Price .....	360.722.5752
Database	Margaret Bridge .....	360.862.1694
Field Trips	Art Wait .....	360.563.0181
Forest Practices	Kathy Johnson .....	360.659.7252
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### Staff

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# Trip calendar

Check our web site at [www.pilchuckaudubon.org](http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org) for the latest information.

## January 5 North Everett to south Marysville

Meet at 8 a.m. at Legion Park off North Marine Drive, Everett. Explore the north Everett waterfront and the Snohomish River Estuary including the Marysville sewage lagoons. View Osprey, eagles, hawks, waterfowl, shorebirds and gulls. Fifteen waterfowl species (including Cinnamon Teal and an early Osprey) in 2009. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Art Wait, 360.563.0181

## January 12 Snoq River Valley, Monroe to Carnation

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Monroe Park and Ride on Highway 2, a half-mile west of the fairgrounds. Expect a fun time and exciting birds. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

## January 19 Guemes Island

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart lot west of Marysville (I-5 exit 200). Park away from the store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd (next to I-5). Ride a tiny ferry, then relax and enjoy unique Guemes Island, its people, birds and dogs. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

**Notice to field trip participants:** Field trips are open to members and non-members alike. No advance notice required unless otherwise stated in the trip description. Trips go, rain or shine. However, in case of snow or ice, contact trip leader! Bring a sack lunch, beverage, binoculars, scope and field guide if you have them. If not, we'll share. Please, no perfume or cologne. Be prepared to share gas money with carpool drivers. Pets, even leashed, are prohibited on field trips. Please leave them at home.

## BirdNote needs help to keep flying

By Adam Sedgley, Marketing and Outreach Director, BirdNote

Already a fan of BirdNote? Thank you! Just learning about BirdNote? Welcome! Pilchuck Audubon has made a donation to help keep BirdNote flying, and we hope you will, too.

BirdNote is a radio series about the ways of birds. It's heard locally on KPLU 88.5 FM. BirdNote educates and inspires people to care about the natural world. As people hear the stories, they experience a deeper, richer relationship with nature. The choir for conservation increases, and the will to protect the environment strengthens.

Some may think BirdNote is financed by National Public Radio because it airs on public radio. Others might think BirdNote is paid for by the radio stations that broadcast it.

*Neither is the case!* BirdNote is *independently* produced and financed. We rely on the financial support of donors to help BirdNote reach the ears of 300,000 people every day.

Guess how many folks to BirdNote to keep it on the air:

- **200,000?** Oh, do we wish!
- **20,000?** Hey, that would be great, too!
- **2,000?** What a strong base of support that would be!
- **200?** Yes. What an impact these 200 people make!

These donors have helped keep BirdNote on the air for five years. At the same time, they're improving conditions for birds, and they're enriching lives.

## January 26 Camano Island

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart lot west of Marysville (I-5 exit 200). Park away from the store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd (next to I-5). We will bird Triangle Cove, Eide Road, English Boom, Iverson Spit and wherever else Virginia's built-in GPS leads us. Seventy-one species last year. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

## May 21-23 Klickitat County

We'll travel through Yakima, stay in Goldendale and bird this very interesting and birdy area. We need to make reservations early and the trip will be limited to no more than three cars. To reserve your space on this new adventure, contact Susie Schaefer: 425.771.8165 or [susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org).

## June 4-7 Annual trip to Ferry County

This year, the Ferry County trip has been expanded to four days to make sure we can visit as many birding areas as possible. Reserve your spot early with trip leader Susie Schaefer: 425-771.8165 or [susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org).

This is a pivotal time for BirdNote financially. Some of our major donors have had financial setbacks. Others give in cycles, and they're ready for new donors to step into their shoes, big and small. We agree!

When you donate to BirdNote, not only do you help thousands of listeners connect or reconnect with nature, but you actually help make BirdNote possible. Here's what your gift can do:

- \$25 to \$100 pays to write and edit one BirdNote story
- \$250 pays narrators to voice five shows
- \$500 pays to mix the sounds and voices for several shows
- \$1000 goes a long way to creating new shows for air, web, and podcast
- \$5000 creates a new series, maybe on a topic of particular importance to you.

To donate, send your check to BirdNote at P.O. Box 37, Clinton, Whidbey Island, WA 98236 or visit [www.birdnote.org](http://www.birdnote.org) and click on "Donate."

To listen, tune in to KPLU 88.5FM every morning at 8:58 a.m. BirdNote is also available as a podcast at iTunes or on [www.birdnote.org](http://www.birdnote.org) where you can listen to any of the 800+ shows that we have produced to date.

We appreciate your help!

Keep up the great work, Pilchuck!

# Upcoming regional festivals

## **Arlington-Stillaguamish Eagle Festival** **February 6 In and around Arlington, Washington**

Mark your calendars now for the Arlington-Stillaguamish Eagle Festival, scheduled for February 6, 2010. Activities include guided eagle viewing trips, guided nature walks, natural history displays/exhibits, live birds of prey from Sarvey Wildlife Center, presentations, photography and poetry contests, Geocaching, a scavenger hunt, entertainment and much more.

Celebrate the Bald Eagle and learn more about the Skagit and Stillaguamish watersheds, host to one of the largest concentrations of Bald Eagles in the lower 48.

This year's festival is sponsored by the Stillaguamish Tribe, the Nature Conservancy, Arlington Arts Council and the City of Arlington. For more info, contact Sarah Hegge, Recreation Coordinator for the City of Arlington at 360.403.3448.

## **Port Susan Snow Goose and Birding Festival** **February 20-21, 2010 Stanwood, Washington**

The geese are back in the Stillaguamish Valley, and plans are well under way for the 2010 Port Susan Snow Goose Festival on February 20-21, 2010. Watch the official festival web site – [www.snowgoosefest.org](http://www.snowgoosefest.org) – and the *Profile* for more information as field trips and presentations are firmed up in the coming weeks.

Pilchuck Audubon sponsors the event, so we hope lots of members and friends will join us in Stanwood, as well as volunteer to help out. We'll host a table at festival headquarters and provide information to festival goers. There is always plenty to do and see at this festival.

Please contact Susie Schaefer at 425.771.8165 or [susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org) if you can help. We will need at least three field trip leaders, as well as 10-12 volunteers for the PAS table.

## **Othello Sandhill Crane Festival** **March 19-21, 2010 Othello, Washington**

This is an event you don't want to miss! The festival features a number of birding tours and specialty tours – and they all fill up fast. Also included in the price of admission are lectures and demonstrations.

If you plan to attend, please remember it's imperative you plan ahead as lodging is limited and field trips fill up quickly.

Visit the web site at [www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org](http://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org) or contact Susie Schaefer at 425.771.8165 or [susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org) for more info.

## **Olympic Bird Festival** **April 9-11, 2010 Sequim, Washington**

Grab your binos and join the Olympic BirdFest 2010 celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, April 9-11, 2010.

The stage is set ... bays, estuaries, sandy beaches, wetlands, tidepools, rainforests and lush river valleys.

The players are ready ... Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks and Black Oystercatchers. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours and a traditional salmon bake at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center.

Check out the offerings by visiting the official web site [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org), or by calling 360.681.4076 for a brochure.

Also in 2010! Follow your BirdFest weekend with a three-day, two night birding cruise of the spectacular San Juan Islands on April 11-13, 2010. Visit San Juan and Sucia Islands and more. Stay at the historic Roche Harbor Resort. Get program information and registration forms online at [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org).

## **Know before you go ... fun Bald Eagle facts**

The Skagit and Stillaguamish watersheds host one of the largest concentrations of Bald Eagles in the lower 48 states. Wintering eagles generally arrive in the area in late October to take advantage of the spawning salmon.

While the staple of most bald eagle diets is fish, they will feed on almost anything they can catch, including ducks, rodents, snakes and carrion.

Bald eagles typically remain in the Stillaguamish Watershed until late February, when it is believed they migrate back to their breeding grounds.

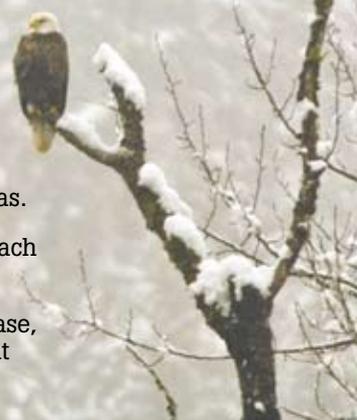
Bald eagles usually return to nest within 100 miles of where they were raised.

Bald eagles have few natural enemies.

Bald eagles build large nests in the tops of large trees near rivers, lakes or other wetland areas.

Nests are often used year after year. With additions to the nests made annually, some may reach 10 feet across and weigh as much as 2,000 pounds.

Eagle mothers lay up to three eggs once a year and the eggs hatch after about 35 days. Disease, lack of food, bad weather, or human interference can kill many eaglets; sometimes only about half will survive their first year.



# Backyard birding with a purpose!

By Alan Mearns, January program meeting speaker

Mark your calendars! The next annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is scheduled for February 12-15, 2010 (Presidents Day weekend).

Nearly 100,000 people across North America will take a few minutes – or a few hours – to record the numbers and kinds of birds they see in their yards. They'll send their lists to the GBBC web site.

The GBBC team will quickly turn that *data* into *information* about the status, trends and health of wild bird populations in the US and Canada. Fun birding with a purpose! Citizen science has a big impact.

Backyard birders can do even more to understand how our bird life is holding up to development, climate change and even disease outbreaks.

At the PAS program meeting on January 8, I will show how your year-round backyard bird observations can show how bird life is changing through the seasons and across the years.

For seven years, my wife and I have taken a few minutes a week to jot down the numbers and kinds of birds in our yard. We entered our data into spreadsheets and now have more than 1800 days' worth of observations.



House Sparrow, by Annette Colombini



Bushtit, by Don Metzner

At least 65 species have passed through our yard! Our records show amazing and disturbing trends that may be related to disturbance (tree removal), climate change and other environmental conditions.

For example, 2005 was a banner year for total bird abundance, bird diversity (numbers of species) and appearance of baby birds.

But, the past two years have been miserable in comparison! Band-tailed Pigeons (a native bird) have all but disappeared and replaced by Rock Doves (the common pigeon).

The once-common House Sparrows are gone. Bushtit flocks visit far less frequently than they use to. We no longer see or hear Winter Wrens. And, what happened to the Downy Woodpeckers?

Was the 2005 El Nino good for our local birdlife? Have the cooling temperatures of the past four years impacted the birds? What about the 125 tall trees that have been chopped down in our neighborhood?

We hope you will not only participate in the GBBC, but also continue to monitor and report your backyard

birdlife in the years ahead. It's not rocket science! But, please believe that your observations count!

## Call for board nominations

By Kathleen Snyder, Secretary, PAS

In April, the terms of the current PAS president and secretary will end. These are two-year terms and require attendance at monthly board meetings.

The duties of the president include presiding over our local meetings, training and guiding all board members and committee chairs, being the chapter spokesperson, preparing a monthly column for the *Profile* and attending regional meetings.

The duties of the secretary include attending and taking minutes for business meetings, posting the monthly board meeting agendas and assisting with PAS correspondence. Both officers are required to be current PAS and/or NAS members.

If you're interested in being president or secretary, contact Susie Schaefer at 425.771.8165 by the end of February. She'll provide more details on the duties of these offices. Pilchuck Audubon is lucky to have dedicated and enthusiastic members whose vision has achieved concrete results for conservation in our area.

## Laura Spehar adds Ed Chair to PAS duties

By Kathleen Snyder, Secretary, Pilchuck Audubon Society

Laura Harvell Spehar is amazing. Not only has she been our program chair for the past year, but she is going to continue in that capacity as well as take on the duties of Education Chair. All this plus she heads up the Edmonds Backyard Wildlife Habitat Community Certification Project. If you look closely, you will see the slight glow of a halo over Laura's head. The Pilchuck Board extends their hearty welcome to Laura and looks forward to her leadership in a committee that has been without a chair for some time. Thank you, Laura!

## PAS board meetings

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.

# Smart Growth report

By Kristin Kelly, Smart Growth Director

I wish everyone safe and peaceful holiday season. Climate change and land use will be a high priority for my work through 2010, and I will share information on climate change issues, both nationally and locally, to keep us informed and empowered.

During 2009, we were successful on a number of land use fronts including reducing densities in rural areas, retaining more trees in urban areas and eliminating Fully Contained Communities. While the economy continues to struggle, 2010

will be a good year to encourage elected decision makers to make some proactive changes to long-range planning that will aide in reducing climate impacts and restore the health of Puget Sound, and to help preserve resource lands while encouraging growth in urban areas. As always, I will do my best to keep you informed and engaged.

Visit Livable Snohomish County's web site to keep networking with others in the county: [www.livablesnohomish.org](http://www.livablesnohomish.org).

## Nuclear power regains support

*Even green groups see it as "part of the answer" to climate change*

By Anthony Faiola, Washington Post Foreign Service

LONDON: Nuclear power – long considered environmentally hazardous – is emerging as perhaps the world's most unlikely weapon against climate change, with the backing of even some green activists who once campaigned against it.

It has been 13 years since a new nuclear plant opened in the U.S. But, around the world, nations are turning to low-emission nuclear energy. The Obama administration and leading democrats, in an effort to win support for climate change legislation, are eyeing tax incentives and loan guarantees to fund a new crop of nuclear power plants across the U.S. that could eventually help drive down carbon emissions.

Worldwide, 53 plants are now under construction – double the total of just five years ago. Rather than deride the emphasis on nuclear power, some environmentalists are embracing it. Stephen Tindale typifies the shift.

When Greenpeace activists stormed a nuclear plant on the North Sea a few years ago and scrawled "danger" on its reactor, Tindale was the commander. He remembers standing outside the plant just east of London, telling TV crews all the reasons "why nuclear power was evil."

The construction of nuclear plants was banned in Britain for years after the 1986 Chernobyl disaster in the Soviet Union. But, now, the British are weighing the idea of new nuclear plants to battle climate change, and Tindale is among environmentalists who are backing the plan.

"It really is a question about the greater evil – nuclear waste or climate change," Tindale said. "But there is no contest anymore. Climate change is the bigger threat, and nuclear is part of the answer."

Roadblocks may yet stall nuclear's comeback – in particular, its expense. Costs may be so high that energy companies find financing hard to secure even with government backing.

Experts also point to improvements in technology since Chernobyl and the partial meltdown at Three Mile Island in 1979. Most notable is an 80% drop in industrial accidents at the world's 436 nuclear plants since the late 1980s, according to the World Association of Nuclear Operators.

### A "pragmatic" approach

So far, at least, the start of what many are calling "a new nuclear age" is unfolding with only muted opposition –

nothing like the protests that helped define the green movement in the U.S. and Europe during the 1960s and 1970s.

As opposition recedes, even nations that had vowed never to build another nuclear plant – such as Sweden, Belgium and Italy – have seen the benefits of a nearly zero-emission energy overriding the dangers of radioactive waste disposal and nuclear proliferation.

(See "Smart Growth" on page 8)

## 2010 Wildlife Calendar – \$12



*Featuring photos of birds, whales and bears by your newsletter editor, Annette Colombini.*

**Contact Annette at  
360-658-4307 or  
[nettebini@comcast.net](mailto:nettebini@comcast.net)  
to get your copy.**

# Birding highlights

October 26, 2009–November 25, 2009

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

Adeline Gildow had a rare sighting in November: a **Barred Owl**, near the Mark Clark Bridge. **Barred Owls** are found in parts of Washington year round, but this is the first she'd seen near Camano Island. Living at Juniper Beach, she spots a great number of species. Her report included 2 **Belted Kingfishers**, 8 **Ring-necked Pheasants**, 60 **Trumpeter Swans**, 300 **Dunlin**, 4 **Bald Eagles**, 9 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 6 **House Sparrows** and 2 **Golden-crowned Sparrows** for a total species count of 29.

Carole and Larry Beason, who also live near the water, reported the usual chickadees, **Downy** and **Hairy Woodpeckers**, along with various water species. They listed 29 **Buffleheads**, 9 **Common Goldeneyes**, 22 **Canada Geese**, 46 **Pine Siskins**, 7 **Northern Flickers**, 10 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 6 **Spotted Towhees**, 3 **Hutton's Vireo** and a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** for a total species count of 36.

There were a lot of **American Crows** reported throughout the county in November. Annette Colombini reported 50 in her Lake Stevens yard, along with a **Brown Creeper**, 3 **Steller's Jays**, a **Varied Thrush**, 3 **Hairy Woodpeckers** and a **Downy Woodpecker** (on the suet feeder at the same time), 3 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, a **Golden-crowned Kinglet** and a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** for a total species count of 15.

Hilkka Egtvedt also reported 50+ **American Crows** from her Mukilteo location. She also reported 43 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 20 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, 4 **Spotted Towhees**, a **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, 3 **Golden-crowned Sparrows**, 2 **Anna's Hummingbirds**, 10 **House Finches**, a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and 2 **Pileated Woodpeckers** (always nice to see) for a total species count of 22.

Chris Erickson is also near the water in Everett, which allows her to view waterfowl along with the usual birds at her feeders. Her total species count of 19 included 2 **Bewick's Wrens**, 6 **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, 23 **American Robins**, 37 **House Finches**, 6 **Black-capped Chickadees**, a **Western Gull**, a **Great Blue Heron**, 3 **Mallards**, 2 **Wood Ducks** and 32 **European Starlings**.

Julie O'Donald reported 20 **American Crows** flying over her Brier home.



American Crow, by Greg Pond



Golden-crowned Kinglet, by Paul Carson



Pileated Woodpecker, by Bonnie Dudley

Apparently the **Western Screech Owl** has made a home in a tree nearby as she saw it again in early November. Her report also included 2 **Anna's Hummingbirds**, 12 **American Robins** eating Mountain Ash berries, 12 **Bushtits**, 3 **Northern Flickers**, a **Townsend's Warbler**, 2 **Varied Thrush**, a **Bewick's Wren** and a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** for a total species count of 20.

Mary Sinker's report saw 50 **Dark-eyed Juncos** in her yard, along with 18 **Mourning Doves**, 20 **Pine Siskins**, 11 **Spotted Towhees**, 17 **Steller's Jays**, 12 **Black-capped Chickadees**, 2 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, a **Winter Wren**, 7 **American Robins**, a **Great Blue Heron** and a **Great-horned Owl** for a species count of 26.

From Stanwood, Dick Vanderhoff reported 220+ **Trumpeter Swans** in the fields along Marine Drive. He also listed 6 **Winter Wrens** at the feeders and in the bushes, 2 **Bald Eagles**, 5 **Black-capped Chickadees**, 10 **Steller's Jays**, 3 **White-crowned Sparrows**, 2 **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, 30 **Dark-eyed Juncos** and 2 **Golden-crowned Kinglets** for a total species count of 15.

Darlene Walker's report from Camano Island included 150 **European Starlings**, but no **American Crows**. She also listed 12 **Canada Geese**, 2 **Trumpeter Swans**, 18 **Snow Geese** overhead, 2 **Great Blue Herons** at the water, 6 **Fox Sparrows**, 20 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 12 **Mourning Doves**, 10 **Black-capped Chickadees** and an **Anna's Hummingbird** for a total species count of 18.

I counted more than 50 **American Crows** in a field near my home in Marysville. I also counted 20+ **Dark-eyed Juncos** in my yard. My total species count of 24 also included 12 **California Quail**, a **Bewick's Wren**, and 6 **Mallards** in a nearby pond, 3 **Mourning Doves**, a **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, 2 **Red-tailed Hawks**, a **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, a **Pileated Woodpecker** and a female **Varied Thrush** in the trees.

Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Please e-mail me ([pricemara@clearwire.net](mailto:pricemara@clearwire.net)) or leave a message at 360.722.5752.

# Hotline to report sick or dead swans

In an effort to monitor Trumpeter Swans that have succumbed to lead poisoning, the WDFW has established a hotline to report sick or dead swans in Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish counties.

Call 360.466.4345, ext. 266, to report dead or sick swans. Be prepared to leave a message including your name and phone number, and the location and condition of the swans. The hotline is available through the end of March.

Lead shot has been banned for hunting in Washington and

## Smart Growth ...

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In the U.S., leading environmental groups have backed climate change bills in Congress that envision new nuclear plants. An EPA analysis of the Waxman-Markey bill, for instance, shows nuclear energy generation more than doubling in the U.S. by 2050 if the legislation is made law. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is reviewing applications for 22 new nuclear plants from coast to coast.

Many green groups remain opposed to nuclear energy, and some, such as Greenpeace, have refused to back U.S. climate change legislation. Groups that support the bills, such as the Sierra Club, are doing so because the legislation would also usher in the increased use of renewable energies like wind and solar and billions of dollars for new technologies. They do not think nuclear energy is the solution in and of itself.

"Our base is as opposed to nuclear as ever," said David Hamilton, director of the Global Warming and Energy Program for the Sierra Club. "You have to recognize that nuclear is only one small part of this."

But Steve Cochran, director of the National Climate Campaign at the Environmental Defense Fund – a group that opposed new nuclear plants in the U.S. as recently as 2005 – also described a new and evolving "pragmatic" approach coming from environmental camps. "I guess you could call it 'grudging acceptance,'" he said.

"If we are really serious about dealing with climate change, we have to look at a range of options and not just rule things out," he said. "We may not like it, but that's the way it is."

That position is a significant departure. "Because of global warming, most of the big groups have become less active on their nuclear campaign, and most of us are taking another look at our internal policies," said Mike Childs, head of climate change issues for Friends of the Earth in the U.K. "We've decided not to officially endorse it. We're also no longer

B.C. for more than a decade, but biologists believe swans are reaching shallow underwater areas in fields and roosts where spent lead shot is still present.

People who see sick or dead swans are advised not to handle or attempt to move the birds. WDFW and PSE employees, and volunteers from the Washington Waterfowl Association and the Trumpeter Swan Society, will pick up the birds.

Since 2001, WDFW and other organizations have worked to locate toxic lead and remove it from the environment.

focusing our energies on opposing it."

Some environmental figures, including Al Gore, remain skeptical of nuclear's promise, largely because of the cost of building plants and the threat of proliferation, illustrated by Iran's attempts to blur the lines between energy production and a weapons program. And experts remain cautious about the prospect of seeing so much nuclear fuel in global circulation.

"I'm assuming the waste and safety problems get resolved, but cost and proliferation still loom as very serious problems" with nuclear energy, Gore told *The Washington Post*. "I am not anti-nuclear, but the costs of the present generation of reactors is nearly prohibitive."

### Meeting tough goals

For nations like Britain – home of the first commercial nuclear plant – a return to nuclear is seen as essential to the goal of meeting aggressive targets for reducing carbon emissions.

After years of resisting new plants after the Chernobyl meltdown, the government did an about-face in 2007, calling for a list of possible sites for reactors. This month, British officials announced plans to fast-track construction of 10 plants.

As may happen in the United States, the plants in Britain are expected to go up in communities with existing nuclear complexes where support for them is already high.

Tindale publicly switched his position less than a year after leaving his job as head of Greenpeace. But his opinion began to change earlier, he said. Rather than being vilified by environmentalists, his public shift has sparked a thoughtful debate here among opponents, supporters and those on the fence.

"Like many of us, I began to slowly realize we don't have the luxury anymore of excluding nuclear energy," he said. "We need all the help we can get."

## New PAS web site update

Thanks for your patience while our web team works on the new PAS site. The team, led by Paul Spehar, includes these faithful volunteers: Kerry Marl, Terry Nightingale, Kathleen Snyder, Carolyn Lacy, with help from Kathy Piland and Annette Colombini. We are excited to have features such as a new banner, the ability to accept donations and membership renewals online and a calendar. Many thanks to Paul and the web team!

## Sign up for "swift" news

Even though the Vaux's Swifts are wintering in Central and South America, we are still busy working on our TogetherGreen grant and planning for the spring migration. We need volunteers to help design the kiosk and web site. If you can help or just want up-to-date information, you should be on the Vaux's Swift email list. Contact Judy Alles (JerryJalles@aol.com) or susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org to sign up.



## New birding trail map to be unveiled January 26

State Senator Lisa Brown and Audubon Washington invite you to the unveiling of the newest map of the Great Washington State Birding Trail – the Palouse to Pines Loop – on Tuesday, January 26, 2010, at 12:45 p.m. in the Cherberg Building on the state capitol campus in Olympia. The presentation will include live birds like those seen on this route: a Great Horned Owl and Red-tailed Hawk.

Please join the presentation of the latest area of the state to offer the Birding Trail’s successful combination of outdoor recreation, conservation and rural economic development.

For more information, contact [cnorman@audubon.org](mailto:cnorman@audubon.org).

## Audubon membership information

Joint membership in National Audubon Society (NAS) and Pilchuck Audubon Society (PAS) includes National Audubon Society’s quarterly magazine *Audubon* and Pilchuck Audubon Society’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 Pilchuck Audubon Society.

However, PAS receives *none* of your national dues to support its programs. Local membership in Pilchuck Audubon Society includes a one-year subscription (10 issues) to Pilchuck Audubon Society’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

Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

I am interested in the Conservation Committee.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_