



# Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

*A Chapter of the National Audubon Society*

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

April 2012

## Calendar

\*\*\*BIRDING CLASS ... Tuesday, **Apr. 3, 6:45 PM** before the meeting.

\*\*\*Tuesday, **Apr. 3, 7:30 pm**: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

\*\*\*Monday, **Apr. 2, 6:30 pm**: VAS Board Meeting hosted by Marilynn Hall  
10806 NE 89th St., Vancouver 360-253-6865

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	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:

### Northern Spotted Owl Status & Conservation

by Betsy Glenn,  
Oregon Fish & Wildlife Department Biologist

Betsy Glenn is an expert in the study of the Spotted Owl, a "threatened" species under the Endangered Species Act of 1990. The bird's population continues to decline--a 40% decline in the last 25 years. Betsy studied at Oregon State U. and has followed the studies on this owl since the '90's. She will give an overview of the population status, summarize long term research, define critical habitat, and explain the newest conservation policy about the recovery of the owl. Her expertise has focused on the Pacific Northwest and she has also studied Barred Owls, Northern Pygmy Owls, and Marbled Murrelets.



## FIELD TRIP

### Tokeland, Westport & Bottle Beach

Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: Apr. 21, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

Meet at: 134th St. Park & Ride in  
Salmon Creek



This will be an all day trip for shorebirds and early passerines. Dress for all weather and pack lunch and snacks.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**New Members:** Margaret Arfmann • Karen Ariniello • Roger Bahr • Linda Bailey • Barbara Bloomfield • Gayle Brauner • Joan Brody • Jeffrey Brunson • Margaret Burnham • Sandra Cahoon • Jeffrey & Chris Ye • Marilyn Cordell • Ruth Dixon • Candie Essen • Jeri Flaskerud • Heather Gordon • Julie Gorecki • Joan Grenier-Winther • Robert Gross • Bruce Hagensen • Penny Holeman • Shanna Jacobson • Barbara Jessup • Wendel & Mandy Johnson • Penelope Jones • Jeffrey & Kathl Booren • Nancy Larison • Craig Limoges • Sally Mayo • Susan McFadden • Jolene McNally • Ronald McPeak • Shirley Miller • Annegret Montierth • Kathleen Moyer • Diana Murphy • Lee Ohman • Stuart Petrie • Diane Petterson • Paula Schulze • Shirley Sease • Ruth Small • Wally Steucke • Jollene Strode • Steven Ullrich • Bernice Vandervort • Dorothy Vicq • Linda Ward • Dennis P. Weaver • Becky Woods • Karen Zabinski

## May Program:

### Falcons & Falconry:

Recreational Sport and Commercial Bird Control  
by Kort Clayton, Biologist and Falconer

**VAS Board Meeting at the home of  
Bonnie Bingle on March 5, 2012**

**Treasurer's Report – Joan Durgin**

In Joan's absence Tammy gave a brief update on the Treasurer's Report for February.

Revenue for February 2012: \$406.17

Expenses for February 2012: \$2,476.79

The report indicates that the 2012 Big Year Challenge has brought in \$280; however, there was an additional donation in today's mail for the amount of \$100. Also, we recently heard from another donor that he will sponsor both teams at \$.50 a bird which could bring in \$300+ at the end of the challenge.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Mike Plymale recommendations:** The Board discussed Mike's recommendations. Eric and Joan will meet soon to develop a timeline of transitioning over to a new internal controls system. In the meantime, Marilyn has put together a Finance Committee that will meet as soon as the new system is in place. Tammy is working on getting the software updates needed by Joan, George, and Sherry for free or at a greatly reduced price.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Grants from Bequest Fund:**

• **The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge**

Friends of Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge requested \$5,000 to support their environmental education programs for spring & fall of 2012. These programs provide integrated environmental, science, historical, & cultural learning to local school groups. The grant will be paired with matching funds from their fundraising efforts & will bring 2,500 students to the refuge that would otherwise not have the opportunity. The Friends programs are offered to schools for free; however, due to school budget cuts, most school districts cannot afford to transport students to the refuge. This grant would support bus transportation for schools that want to attend the educational programs but cannot afford the high cost of buses. **Grant Approved by Board of Directors**

• **Barbara Harmon**

Barbara Harmon is a 3rd grade teacher in La Center. She has a bird feeding station outside her classroom with raised garden beds. Each month her students (ages 7 to 10) learn three new birds that inhabit our region. In the spring the students partner up & write reports on Northwest birds. The reports are displayed in the cafeteria for all students, teachers, & parents to see. Also, each spring they make birdhouses for Mother's Day gifts. Several field trips are taken yearly to the La Center Bottoms & Barbara takes local Girl Scout & Boy Scout troops to local areas to view and learn about birds too. Barbara is requesting \$540.60 to maintain her bird feeding station & assist others in learning about our local birds with better equipment. She sent along a detailed list of the items she will purchase, a birdbath, bird seed & suet, a spotting scope, 10 pairs of binoculars, field guides, & seeds for their raised garden beds.

Barbara's project is fully endorsed by the La Center School District. **Grant Approved by Board of Directors**

*Respectfully submitted, Tammy Bjorkman*

**VAS Budget will be voted on at the  
General Meeting on April 3rd  
by the voting membership.**

**2011 Actual vs. 2012 Budget**

INCOME	2011 Actual	2012 Budget
BANK ACCOUNT INTEREST .....	170.29	184.00
BIRDATHON Donations .....	415.00	0.00
BIRD CHALLENGE 2 Teams.....	0.00	3,000.00
COFFEE FUND.....	24.20	25.00
DONATIONS.....	1,810.00	1,600.00
AUDUBON ADVENTURES.....	1,664.20	1,600.00
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY .....	1,960.76	1,886.00
NEWSLETTER Subscriptions.....	1,500.00	1,500.00
STORE SALES.....	30.00	20.00
BIRDSEED SALE: Backyard Bird Shop.....	254.65	0.00
REFUNDS.....	0.00	20.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME .....</b>	<b>7,829.10</b>	<b>9,835.00</b>

**EXPENDITURES**

**ADMINISTRATION**

Supplies.....	192.00	200.00
PO Box 1966 Rental.....	56.00	60.00
WA State on-profit Corp. Filing Fee.....	10.00	10.00
NAS membership VAS collected.....	95.00	100.00
Professional Services - CPA .....	665.00	1,235.00
<b>COFFEE SUPPLIES .....</b>	<b>21.69</b>	<b>25.00</b>
<b>CONSERVATION Meetings .....</b>	<b>111.46</b>	<b>250.00</b>
<b>WASHINGTON AUDUBON .....</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>
<b>MISC (Carving Show, Home Show) .....</b>	<b>33.65</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**DUES/MEMBERSHIPS**

Columbia Land Trust.....	100.00	100.00
WA. Environmental Council .....	100.00	100.00
Friends of Columbia Gorge .....	100.00	100.00
Nature Conservancy .....	100.00	100.00
Columbia Springs .....	100.00	100.00

**NEWSLETTER**

Supplies.....	146.85	150.00
Printing .....	2,291.84	2,200.00
Postage 2006 .....	921.63	1,045.00
Bulk Mail Permit.....	190.00	200.00

**OUTREACH**

Audubon Adventures - VAS .....	1,881.85	1,750.00
Audubon Adventruers—Supplies .....	0.00	50.00

**PROGRAMS**

Speaker Travel (3@300 miles@.32/mile)....	60.00	300.00
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<b>PUBLICITY .....</b>	<b>107.40</b>	<b>110.00</b>
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<b>RENT .....</b>	<b>553.50</b>	<b>550.00</b>
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<b>TOTAL EXPENSES .....</b>	<b>8,828.67</b>	<b>9,835.00</b>
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<b>NET INCOME.....</b>	<b>\$(999.57)</b>	<b>\$(0.00)</b>
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**2011 Bequest Funds vs. 2012 Budget**

REVENUE	2011 Actual	2012 Budget
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION EARNINGS.....	6,004.66	5,000.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE .....</b>	<b>\$6,004.66</b>	<b>\$5,000.00</b>

**BEQUEST EXPENSES**

Misc Grants.....	0.00	2,500.00
Grant Audubon Washington .....	2,000.00	
Friends of Ridgefield NWR .....	1,000.00	
Community foundation Fees.....	2,130.78	2,500.00

<b>TOTAL EXPENSES .....</b>	<b>5,130.78</b>	<b>5,000.00</b>
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<b>NET INCOME.....</b>	<b>\$873.88</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
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## As the Legislature Winds Down...

As of this writing, the regular session of the legislature has just ended. The governor has called a special session because the budget is not yet adopted. Earlier, the senate passed a budget that apparently cuts everything in sight. The Senate budget must be reconciled with the House budget, which is less draconian. According to an article in the *Columbian*, Senator Zarelli wrote much of the Senate budget. He was quoted as saying that the House budget had no chance in the Senate.

Many bad bills were derailed, but a couple remain threatening. One Senate bill made it into the house. It started out described as a "grab bag" of bad environmental proposals that attacked growth management and measures that control stormwater runoff. Thanks to amendments in the Senate (and Senator Pridemore), much of the bad stuff against growth management was stricken from the bill. But, at least as of now, there still remained provision that would undermine the permit system that prevent pollution from getting into our streams.

## The Washington Wolf Conservation and Management Plan

We have one now. In December, the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission adopted, with just a few changes, the wolf management plan that the Department of Fish and Wildlife had developed. It appears to be a delicate balance between the supporters of wolves and those who fear wolves. Some highlights are as follows.

There are three recovery regions: eastern Washington, Northern Cascades, and Southern Cascades/Northwest Coast. There are criteria, based on number of breeding pairs in each region, for changing the status of gray wolves from endangered to threatened to sensitive, and, finally, from sensitive to delisted. Delisting would require three consecutive years of the wolf populations having met the recovery objectives. Translocation of wolves from one region to another could be available as a recovery tool. Payment for confirmed and probable livestock depredation is a part of the plan. There are provisions for non-lethal harassment, which would be allowed with a permit. Regulated lethal control would be allowed. The lethal control provision would be reconsidered if it was used inappropriately or if more than two mortalities per year occurred.

One tricky part is the management of hoofed animals (ungulates). Wolves and human hunters compete for the same prey. The plan calls for managing "for healthy ungulate populations through habitat improvement, harvest management, and reduction of illegal hunting." One provision does consider wolves: if research shows that wolves are not meeting recovery objectives and prey availability is a limiting factor, then the harvest of the ungulates might be managed to benefit the wolves. Reducing wolf population because of at-risk ungulates would be considered if

wolves are determined to be a limiting factor and the wolf population has at least four breeding pairs in the recovery region. At-risk ungulate populations are defined as including those species, such as the Columbia white-tailed deer and the Selkirk Mountain woodland caribou, that are listed by the Feds or the state. But, the definition also includes a provision that measures hunting success. I think we can agree that listed species of ungulates should be considered at-risk. We might have a question about including deer or hunting success in considering an at-risk ungulate population. The latter provision could be subject to political pressure and abuse.

## Whistling Ridge Wind Turbines Approved by the Governor

Governor Gregoire has approved the Whistling Ridge Energy Proposal as was recommended by the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC). Under this final decision, the number of wind turbines was reduced to 35. Seattle Audubon had intervened in this process for Audubon, including Vancouver Audubon. I've not heard yet from Seattle what their reaction is. Shawn Cantrell, Seattle Audubon, told me last fall that while 35 turbines improved the situation from our point of view, there still were spotted owl issues. From the viewpoint of Friends of the Columbia Gorge, 35 wind turbines are 35 wind turbines too many. At the end of January, Friends asked Vancouver Audubon to sign on to an official Notice Of Intent (NOI) to sue over the issue. Although, leaning against signing on to the NOI, the VAS board did not make a decision as we want to get more information. Portland Audubon declined to join in the NOI. After consulting with Shawn, Friends decided to wait. The land owner, SDS timber company has said that 35 turbines are too few, the project would not pencil out.



## Coal Exports and Roger Cole

At the meeting last December, the Washington State Audubon Conservation Council passed a resolution opposing all coal exports from the Pacific Northwest. Locally, the Sierra Club has been a leader in working in opposition to the proposed coal export facility in Longview. One of the people involved in this effort was Roger Cole. We in the environmental community learned this last week that Roger had died. His death is a great loss to Clark County and to the environment.

Gretchen Starke



## WA Big Year Fund Raiser Competition

Vancouver Audubon President Eric Bjorkman and his wife Tammy are involved in a year-long fundraising competition with fellow board members Arden and Sherry Hagen. Both couples are conducting a 'Big Year' in Washington State. Throughout 2012, Eric & Sherry will keep a journal of the adventures of **Team Bjorkman** and **Team Hagen** respectively & contribute articles to Columbia Flyway each month sharing the high-lights and low-lights of their quest.

## Who's idea was this, anyway?

This is what I'm thinking as we are driving back from a futile trip to see the Iceland Gull that is reported to be hanging around a gravel spit in the Snake River near Asotin, WA. The Hagen's picked it up the week before, so off we went to keep pace with them.

This is not our normal style. We prefer to have time to experience the area and not feel rushed and pressured to "get the bird" before our time is up and we need to head for home and work. Having said that, we know this is likely our one chance to get a life bird and a big year bird in one shot. So we suck it up and go. We hope the next rarity shows up at Klinepond, or better yet, our backyard!

We're having a great time traipsing around the state but I have to admit it is exhausting. We've used nearly every block of available time to chase some exotic rarity or to get the winter birds before they move off to their breeding grounds. We've done very well but 358 miles (each way) is a long way to go to not see a gull.

I can't even imagine attempting a big year for North America. After two months and ten days of trying it within the boundaries of Washington, I have a new found respect for anyone who would try it on such a grand scale.

We're taking a break from our quest and we're heading down to Arizona and New Mexico later this month. With luck, we'll top 600 species for North America. It might just be the spark we need to recharge and be ready for spring migration!

*Eric Bjorkman, VAS President*

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## The Backyard & Beyond...

In answer to Eric's Question of "Who's Idea was this?" Well, Eric it was **your idea** to do a Big Year but it was **my idea** to turn it into a VAS Big Year Competition Fund Raiser.

**Team Hagen:** There are some 83,500 miles of roads from freeways to service roads in the State of Washington according to WSDOT. What are your chances of running into the same couple 3 times in 2 months 3-6 hours away from home? What are the chances of running into them twice on gravel roads in the wilds of Okanogan County next to the Canadian border? Well that is what has happened to us and the Bjorkmans as we travel in search of all the species we can find in this WA Big Year Fund Raiser Competition. The last time was the end of February as Arden and I were back in that region in search of the **HOARY REDPOLL** coming to feeders in the little town of Chesaw. We did see this rare bird of our state as did the Bjorkmans. While watching for it to return the next morning to one of the feeders (us watching one & Bjorkmans watching another), I spotted waxwings and upon further investigation they turned out to be the beautiful **BOHEMIAN WAXWINGS** that were my target bird for this year. I wanted to get better photographs than the one I had taken years ago borrowing my sisters-in-law's SLR camera with a 50 mm lens. That is like a point-and-shoot set on wide angle. So almost any photo would be better than the one I had. Then a few days later on the way home from Spokane, we went back to Clarkston for our second search for the **ICELAND GULL** which we missed the first time that we drove over and back in one day (it is 6 hours each way). But this time there was success for our ABA life list of #716. But we can sympathize with Eric & Tammy on not finding the gull when they made the trip. *Note:* the Iceland Gull was reported the next day after they got back so it was elsewhere the day they were there as it was on our first try. On the way home we stopped at Fish Hook State Park known for roosting Saw-whet Owl and after searching every juniper bush and every evergreen tree in the park, I decided that the white-wash under the first bush looked rather fresh as did the whitewash on the limbs inside. So Arden came to look again and happened to look up just at the right angle to find this little tiny owl staring back at him. I always say "any day I see an owl has to be a good day". So we got a lifer and an owl in one morning. It WAS a good day.



### Our Counts so far:

Bjorkmans:  
Feb 7: 152  
Mar 6: 161  
Hagens  
Feb 7: 161  
Mar 6: 181

We are all waiting for spring migration to get into full swing now.....

*Sherry Hagen,  
Happy Birding*



# 2012 Washington Big Year

## Fund Raiser Competition: Bjorkman's vs. Hagen's

**THE COMPETITION:** Starting January 1, 2012 the VAS Teams, the **Bjorkman's** (Tammy & Eric) and the **Hagen's** (Sherry & Arden) will begin birding in the **state of Washington** to see who can record the most species during the year ending on December 31, 2012. They will pay their own expenses for this fund raiser.

**THE FUND RAISER:** You can support Vancouver Audubon by buying raffle tickets or giving donations that will go towards VAS's annual operating fund which helps make it possible for us to support local & statewide issues and initiatives.

**COMPETITION RULES:** Each team member will try to see each bird for it to count. Exception would be if one of the partners is working or otherwise **unable** to accompany the other when that person sees a countable bird species. For instance both members of a team **can not** go out in separate directions or areas in search of species at the same time, then combine the total.

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### RULES for the \$20 SUPPORT A TEAM RAFFLE TICKETS

1. Receive a raffle ticket with each \$20 donation made. *For instance, with a \$20 donation you will receive **one** chance to win a prize. \$200 gives you **ten** chances to win a prize.*
2. Enter your contact information on the slip along with "**Which Team**" you think will see the most species during the year. *For each ticket you buy you can vote for either team.*
3. Enter the number of species you think the that winning team will see. *Each ticket you purchase can have a different guess as to the number of species that team might see.*
4. **ONLY ONE PRIZE PER PERSON**      **GUESS THE NUMBER OF SPECIES END DATE IS OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup> 2012**

### RULES for 'NUMBER of SPECIES PLEDGE'

Sign a pledge ticket for the amount you would like to give for each species seen by the team you choose. *You might pledge \$1 per species and if the team sees 250 species that would amount to a \$250 donation. You can also guess the number of species they might see to enter the raffle. You can also pledge to both teams and the number of species each will see.*

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**PRIZES: to be awarded & drawn at the February 2013 General Meeting** (Need not be present to win)

**GRAND PRIZE:** *The person that chooses the winning team & comes closest to guessing the number of species that team saw. Tie breaker 1: earliest post date. Tie breaker 2: without going over the number*

**\$100 Gift Certificate from "The Backyard Bird Shop"**

**Woodprint from local artist Debbie Neely**

**2<sup>ND</sup> PRIZE:** *Winning ticket will be drawn from those participants who choose the winning team.*

**\$100 Gift Certificate from "The Backyard Bird Shop"**

**3<sup>RD</sup> PRIZE:** *Winning ticket will be drawn from those participants who choose the winning team.*

**Natural Wood Carving from local Audubon carver Nancy Ellifrit**

**The 12 or more remaining Prizes will be drawn from all the remaining tickets no matter who you choose to win.**

**Massage, Pedicure or Manicure, Free Oil Changes (5 to give away), Bird house built by Arden Hagen (5 to give away)**

*Those present will choose their prize. Those not present will be assigned a prize.*

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### RULES for the \$5 "GUESS the NUMBER of MILES"

1. For each \$5 ticket, you can guess the number of miles the team that puts on the most miles during year reaches. You do not have to pick a team, just the number of miles.
2. Enter your contact information along with your guess on the ticket.

**PRIZE: Dinner for 2 with Bjorkman's & Hagen's at Orchard Hills Country Club**

**General Drawing Tickets can be purchases & Pledges can be made throughout the year**

# Remember this is a Fund Raiser for VAS



Feb. 8, Scott Carpenter reported that the **CINNAMON TEAL** wintering at the Ridgefield Refuge continue to be seen and will soon be joined by returning migrant teal. He also found one **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** near



Long Lake, a flock of **6 TREE SWALLOWS** at Rest Lake and an **ORANGE - CROWNED WARBLER** was just past the observation blind.

Feb. 11, Arden and Sherry Hagen set out for Damon Point at Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor County, on a

successful quest to get the **MCKAY'S BUNTING**, their Lifer #715 for the ABA area. The weather was horrible but that didn't dampen their enthusiasm for this megarrarity. Bjorkman's were there also.

- The **RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER** was seen by Jim Danzenbaker, at Cottonwood Beach in Captain William Clark Park in Washougal. He found the Steigerwald NWR **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** east of the intersection of the Dike Trail with the Gibbons Creek Art Trail.

Feb.12, Jim Danzenbaker and Steve Kohl headed to Damon Point to see the **MCKAY'S BUNTING**. Afterwards, they watched **7 SNOWY OWLS** and loads of people watching the owls. Two **ROCK SANDPIPERS** on the Point Brown jetty were with **17 SURFBIRDS** and **12 BLACK TURNSTONES**. The **EMPEROR GOOSE** was still on the golf course.

- Randy Hill had **2 TURKEY VULTURES** in Ridgefield heading north over Lake River.
- Rhett Wilkins and Stefan Schlick easily found the drake **TUFTED DUCK** near Lacamas Lake in Camas. They then went to Captain WM. Clark Park in Washougal and saw the **RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER**.
- Danielle and Kelly Johnson went to Lacamas Lake Park for the **TUFTED DUCK**.

- Jim Bradley spotted a **SNOWY OWL** sitting on a light pole in the middle of the freeway, between Mill Plain and Fourth Plain.

- Another earlier than normal Spring arrival was reported by Bob Flores who saw a **SAVANNAH SPARROW** in their Ridgefield area yard.

- Susan and I found a very early migrant, **SAY'S PHOEBE** at Hamilton island, just below Bonneville Dam. This area, better known for it's fishing opportunities, is one of the few grasslands in Skamania County where you can find this and other open land species.



Feb. 13, Scott Carpenter called Randy Hill, after seeing an early **SAY'S PHOEBE** at Post Office Lake during a Ridgefield NWR goose survey.



Feb. 14, The **TUFTED DUCK** was still at Lacamas Lake Park in Camas, seen again by Lyn Topinka and Bill Johnson, the original finder of this rare visitor.

Feb. 18, Gary Fredricks stopped by Lacamas Park to see the **TUFTED DUCK** and said that this was his best

look ever of this species. The next day he traveled to Illwaco for the continuing **YELLOW-BILLED LOON** there.

- Tim Haller went to Lacamas Lake Park to check out the **TUFTED DUCK** which was a lifer for him. The highlight at the Steigerwald Lake NWR was the lone female **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD**.
- Steve Kohl and Will Risser also searched for the unusual birds reported in Clark County, finding the **TUFTED DUCK**, the **RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER**, the female **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** and a **SAYS PHOEBE**. An excellent group of birds for anyone to see in one day.

Feb. 18-20, Les Carlson and George Mayfield participated on the Washington Ornithological Society's winter birding trip in north-central Washington. They ended up with a total of 80 species on this trip. George added 7 lifers on the trip: **YELLOW-BILLED LOON, GYRFALCON, PYGMY NUTHATCH, BOHEMIAN WAXWING, AMERICAN TREE SPARROW, COMMON REDPOLL,** and **HOARY REDPOLL**.

- The highlight of Les's 6 life birds were the **GYRFALCON, NORTHERN GOSHAWK, SHARP-TAILED GROUSE, COMMON REDPOLL, AMERICAN TREE SPARROW** and the **YELLOW-BILLED LOON**, which they picked up in Wenatchee on the way home.



Feb. 19, Wendy Duncan and Joan Durgin photographed a **SAY'S PHOEBE** at the Steigerwald Lake NWR.

- David Barber saw a nice pair of **BARROW'S GOLDENEYE**, east of the I-5 Bridge at about the 3/4 mile mark on the Columbia shore walk.
- For her reporting area for the Great backyard Bird Count, Susan Saul surveyed the Salmon Creek Trail finding 28 different species. Two of the birds seen, **CINNAMON TEAL** and **GREEN HERON**, were either very early migrants or had wintered here instead of flying south.

Feb. 20, Randy Bjorklund and Guy McWethy easily picked up the Camas **TUFTED DUCK**, then over to get the **NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD** and **LESSER GOLD-FINCH** in Vancouver. In the Vancouver Lake lowlands, at Post Office Lake, was a **SAYS PHOEBE**.

**("Afield" Continued on next page)**

Feb. 23, Don and Carol Kohler went out to nearby Lacamas Lake and saw the **TUFTED DUCK**, a new Clark County bird for their lists.

- Patti Brent saw the female **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** at Steigerwald NWR in Washougal. There was also an **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER** and several **YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS** on the refuge.
- A **NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL** was calling from the woods behind our house on Mt. Pleasant in Skamania County.

Feb. 24, Patti Brent returned to eastern Clark County to see the **TUFTED DUCK** at Lacamas Lake.

Feb. 25, Carol Kohler had a large group of **EVENING GROSBEAKS** at their Camas feeders, along with them were a few **PINE SISKINS**, **EURASIAN COLLARED DOVES**, and her first **MOURNING DOVE** in a while. Carol and Joan Durgin led a work party at Steigerwald and saw about a dozen **WESTERN MEADOWLARKS**. The **BEWICK'S WRENS** were calling and they saw an **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER**.

Feb. 26, while birding on Sauvie island, Roger and Ruth Phillips spotted the Eurasian form of the **GREEN-WINGED TEAL**, formerly called a Common Teal but now just a subspecies.

Feb. 27, The Ridgefield NWR, **VERMILION FLYCATCHER** was reported again by Randy Hill, between stops 6 & 7, and the hide-and-seek sightings indicate it probably over-wintered.

- **2 TREE SWALLOWS** were seen in Skamania County, near Beacon Rock by our son, Brad Cady.
- Les Carlson and I did a Big Day in Skamania County and found 66 species which is a new record for February.

March 1, A **TURKEY VULTURE** near Creston, WA, an uncommon bird east of the Cascades, was the first seen this year in Washington, by Arden and Sherry Hagen.

March 2, George Mayfield and Nancy Ellifrit drove out to Illwaco and found the **YELLOW-BILLED LOON**, a lifer for Nancy.

March 6, The Steigerwald Lake NWR **MOUNTAIN BLUE-BIRD** was seen again by Lyn and Gene Topikna.

- An **AMERICAN DIPPER** was found on Mill Creek by Cindy Mayfield, this is far from the usual mountainous streams where they normally are found.



- Sherry and Arden Hagen went to Clarkston/Asotin, WA for an **ICELAND GULL** reported from near there, this was the #716 bird that they have seen in the ABA area.

- A walk along the Salmon Creek Trail by Dan Nelson, produced **2 PILEATED WOODPECKERS**, **12 BARN SWALLOWS** and **WHITE-**



**THROATED SPARROWS**. We are blessed with a number of great birding spots in the metro area.

March 7, A small flock of **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE** were seen east of Fort Vancouver by Gay and Harry Leslie. These are among the earliest north-bound waterfowl and can be found here in early spring and again in late summer as they move to and from their wintering grounds in the Sacramento River Valley.

March 8, Les Carlson found a singing **HUTTON'S VIREO** north of his home. This small vireo is difficult to find except when calling in the early spring.

- Lyn and Gene Topinka photographed the **YELLOW-BILLED LOON** at Illwaco, this is another one of the rare birds that has been allowing unusually close views this winter. They also found a flock of scoters near Chinook that contained all three species.

- In Vancouver, Vanessa Winnett had her first of the season singing **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW**. We have two different subspecies of this species in our area, the Gambel's during the winter and the locally breeding Pugetanis, their songs are completely different as is their bill color.

March 9, The **VERMILION FLYCATCHER** was seen by Arden and Sherry Hagen at the Ridgefield NWR just past the Kiwa trail entrance. It was fly-catching from a large root snag in the wetlands.

We have had an influx of **EVENING GROSBEAKS** with birds being reported from feeders in all corners of our area. What must have been a wintering bird a male **WILSON'S WARBLER** was in Don and Sue Cannard's yard in Vancouver, I can't remember any other winter reports of this species from Clark County.

April will be when the spring migrants become really noticeable with new arrivals nearly every day. Warblers, tanagers, and shorebirds near their peak in numbers near the end of the month. Please note the arrival dates for species and send those records to me for this column and the County Year List Project. This project is a compilation of all the birds seen in each county in 2012, so far 130 species have been reported in Clark County and 89 were reported from Skamania County. To see the list go to: <http://www.wabirder.com/bartel.html> and please let me know of any birds not marked off that were seen in either of those two counties.

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**April 2012**

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