



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

April 2016

Calendar

***Tuesday, April 5, 7:30 PM: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Tuesday, April 26, 6:30 PM: VAS Board Meeting hosted by Eric & Tammy Bjorkman, 4110 NE 54th Ave., Vancouver 360-695-3116

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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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: Show and Tell

by Members & Guests

Members are invited to present some of their own photos of birds or wildlife. Several have already agreed to present.

Contact Programs coordinator Bob Rowe, if you wish to present but have not yet notified him.

rowe9629@comcast.net

(360) 713-3675

Time limits us to about 8 presenters with about 20 photos each to share.



FIELD TRIP

Columbia Gorge Birds and Blooms



Leader: Wilson Cady, 360-835-5947

When: April 2, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

Meet at: Meet at the Port of Camas-Washougal Boat Launch. (just south of Highway 14 by Westlie Ford. Take the Frontage Rd exit to the Round-a-bout at Port St. south)

An is an all day exploration of the Columbia Gorge, mostly by car with a couple of short walks depending on the conditions. Dress for the weather, bring a lunch and your bird book and binoculars. If you have an FRS radio (22 channel walkie-talkie) please bring it for communicating between vehicles. .

We will carpool.

Do not forget to pay your driver for gas.

Welcome New Members: Julie Baun • Sandra Cahoon • Alberta Carlson • Karen Cornell • Maryann Flood • Karen Fox • Adena Grundy • Barbara Kelly • Deena Kerr • Crystal Leighty • Mair Lewis • Debra Mohler • Rebecca Nowacki • Francis Putnam • Moira Reynoldson • John Schwartz • Steve Vanvranken.

VAS ELECTIONS

It is time again to elected new officers for VAS. The following have agreed to run for office. Eric & Tammy have agreed to stay on as President and Secretary if voted in. While Joan and Susan will switch positions if voted in. We will take nominations from the floor also.

President:Eric Bjorkman

Vice President:.....Joan Durgin

Treasurer:Susan Setterberg

Secretary:Tammy Bjorkman

My Big Year: Part 2

by *Bob Flores*

Through the summer months I concentrated on Larch Mountain and Vancouver Lake areas and found surprises such as Sabine's gull, prairie falcon, ferruginous hawk, rock wren, and a bird I thought I was going to miss for the year, eastern kingbird. Fall shore birding can be very good in Clark County but as the drought continued, wetlands began to dry up. To compound this, the Ridgefield NWR pump was not in operation preventing usual fall pumping. So, by the end of September wetlands were non-existent. Although I found myself worried about water conditions, I was able to find a sanderling, Forster's tern and horned lark but there was no doubt the opportunity for several wetland birds and shorebirds were lost by the drought. As fall and winter approached, I was able to locate expected white-winged and surf scoters and then a series of good birds occurred. A snowy egret showed up while conducting a tour on Ridgefield NWR. Soon afterward on another tour, a Brant was found in Vancouver Bottoms then a white-faced ibis at Shillipoo Lake. November ended with a northern shrike and I was again feeling good and forgetting the wetland conditions. December began warm and the weather really never allowed my dreams of a snowy owl and snow bunting to come true. By mid-December I was repeating to myself the phrase "A December NOT to remember" as I wondered where my next bird was to come from. I decided I needed to leave the County and went north to see the yellow-throated

warbler in Longview. What a beautiful bird. Many birders had the same idea including Ryan Merrill, who decided to go to Post Office Lake to look for the snowy egret and I decided to join him. Ryan and I discussed my big year and what birds could be found and he suggested common redpoll, of course not having found it in the County I just smiled. So, less than an hour after that conversation, there we were on the dike overlooking Post Office Lake when Ryan exclaims, "There a redpoll!" I at first did not hear it, but as it flew over us and to the side of my good ear there was no doubt and I just stood there staring at Ryan with a dropped jaw. I could not believe it. A week later I found myself sitting in my lounge chair again chanting "A December NOT to remember" when my phone rang. It was Jay Withgott and all I heard was kittiwake and I sprang forward the chant disappearing as if I had been slapped in the face. He told me he was on the Oregon side of the Columbia River looking at a black-legged kittiwake that was roosting on the Washington shoreline. His description of the location was familiar to me so I bolted to the area and with a few phone calls I was able to jump the kittiwake from the shoreline and observe it fly towards I-205. When I let Jay know I found it, I asked how he had my number and he said members in the group he was with had written down my number. They had written my number down when I asked the OBOL and Tweeters communities' assistance with my big year in January. So my last bird of the year was given to me because the birding community did engage themselves with my big year and I am so grateful to all of them who have helped me reach my final number of 227 for the year.

GO PAPERLESS with the VAS Newsletter

If you would rather have a paperless VAS Newsletter then you can email Sherry Hagen at littlebird-er@comcast.net to receive a "PDF" copy of The Columbia Flyway in color sent to you. Include the email address that you wish to have it sent to.

The PDF form is also available on line at:

www.vancouveraudubon.org



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U.S. House Takes Historic Vote on the Arctic Refuge

From National Audubon

For the first time ever, Congress took a vote on whether or not to provide permanent protection for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Although the measure did not pass, it received bipartisan support and represented a significant moment in the history of this long-threatened Refuge.



As part of the debate on the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Act (H.R. 2406) in the U.S. House, Representative Jared Huffman (D-CA) offered an amendment that would have designated the vulnerable coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge as Wilderness, which would prevent oil and gas development. The amendment mirrors the bill that he introduced with Rep. Mike Fitzpatrick (R-PA) to provide the Arctic Refuge with permanent protection (H.R. 239), and has been introduced in Congress for more than 25 years.

Although Audubon strongly opposed the SHARE Act, this vote presented a historic opportunity to support and protect the iconic Arctic Refuge, and a vote for the amendment was not a show of support for the overall bill. The final vote for the amendment was 227-176, with 30 members not voting.

Along with 167 Democrats, nine Republicans supported the amendment. [Including: Reichert (R-WA)] Three Democrats opposed the amendment, including Representatives Bishop (D-GA), Costa (D-CA), and Peterson (D-MN).

Audubon continues to push Congress to pass the Arctic Refuge legislation. If you haven't already, [please ask your members of Congress to cosponsor the bill to permanently protect the Refuge.](#)

Gretchen Starke's Column

Due to an overload of those unexpected things in life that cause stress and take time to deal with. Gretchen is sorry that she was not able to submit an article on conservation this month. She hopes things will be better next month and we wish her the best in dealing with these issues.

Home & Garden Show

Volunteers Needed for the VAS Booth

April 22, 23 & 24

Friday, Saturday & Sunday

If you are interested in helping

then call Marilyn Hall

at 360-253-6865

to sign up for a 2 hour
time slot



INJURED BIRDS: WHAT TO DO?

We have no Bird Rehabilitators in the Vancouver Area that we know of. So what should you do if you find yourself in this situation?

Many Birds that hit a window just need some time to rest to get "their wind back" before taking off again. Try putting them in

a box with plenty of air for an hour or more until you hear movement then take them outdoors and test if they are ready to fly off. If not then....



1. Call the **Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center** for information: 503-292-0304

5151 NW Cornell Rd, Portland OR

2. Call Arden or Sherry Hagen for information: 360-892-8872 If they are available to transport a bird to the Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center then they ask that they receive a gas mileage compensation and a small donation for the Care Center for the care of the bird at the time of pick up.

3. There is 24 hr **Animals Hospital called DoveLewis** in downtown Portland that will take the bird overnight if the Portland Audubon Wildlife is closed.

1945 NW Pettygrove 503-228-7281

In the meantime....

Keep the bird in a box with small air holes.

You might offer water via a dropper, and if necessary watered down puppy chow to supply nutrients.

Feb. 6, A **SWAMP SPARROW** highlighted the trip around the River "S" unit of the Ridgefield NWR, for Jim Danzenbaker

Feb. 11, Bob Flores spotted a **EURASIAN WIGEON** at the intersection of Carty Rd and NW Hillhurst Rd in the small wetland there, it was mixed in with 58 **AMERICAN WIGEON**.

HORNED LARKS are unusual in Clark County, so a flock of 14 birds spotted along the Dike Trail at the Steigerwald NWR, by Barry Woodruff, was remarkable.

Feb. 13, Lyn and Gene Topinka headed up to the pond at Hurlhurst and Carty Roads to see the **EURASIAN WIGEON** reported by Bob Flores. They then went to Lower River Road and the Shillapoo Lake area where there were thousands of **SNOW GEESE** and at least 6 **CANVASBACKS** on Shillapoo Lake.

Susan Setterberg led a VAS trip to the Woodland Bottoms and had the first local sighting of an **OSPREY** for 2016. Their other exciting bird was a **BARN OWL** sitting out in the open.

Feb. 14, We had a **NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL** calling in front of our home from a spot near where I have put up some nest boxes for them.

Feb. 15, Jason Hernandez found a Dusky **CANADA GOOSE** among the numerous Canada Geese on the North Shore of Bonneville Dam in Skamania County, this subspecies seldom strays that far east. And at the last picnic table before the dam's guard station was an early **SAY'S PHOEBE**.

Feb. 17, Lyn Topinka had nice views of the **SAY'S PHOEBE** which had been on Hamilton Island at the end of the road just before one enters the Bonneville Dam Visitor Center.

Feb. 20, Rich Young heard a possible **WESTERN TANGER** on the Washougal River Trail, but without a visual conformation one can't rule out a Starling, they imitate many species in the Spring. I have spent a lot of time looking for some early migrants and finding only a Starling in the area. There were no questions about the hundreds of **TREE SWALLOWS** he saw at Steigerwald Lake NWR or the **CINNAMON TEAL, MERLIN, YELLOW-RUMPED WABLERS** or the pair of **BALD EAGLES** sharing a duck near their nest site.

Feb. 21, The Washington Ornithological Society field trip, led by Randy Hill, had an interesting afternoon at Steigerwald Lake NWR. They found at least 250 **TREE SWALLOWS**, 2 **VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS** and a single **BARN SWALLOW** flying over the wetlands. They

also saw the **SAY'S PHOEBE** near the barn along the dike trail.

Feb. 22, Ann Nightingale, Shawneen Finnegan, Dave Irons and Jim Danzenbaker enjoyed a full day of birding starting at the River "S" unit of Ridgefield NWR where the highlights were a drake **EURASIAN WIGEON**, a pair of **GREAT-HORNED OWLS**, a **MERLIN**, thousands of **CAKCLING GEESE**, and a single **BARN SWALLOW**. They then decided to migrate north to Cowlitz County where at the Port of Kalama the log booms were loaded at least 1,000 gulls which included several **WESTERN GULLS**, at least 500 **MEW GULLS**, and lesser numbers of **CALIFORNIA, THAYER'S, HERRING, GLAUCOUS-WINGED** and various large hybrid gulls. Also present were three **RING-BILLED GULLS** which finished a clean sweep of the expected gull species.

Afterwards, they visited Woodland Bottoms where they tallied hundreds of **SANDHILL CRANES**, 3 **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS**, and the highlight of the day was when they reached the Lewis River and watched a conservatively estimated 4,000 gulls, 100+ **BALD EAGLES**, 78 **COMMON MERGANSERS**, several hundred assorted scaup, and miscellaneous other ducks that were attracted to a smelt run. They ended the visit to Woodland Bottoms at the north end where they watched 8 **SHORT-EARED OWLS** and at least a dozen **NORTHERN HARRIERS** hunting over the fields.

Feb. 25, Todd Kapral of the Backyard Bird Shop sent me a photo taken by one of their customers of a **GIANT WOOD-RAIL**, a bird from Brazil, that has been in her neighborhood since last fall. This is a non-migratory species and is most likely an escaped cage bird although it isn't banded or pinioned. I was lucky enough to get to hear this bird but have not seen it yet.

Les Carlson and I birded in Skamania County, seeing the continuing **HARRIS'S SPARROW** at Skamania Landing, 50 **TREE SWALLOWS** at Rock Creek Cove and 30 **WILD TURKEYS** at Home Valley where we finished the day with a calling **NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL**.

Feb. 27, Our first of the year **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** showed up at our feeders, we also had numerous **AMERICAN ROBINS** eating the remaining Holly berries..

Feb. 28, Russ Koppendrayner found a **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** among the gulls at the Kalama Marina, in Cowlitz County, it was also seen by Jeff Jendro, this was a new species for the Cowlitz County checklist. Bob Flores and Randy Hill successfully searched for this bird and also found a **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** in the flock, the kittiwake is a bird of the oceans and the Lesser Black-backed is an Eurasian species. After viewing these bird Shawneen Finnegan and Dave Irons found a **RUSTY BLACKBIRD** at the Woodland Bottoms, a lot of good birds

Vancouver Audubon

in that county.

Feb. 29, The first of 2016 **BAND-TAILED PIGEONS** came to our feeders, within a few weeks these first three birds will be joined by a couple of dozen more.

March 3, A **GLAUCOUS GULL** was seen at the Ridgefield NWR by Chris Goulart, perhaps the same on that had been seen earlier at the Lewis River feeding on smelt.

March 4, Susan and I birded in Skamania County where we saw the continuing **HARRIS'S SPARROW** at Skamania Landing, a **MERLIN** in Stevenson and a **COMMON LOON** in the Columbia River at Dog Mountain.

March 6, After hearing a **NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL** in the pre-dawn darkness, the first of the year **TURKEY VULTURE**, **CALIFORNIA GULL**, **RING-BILLED GULL**, **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** and **VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW** for his Battle Ground yard were reported by Jim Danzenbaker. He also spotted about 200 **SNOW GEESE** flying overhead.



Arden and Sherry Hagen had a **CHIPPING SPARROW** in their yard where they had one earlier in the winter, this could have been either the same bird or a migrant.

The first female **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** of the year for Skamania County was at our feeder on Mt. Pleasant and our first **TURKEY VULTURE** passed overhead..

Michele Maani photographed a **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** at Vancouver Lake, this hawk has yet to be confirmed as a nesting species in Washington.

March 11, A male **BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK** was at George and Cindy Mayfield's feeder, a full six weeks earlier than their average return date.

The 2016 Clark County Cumulative Checklist (birds seen by anyone) stood at 141 species at the end of this report date and the list in Skamania County was at 97. These numbers will go up rapidly now that spring migration is underway, some of the birds we should expect to arrive in March include Cliff Swallow, and Orange-crowned Warbler. To see the calendar of average return dates for birds go to: <https://birdsoverportland.wordpress.com/oregon-migration-phenology/>

Wilson Cady, gorgebirds@juno.com

Woodland Bottoms Field Trip Results

By Susan Setterberg

On February 13, we had a bonus trip to Woodland Bottoms. The area has been very exciting this winter with many raptors, cranes and ducks. A number of fields are flooded, much like Ridgefield NWR, and are generously used by waterfowl. We met at 9 am, with the hope the rain would hold off, and heard the Killdeer from the Walmart parking lot for our first bird. We headed out Dyke Access Rd to check out the back waters along the dyke which are sheltered from the Columbia River. Not too much to see in that area but lots of Robins and Starlings, with the ever present Kestrels to check out. Things got more interesting as we drove along the Dyke Road and we were treated to a large variety of gulls moving up river. Overall, we estimated 3000 gulls, with the largest portion being the "Olympic," or hybrid gulls (Glaucous-winged X anything else). But there were California, Mew, and Ring-billed in the mix too. An almost equal number of scaup species was on the water; Lesser and Greater were seen. Goldeneye, Common Merganser and Double Crested Cormorant plus a couple Bald Eagles were spotted on the river. Inland around the farm fields we were looking for plentiful Rough-legged Hawks as seen earlier this season, but we only found one. Lots of Red-tails (26), a few Northern Harrier (4), and final counts of 14 Bald Eagle and 20 Kestrel rounded out our raptor day. There was quite a variety of ducks to see. We had a couple of real treats for the day though. There were at least 139 Great Blue Heron in the rookery. It is always odd to see these birds up in trees. Near the end of the trip, we had a field full of Sandhill Cranes (138 counted). The flock is the one that overnights in the roost at the Ridgefield NWR Roth unit. What a sight that was. But probably the best sighting was made as Michelle Maani spotted what looked like an owl perched on a stump on back of a fence we had just passed. Our well photographed Barn Owl was a delight. What beautiful color. To find it sitting out was truly amazing; best view I have ever had. It was a great morning with 47 species. We were able to count all birds (well, estimates on the gulls and scaup) to submit them as part of this year's Great Backyard Bird Count. Thanks to Michelle for the photographs.



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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 2016

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.

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