

Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

April 2009

Calendar

***BIRDING CLASS ... Tuesday, April 7, 6:45 PM before the meeting.

***Tuesday, April 7, 7:30 pm: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Monday, April 6, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting at the home of Gretchen Starke 308 SE 124th St., Vancouver 360-892-8617

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

PROGRAM:

Carnage & Mayhem on the Urban Landscape

by Bob Sallinger

Audubon Society of Portland's Wildlife Care Center is the oldest and busiest wildlife medical facility in Oregon treating over 3000 animals and responding to more than 15,000 phone calls each year. In 2007, the Care Center analyzed 20 years worth of data to identify issues and trends affecting urban wildlife populations. Portland Audubon Conservation Director, Bob Sallinger will report on what they have learned and how Portland Audubon is applying these lessons to better protect urban wildlife populations. Priority issues include reducing cat predation on wildlife and reducing illegal killing of protected bird species. Come learn about the amazing diversity of wildlife that we have in the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Region and how you can help protect and restore those populations.

Bob Sallinger is the Conservation Director for the Audubon Society of Portland. He has worked for Portland Audubon since 1992. Bob has a degree in biology from Reed College and a law degree from Lewis and Clark. In addition to his work at Portland Audubon, Bob is an adjunct professor of law at Lewis and Clark, serves on the Boards of Coalition for a Livable Future, East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, and Portland Parks, and chairs the City of Portland Watershed Science Advisory Group.

Photo to right: Bob Sallinger with young owl



FIELD TRIP

Fernhill Wetlands (Forest Grove)

Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

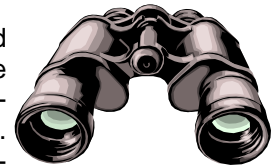
When: April 18, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

Meet at: Red Lion (Inn at the Quay)



This is a good inland site to see migrating shorebirds in April. Other early migrants are also possible. If any rarities are in the Portland area, we may chase them also. Bring a lunch and there will be a lot of walking on this trip.



VAS News

VAS BOARD MEETING was held on March 2nd at the home of Mayfields. A quorum was present.

Treasurer's Report. Income was \$128.83. Expenses were \$353.50. Cash and investments totaled \$21,190.69. The Community Foundation fund dropped to \$199,311.46 as of 31 December 2008.

Education. Nothing

Field Trips. Wilson will lead a trip in the Gorge in March. Arden had planned a trip to the coast in April but the tides aren't right for the available dates. There will be a trip to the Hanford Reach 5-7 June and one to Bend later in the month.

Membership. The roles are still very confused. National has changed chapter numbers – they are now eight digit numbers starting with a C and the year as the next figure. The Y-13 will be in someplace. The Post Office is changing bar codes. We will not use bar codes on in the future. Communications. Nothing.

Programs. Randy is still looking for a May program.

Publicity. Nothing.

Conservation. Gretchen attended three work sessions: 1. Legacy land purchases(Conservation Futures); 2. AG Land – There is lots of land in the county for small farms, DNR has small parcels of trust lands around but they would have to be bought; and 3. Rural lands Task Force. – some members want all land in upper county to be in five acre parcels. Gretchen, Marilyn and Sherry went to Olympia to visit with our legislators.

Old Business. Nothing.

New Business. A motion was MSP to give \$100 annually to the Columbia Land Trust and Columbia Springs Education Center. They will be a budget item as of next year.. The Home and Garden Faire is 24-26 April.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Ellifrit

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

New Members: Donald Bajema • Terry Bennett • Susan Borich • Erick Campbell • David Christiansen • Dale Clark • Terri Coats • Larry Cramer • Christine & Larry Dickinsen • Robin Haglund • Gerald Hamilton • Marilyn Hendricks • Mark Jander • Sarah Jones • Ann Kaufman • Doretta Kelley • Lap Lai • Camas Library • Ina Lindsay • Carole Lowinger • Heather Lund • Bob Lutz • Twila Mc Combs • Gwendolyn Morgan • Cathy Morton • Janet Moulton • Kenneth Powell • Debbie Tubbs • Harvey Waybright • John Weimer • Lew Whipple

Transfer members: Marilyn Depoy • John Eidman • M. Thomas

VAS Upcoming Programs:

Indonesia by Marcy Summers (May)

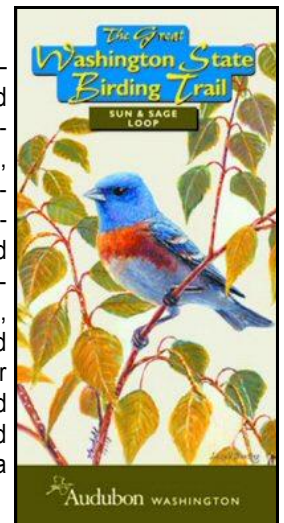
Great Washington State Birding Trail(s)

According to Audubon Washington Birding Trail Director Christi Norman, birding "trails", now offered in more than 30 states, are usually self-guided driving tours to places where birds are likely to be seen. More than 40+ million Americans describe themselves as interested in bird watching. The latest addition to Washington's Birding Trail maps was recently revealed during Lobby Day on Capital Hill in Olympia on Feb. 19th.

Visit the website for information on getting the maps: http://wa.audubon.org/birds_GreatWABirdingTrail.html

Sun & Sage Loop features more than 200 of Washington's 346 annually recorded bird species.

This varied Eastern Washington landscape – sculpted by ice-age floods, weather, and human design – nurtures Pacific Flyway travelers and avian residents of sage hillside, wildflower meadow, and leafy forest. Hundreds of bird species – warbler to woodpecker, kinglet to kingfisher – thrive amid wide valleys, intimate canyons, and waterways large and small. During migration, hawks soar through mountain passes and shorebirds traverse river lowlands. Winter brings snow to high-country plateaus, and gathers waterbirds onto natural wetlands and lakes formed by dams on the Columbia River.



Here, irrigation channels and seasonal ponds transform desert into orchard and vineyard beneath lofty basalt cliffs. Find abundant wildlife in protected places: Wild and Scenic rivers, national wildlife refuges, national parks and state parks, plus the natural and cultural history of the Yakama Nation. Here are myriad opportunities to bird by foot, by bike, and by boat – all in the heart of Washington's wine country.

See page 5 for more on the other available maps.

*****MEMBERS TRADING POST*****

If you have art work or books to sale that have to do with Nature, Wildlife or Science, you may bring them to the General Meeting but you **MUST** donate **at least** 10% of the sale price on books and **at least** 15% of the sale price on other art work. For more information call:

Sydney Reisbick 360-887-7880



Three in a Row: County Commissioners' Work Sessions

It was a case of good news – bad news one morning in February when I attended a series of county commissioner work sessions. The commissioners hold work sessions on various projects to obtain information from staff and to give them direction. The public may attend and listen, but may not speak. (That can come in public hearings – a different critter altogether – or in talking to the commissioners individually.)

Legacy Lands: Conserving Special Land

The good news first. The county has a plan, called Legacy Lands, for acquiring land for habitat and greenways and easements for farming. Funding comes from various sources. Conservation Futures is one such source. This program allows the county to levy a small property tax to buy land for conservation: greenways, habitat, and in recent years, easements for farm lands. The county gets matching funds from the state and from the federal government. The feds give the county 85 cents for every Conservation Futures dollar.

There have been five funding cycles, the most recent in 2004, which is still active. Among the properties acquired through Conservation Futures has been Columbia Grove on the banks of the Columbia and Mimsi Marsh, the purchases of which Vancouver Audubon supported. The county will be pursuing grants for conservation projects in the Salmon Creek and Burnt Bridge greenways and in the Lackamas Lake and Creek area.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) would like to transfer three parcels of land to the county. The DNR holds land in trust, mostly for the schools and the universities, although some lands are held in trust for various counties. The commissioners expressed interest in one of the properties, along the Washougal River, but not necessarily the other two, because of maintenance problems. To obtain the land transfer, the legislature would have to appropriate the money to buy out the trust. There would be no cost to the county.

Agricultural Lands Task Force: Farmers Who Want to Farm

Next the somewhat good news. The good news is that there are farmers in Clark County who really want to farm (and keep in mind that, in general, farms are better for birds than are subdivisions and strip malls). The not so good news is that farmers face obstacles.

The obstacles first. The biggie is the potential conflict between the public and farming practices. The task force complained about "rolling urban growth boundaries." Good land is being eaten up by subdivisions and strip malls. Some farmers have run into problems with

regulations that were more designed for urban and suburban development than for farms. An example is the requirements for setbacks on farm buildings and farm stands. Then, there is the high cost of land, which is related to the push to develop out in the country. There are high production costs, but low prices for products. Technical support is inadequate.

But, there are opportunities. Because of the recent food scares, people are looking to buy local products. People are asking for produce, milk, and meat. Clark County has 400,000 potential customers at hand. On the small farms, there is profit potential in high value production. There has been a spectacular growth in community subscription agriculture (CSA) operations, going from three to twenty. Farmers markets have grown, with the Vancouver Farmers Market now at 280 members. With development in a slump, there is opportunity for agriculture.

To support small agriculture, the task force is asking for leadership from the county to highlight the of value small-scale agriculture. Commissioners should strengthen the right-to-farm laws. What development there is near farms should be farm-oriented businesses, not housing. This would provide a buffer around farms. The task force would like land set aside for farmers markets. Other suggestions business incubators to help potential farmers and a processing facility. The task force would like to educate young people on the value of farming.

The Rural Lands Report: Wall to Wall Country Estates

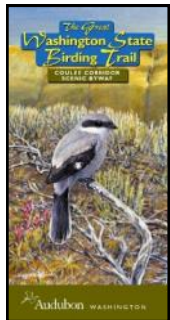
And the bad news. The rural lands task force has already produced a report, so this work session consisted of the staff asking for direction. Implementation of the rural lands task force would negate the goals of the agricultural lands task force and could make things more difficult to conserve legacy lands. While the task force recommendations give lip service to protecting wetlands and wildlife habitats, most of the recommendations are aimed at increasing the population in the rural areas, thus making protecting wetlands and wildlife more difficult. One item the staff will look at is the elimination of twenty and ten acre zones, with the idea of *increasing rural density*. The task force also wants to expand rural centers to "enhance their economic viability and community identity." Staff proposes looking for "additional economic development opportunities in rural centers," such as mixed uses and light manufacturing. This is rural? The task force recommended creating a "Zoning Fairness Board," whatever that is. And, cluster zoning, which has been tried in the past and which was a disaster. These are only a few of the recommendations of the rural lands task force. Staff thinks it would take until December of 2010 to finish the job especially if an environmental impact statement was required.

Gretchen Starke



- Feb. 9, On a trip to Spokane, Bob Rowe picked up a life bird when he found a **TUFTED DUCK** on the Columbia River at Rufus, Oregon, on a side road north of I-84. This is a Eurasian species that is uncommon in North America. Scott Carpenter and Steve Nord picked **13 TRUMPETER SWANS** in a flock of **TUNDRA SWANS** on the Carty Unit of the Ridgefield NWR.
- Feb. 15, The **ROSS' GOOSE** in the Vancouver Lake Lowlands was relocated by Eric and Tammy Bjorkman. They then went to downtown Portland where they found a **SLATY-BACKED GULL** that was being seen along the waterfront. This is a large dark-backed gull from Asia with only a few records in the Northwest.
- Feb. 16, Mary Sandheger spotted a **BROWN CREEPER** on a Douglas Fir near her Camas area home. These small birds feed by climbing up tree trunks gleaning small insects from crevices in the bark.
- Feb. 17, After searching in the Vancouver Lake Lowlands for **WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS** without success, Dan Friez was surprised to see one under the feeders at his Vancouver home. This is a species that breeds east of the Rocky Mountains and the number that wander to our area is small and variable from year to year. Bob Flores found about **3-4,000 GREEN-WINGED TEAL** feeding in a small pond above the Ridgefield NWR. Included were two **EURASIAN WIGEON** and a teal that lacked the normal white bar of either the Green-winged or Eurasian subspecies. Bill Tweit stopped off at the Woodland Bottoms along Dike Access Road for an hour and found huge numbers of raptors in the fields. He counted **35 NORTHERN HARRIERS, 15 RED-TAILED HAWKS, 4 ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS** and **15 RAVENS**. These large numbers were still being seen in mid-March.
- Feb. 20, The first **TURKEY VULTURE** of the season was reported from near Beacon Rock, in Skamania county, by Larry Price. Our first of the season **BAND-TAILED PIGEON** showed up at our feeders in western Skamania County. The next day we had **3 MOURNING DOVES** return.
- Feb. 22, Another new species was added to the Clark County list when Scott Carpenter and Steve Nord, found a beautiful **SAGE SPARROW** on the River "S" Unit of the Ridgefield NWR. Word spread quickly after it was seen and Clay Davis, Barry Woodruff, Al Larrabee, and I were able to see the bird that day. Scott and Steve also spotted two **VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS** among the many (50+) **TREE SWALLOWS** there.
- Feb. 25, Sherry Hagen viewed and photographed the **SAGE SPARROW** at Ridgefield NWR. **TREE SWALLOWS** and **SANDHILL CRANES** were still present. When Arden was able to come out in the afternoon to see this bird he saw a **NORTHERN SHRIKE** working the area. Eric Bjorkman tried for the sparrow but missed it but he did spot **CINNAMON TEAL** and along the roadway he saw **11 RIVER OTTERS** playing.
- Feb. 26, The **SANDHILL CRANE** migration was apparent at the Clark College campus as Ray Korpi counted 35 flying over Clark College for only the second time in fifteen years.
- Feb. 28, While Gretchen Starke was leading a group of birders in the Vancouver Lake lowlands they saw several hundred **SANDHILL CRANES**. Further down Lower River Road they found several hundred **SNOW GEESE**.
- March 1, The first Clark County **TURKEY VULTURE** of the year was seen near the confluence of the Washougal and the Columbia Rivers by Steven Clark.
- March 2, A juvenile **GOLDEN EAGLE** and it was seen circling over the River "S" Unit by Will Clemons. There have been at least two of these birds on the refuge this winter one an adult.
- March 3, A early migrant, a **SAY'S PHOEBE**, was found at the Ridgefield River "S" unit by George and Cindy Mayfield. This is the earliest returning species of flycatcher in Washington but it does not breed on the west side of the state and is an uncommon migrant in Clark County. Another **TUFTED DUCK** was photographed along Marine Drive west of the 138th in Portland by Sherry Hagen.
- March 7, Three different **PEREGRINE FALCONS** were seen at the Ridgefield NWR, River "S" by Bob Flores.
- March 8, Em Scattaregia and her sons Adrian and Christopher Hinkle spotted a "**COMMON**" (**GREEN-WINGED TEAL**) on the River "S" Unit at the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge other finds included a **GREAT-HORNED OWL**, a **BARN OWL**, and **3 TURKEY VULTURES**. The "Common Teal" is the Eurasian subspecies which has a white horizontal streak over the wing instead of a vertical stripe in front of the wing as found in North American Green-winged Teal.
- The first of the year **RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD** in Clark County was one reported from Joan Durgin's Camas feeders. She has had this honor for several years in a row.
- Susan and I birded in southeast Arizona for a week in search of three rare birds from Mexico, **SINALOA WREN** (first U.S. record), **BLUE MOCKINGBIRD** (fourth U.S. record) and **RUFOUS-CAPPED WARBLER**. The last two were easily located but the wren took three days of watching the patch of woods where it was reported before we got a momentary glimpse of it although we heard it each day. We did see many other species and enjoyed the sunny and warm weather while there in mid-March.
- From April through May we will be seeing returning migrant birds with the cast of species changing on a weekly basis. If you are interested in when these species are due to arrive check out this web site which gives the average arrival dates for many species for our area. <http://www.oregonbirds.org/phenology.html>
- Please continue to send or call in your sightings to me for this column and the 2009 cumulative which stood at 119 for Clark County and only 69 for Skamania County.

Great Washington State Birding Trails (cont.)



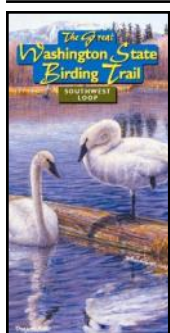
Coulee Corridor Scenic Byway features more than half of Washington's 365 bird species!

Thousands of Sandhill Cranes migrate along the Pacific Flyway in spring and fall. Black-crowned Night-Herons and Great Egrets nest here in summer. Our large populations of Bald Eagles and waterfowl offer great winter birding. The Coulee Corridor follows the ancient route of the Columbia River where ice-age floods sculpted dramatic canyons and tablelands, where Native American tribes lived and Hudson Bay trappers explored, where miners crossed to the Cariboo gold fields and cowboys made the White Bluff cattle drives. The shrub-steppe encompasses plains of sagebrush, grasses, and lichens, plus talus slopes and basalt cliffs. Much of this semi-arid desert, now irrigated by water from the Columbia River, includes wetlands and pothole lakes, with abundant public land in the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge; the Desert, Potholes, and Banks Lake Wildlife Areas; Lake Roosevelt Recreation Area; and state and local parks.



Cascade Loop features 225 bird species.

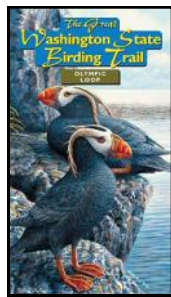
This loop takes you along the inland coastal waters of the Pacific Ocean where tides and currents sculpt dramatic shorelines in a temperate climate. Turning east, the trail winds through dark, stately conifer forests before rising over the high open passes of the snow-capped Cascade Range, sprinkled with clear lakes and fast-flowing streams. East of the mountains, where winters are colder and summers are warmer, you'll find sagebrush-grassland plateaus, ancient canyons, and the legendary "River of the West," the mighty Columbia. Hundreds of thousands of shorebirds, neotropical migrants, and other birds of the Pacific Flyway depend on Washington's wealth of natural habitats: some stop here to rest and eat before continuing north, while others stay to nest and raise the next generation. Northwest Washington is famous in winter for its large populations of sea-birds, Bald Eagles, Snow Geese, and Trumpeter and Tundra Swans, and offers some of the country's best raptor viewing.



Southwest Loop features 270 species

This loop takes travelers from the deltas and wetlands of south Puget Sound out to breaker-washed coastlines. Sandy shores rumple into dunes below sculpted rock headlands above the Pacific Ocean, home to pelagic birds. Rivers flow from forested hills into sheltered bays, winter havens for waterfowl and nourishing stopovers for hundreds of thousands of migrating shorebirds.

Turning east, the trail retraces some of the 1805 Lewis and Clark journey along the Columbia River, exploring the sloughs and uplands of the Columbia Gorge Scenic Area. Finally, the loop guides you north through the rugged Cascade Range, land of restless Mt. St. Helens, lakes, streams and prairies.



Olympic Loop features more than 200 species

From the quiet Nisqually River delta in south Puget Sound, the Olympic Loop leads west to wild Pacific breakers, follows rivers through moss-draped forests, and touches the tip of the contiguous U.S. at Cape Flattery. The route traces the Strait of Juan de Fuca east over the Olympic Peninsula, and winds south along the inland waters of Hood Canal. This loop explores Olympic National Park, four national wildlife refuges, state and local parks, as well as the natural and cultural history of six Native American tribes. Around the Olympic Loop, spring migration brings clouds of shorebirds to sandy beaches—Dunlin, Sanderlings, and Western Sandpipers—and visitors to rocky coasts—Black Turnstones, Surf-birds, and Wandering Tattlers. In summer, Marbled Murrelets and Bald Eagles nest in old-growth firs, American Dippers bob on glacial streams, and Yellow Warblers sing in wetland willows. Fall's berries feed Cedar Waxwings. Winter features waterfowl extravaganzas on fresh and salt-

The Backyard & Beyond...

A "sort of" funny thing happened at our house recently. Arden & I (mostly "I") make a suet mixture at home for our birds rather than buying it at the store. It saves money and the birds love our peanutbutter-lard mixture. We've been doing this for years. Last month I had put out the ingredients in the kitchen and the lard was waiting in the pan to be melted down along with the peanutbutter. I had appointments and errands to do and left it until I got back. Arden decided to be a good mate and started the melting process by turning the burner on medium or so **but.....** his business phone rang and he took off downstairs to his office. Well, you can pretty much guess what happened next. He forgot all about the lard and peanutbutter melting on the stove. His first mistake was turning the burner to medium. Peanutbutter burns easily so a setting of low is best even when you are standing next to it. It was a good 30 minutes later when he ventured out of his office and into the rest of the house... he found it filled with smoke and the fire alarms going off. Luckily, it was only



burning ingredients and not the house burning!!! He threw open the windows and most of the smoke was gone by the time I returned home. My good 8 quart pan was burnt beyond use so it went in the garbage. The house reeked of burnt suet mixture, an awful smell. We were having a dinner party in a couple days and I needed the pan so I had to buy a new one plus all kinds of odor eating sprays and devices to try and clear the air. All the money we had saved through the years making our own suet was pretty much gone. Weeks later and the odor is still lingering to some degree.

Sherry Hagen, Happy Birding ☺

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. Box 1966
Vancouver, WA 98668-1966

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*Mission Statement:
Vancouver Audubon
believes in the wisdom
of nature's design and
promotes this through
education, involvement,
stewardship, enjoyment
and advocacy.*



April 2009

THE COLUMBIA FLYWAY is the monthly newsletter of the Vancouver Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Publication **deadline** is at the board meeting each month.

VANCOUVER AUDUBON ** NEWSLETTER & DONATION COUPON

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**Flyway Renewal
date:**
November 1st
every year

I wish to subscribe to Vancouver Audubon's newsletter "The Columbia Flyway" for \$10/year.
 I wish to support Vancouver Audubon with an additional donations of \$_____

Renewals: please send your renewal directly to National Audubon with the forms sent to you. Thanks!
*** This will **not** include *The Columbia Flyway* ***

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Do Not share my name or any of my personal information with other organizations

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For more Info Call:
George Mayfield 360-687-0360
Eric Bjorkman 360-695-3116

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____
EMAIL ADDRESS _____

President.....	Eric Bjorkman	695-3116	bjorkmante@iinet.com
Vice-Pres	Marilynn Hall	253-6865	marilynnhall@comcast.net
Secretary.....	Nancy Ellifrit.....	574-3621	nellifrit2@msn.com
Treasurer	Joan Durgin	834-5621	jdurgin1@hotmail.com
OPEN	Education.....		
Conservation.....	Gretchen Starke.....	892-8617	gstarke@pacifier.com
Membership	George Mayfield	687-0360	gomayf@comcast.net
Field Trips	Arden Hagen.....	892-8872	iambakerman@comcast.net
Publicity.....	Tracy Snow.....	503-335-5361	tracy.now@orport.ang.af.mil
Programs	Randy Hopfer.....	573-6000	rhopfer@hotmail.com
Sightings	Wilson Cady.....	835-5947	gorgebirds@juno.com
Editor.....	Sherry Hagen.....	892-8872	vas@pacifier.com
Mailings.....	Bonnie Bingle.....	576-0330	
Volunteer Cor	Bob Rowe	254-8699	rowe9629@comcast.net
Refreshments.....	Cindy Mayfield	687-0360	gomayf@comcast.net