

Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

December 2008

Calendar

***BIRDING CLASS ... Tuesday, December 2, 6:45 PM before the meeting.

***Tuesday, December 2, 7:30 pm: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Monday, December 1, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting at the home of Bob & Geri Rowe, 2010 SE 140th Ave. Vancouver 360-254-8699

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	31			

PROGRAM:

Condor Tales

by Sandy Wilbur

Sanford "Sandy" Wilbur was leader of the California Condor research and recovery effort from 1969 to 1981, and was the principal formulator of the plan from which the current captive breeding and release program was developed. Using color slides and readings from his recent book, "Condor Tales: What I Learned in Twelve Years with the Big Birds," he will describe how the condors became endangered (reaching a low point of only about fifteen birds in the early 1980s) and how the condors came to be taken from the wild for a captive breeding program. He will also talk about the past status of condors in the Pacific Northwest, and how they might be reestablished in our area.

In addition to the California Condor, his endangered species work has included rails, terns, vireos, spotted owls, and Hawaiian birds. He has written many scientific papers and magazine articles

and several books, including "Condor Tales," "Birds of Baja California, Mexico," and "Vulture Biology and Management."

His website contains both historic and recent information on California condors and other wildlife. Currently, he and his wife Sally live in Gresham, Oregon in the winter, and far northern New Hampshire in the summer.

<http://home.netcom.com/~symbios/wildlife.html>



FIELD TRIP

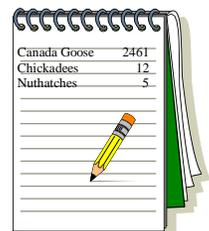
Christmas Bird Count

Leader: Tammy Bjorkman, 360-213-6489

Email: bjorkman@inet.com

When: December 21, Sunday

Call Tammy for details if you would like to participate



This is the thirty-second year that our chapter has joined with the Portland Audubon Chapter in conducting the winter census of birds in a fifteen-mile diameter circle that is centered on the north end of Racetrack Lake on Sauvie Island. We see about a hundred and ten species each year as a bi-state total and about one hundred different types of birds on the Washington side. The main areas we cover on our side of the circle are the Vancouver Lake Lowlands, Burnt Bridge Creek, Salmon Creek, and the Ridgefield Refuge.

Birders of all skill levels are invited to participate, as we will divide in to groups with each party having at least one experienced birder.

**No Newsletter
or Meeting in January**

Treasurer's Report. Income for October was \$1,315.84 and included \$565 in donations and \$700 in Newsletter subscriptions. Expenses were \$3,743.09. \$2,145.64 was sent to National Audubon for Audubon Adventures. Cash and investments were \$21,763.49. As of 30 June the Community Foundation was \$216,243.33.

Education. Carol Peterson reported on our collaboration with Columbia Springs for summer camps. Schools were not notified so attendance was low. Background checks were a problem. Carol will continue next year.

Field Trips. Tami Bjorkman will be the coordinator for the Christmas Bird Count this year. Please contact her to volunteer to count.

Programs. There was a discussion about mileage. A motion was passed to give mileage to all speakers, no matter where they lived. Another motion was passed to use the federal mileage rate. The meetings need to be more friendly. The refreshments will be moved out from behind the screen. Board members will act as greeters. There will be a popcorn night annually.

Conservation. The new Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife biologist will inform the board of their update of wildlife Priority Habitat maps. Gretchen gave the highlights of the Conservation committee's last meeting. DNR is doing recreational planning for their lands; the motorized users want more land available.

Old Business. There was a critique of Bird Fest. Viewers were brought to sites in bus loads, which made too many people at one time for successful viewing.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Ellifrit

VAS Upcoming Programs:

January: **No meeting**

February: ?? *Movie & Popcorn
Night at VAS*

March: *Nate Chappell Birds of Thailand,
Argentina, Etc.*

April: *Bob Sallinger
Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center*



Concerned about Global Warming? Here is what your State Office is doing...

Audubon Washington staff are often asked what the State office is working on in regards to Global Warming. Right now, we are focusing on a national campaign, the C-Change Global Warming Campaign. The purpose of this campaign is two-fold: to generate pressure on targeted swing congressional members and to create climate change champions among our senators to ensure stronger conservation legislation from the next Administration.

There are three primary components to this campaign. The first is pre-election tasks. We have been seeking opportunities to discuss climate change at public forums, local candidate debates, and other public meetings. On October 15th, the "Feeling the Heat Report" was also released. Audubon Washington collaborated on this report focusing on rising global temperatures and what implications temperature trends might have for our state.

Another component of the campaign is ongoing tasks. Our office has been sending letters to three target audiences: grassroots leaders within our state, state university presidents, and local businesses. Through these letters, we are urging participation in this campaign to encourage Congress to reduce carbon emissions, invest in clean energy, and protect communities from the impact of global warming.

The third component of this campaign will occur post-election. We are working to coordinate meetings between legislative members, local business leaders, university faculty, and other interest groups. The C-Change group will also focus on a "100 Days Campaign" urging swift federal action for the environment in the first 100 days of the new Administration.

This is what the State office is working on, but we still need some help from chapters. We can't make an impact unless you do. Audubon's unique strengths are its chapters and volunteers. Here are some examples of how you can get involved:

- Write an editorial to your local paper
- Write a letter to the editor to your local paper
- Attend meetings with local congressional leaders
- Make sure you are signed up to receive Audubon's action alerts, go to: <http://audubonaction.org/audubon/home.html>

If you would like to get involved, have questions, or would like more information, please contact Sara Kath at skath@audubon.org or call 360-786-8020 ext. 205.



Election Note

The election has, for the most part, turned out well for the environment. Tim Eyman's toxic initiative went down and many candidates friendly to the environment (or at least willing to listen) were elected to state, local, and national office.

Vancouver Waterfront Development Revisited

Last month I wrote about the proposed park in the new development that is hoped to be where Boise Cascade once was. Since then, the citizens committee met one more time and the open house has been held. My enthusiasm has been tempered considerably. The grove of trees at the west end of the project turns out to be on land that was not owned by Boise Cascade, not now owned by the developer and will not be owned by the city unless the current owner agrees to sell. But the city does hope to buy it someday, so park plans were prepared for that land. The plan as it was presented at the open house shows the trees, but a kind of braided network of trails through the area. Directly east of that is a circular path enclosing – a lawn. Further to the east is a proposed bird watching area with three or four small clumps of trees. Oh, well. Even if this “bird watching site” stretches truth in advertising, we will have to remember that this is an urban park and it was an industrial site. It will provide open space for people, even if not for birds. A footnote: on leaving the open house, I ran into one of the Port of Vancouver commissioners and she said that the owner of the land to the west plans to hang onto it forever.

News Flash: Bad News about Gravel Mining on the East Fork

Remember Storedahl? And the proposed expansion of gravel mining on the East Fork of the Lewis River? I just received an e-mail from David McDonald, the lawyer for the Friends of the East Fork in the fight to keep Storedahl from destroying habitat through gravel mining of the East Fork. The Supreme Court (I assume state) has denied the Friends' petition to review the Court of Appeals decision that commands the county to grant the rezone that will allow Storedahl to mine. There is still the matter of the habitat conservation plan (HCP) that Storedahl must file under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government, but McDonald said that there is little hope there. Vancouver Audubon testified on this issue on the basis of habitat destruction. Often, what is bad for salmon is also bad for birds.

The State Conservation Meeting: October 10

Briefly, the issues discussed at the conservation meeting are as follows: 1) Lower Columbia Basin Audubon proposed a resolution for mitigation of shrub-steppe habitat lost because of increased irrigation for agriculture. The discussion and decision on the resolution was delayed so that it may be expanded to encompass a state-wide policy. Vancouver Audubon agreed that we should support such a resolution. 2) During the upcoming legislative session, Audubon will be supporting more money for the Evergreen Communities program and more money for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. The latter is the program that gives grants to local governments for parks, open space, and wildlife habitat. You will be hearing more about this later. 3) Audubon Washington is on a taskforce that is working to update voluntary guidelines for windpower. We have some six issues that we are concerned about including collecting baseline data before construction, monitoring of ongoing operations, and cumulative effects. 4) Audubon Washington is signing onto the EarthJustice lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the northern spotted owl issue.

Decline of the American Kestrel

According to the organization, Hawk-Watch International, the population of American kestrels has had a serious decline. Data from various sites that monitor migration, breeding bird surveys, and Christmas bird counts show annual declines for nearly every year and site for the thirty years 1974-2004. The percent annual decline has been sharper for the later years, 1994-2004. The causes of the decline may be any or all of the following: pesticide contamination (including possible DDT despite it having been banned in the U.S. for years), habitat change especially the change caused by previously logged forests in the east growing back, increased predation by Coopers hawks, and West Nile virus.

Gretchen Starke



Oct. 11, Scott Carpenter, spotted a **YELLOW WARBLER** during Ridgefield BirdFest along the Kiwa Trail, at the River "S" Unit. This was about two weeks late for this species.

Another bird found during this annual celebration of the refuge was a **WILSON'S PHALAROPE** seen by Arden Hagen.

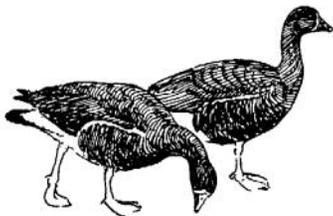
Oct. 12, In the high mountain lake area of north Skamania County, Khanh Tran, of Portland, found several interesting species including a pair of **BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS** near Takh Takh Meadows and three **AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKERS** near Horseshoe Lake. An active **NORTHERN GOSHAWK** patrolling the roads for grouse and a pair of **PINE GROSBEEK** at Horseshoe Lake.

He had an extremely successful outing for **SPRUCE GROUSE** on this trip and found a total of 8 birds from four different locations.



Oct. 14, Seattle resident, Bob Sundstrom, counted several thousand newly arrived **CAACKLING GEESE** in the fields just north of Woodland, and several thousand more at Ridgefield NWR "S" Unit. This small species of Arctic breeding goose is now our most numerous goose during the winter.

Oct. 15, After reading the e-mail posting of Khanh Tran's trip, Joseph Higbee of Spanaway WA, a female and 3 male **SPRUCE GROUSE** on the road into Horseshoe Lake. In 2001, Joe was the person who first located this species of grouse in Skamania County.



Oct. 16, Susan and I birded at Rock Creek Cove in Stevenson where we found 2 adult **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE** with 7 juveniles. We suspect that this is the pair of geese that

have wintered at the park there for at least the last three years that returned with their offspring.

Oct. 17, Ruth Sullivan of Tacoma also checked out the Tahkalakh Lake/Horseshoe Lake area and saw the **SPRUCE GROUSE**. She stayed the night to try and find some owls and was lucky enough to locate a calling **BOREAL OWL**, a species previously unrecorded from Skamania County.

Oct. 22, Don and Sue Sargeant, birders who live in Pleasant Valley, reported an **EURASIAN COLLARED DOVE** coming to their feeders. This species is quickly spreading across the country after first becoming established in Florida.

Oct. 25, A second sighting of **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES** at The Dalles Dam this fall should put all local birders on alert for this ocean-dwelling species along the Columbia River. It has never been reported from Clark or Skamania County but most likely passed through here to get to Klickitat County.

Oct. 27, Susan and I made our third trip of the fall to northern Skamania County where we finally located the **SPRUCE GROUSE** at Horseshoe Lake, where there was also a calling **PINE GROSBEEK**. Other birds seen on this outing were **AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER, BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER, MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE, WESTERN BLUEBIRD, PINE GROSBEEK and RED CROSSBILL**. A very late **OSPREY** was at Ollalie Lake.

Oct. 30, A birding trip along the Columbia River in Skamania County produced a **RED-NECKED GREBE** at Bonneville Dam for Susan and I. At Franz Lake we watched flight after flight of noisy **TUNDRA SWANS** arriving at this traditional wintering spot in the flock of 200 birds on the water we were able to pick out one **TRUMPETER SWAN**, a new Skamania County bird for me.

Oct. 31, A **MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE** visited our feeders at our home in western Skamania County. This appears to be another species that is moving into the western part of the state this winter, where they are uncommon.

Nov. 1, Carol Ledford, of Portland, birded the River "S" Unit at the Ridgefield NWR and picked out a "BEWICK'S SWAN", this is the Eurasian form of the **TUNDRA SWAN**. These birds have a more extensive yellow area on the bill and to my knowledge this is the first one of these birds seen in Clark County.

Nov. 2, A **ROSS' GOOSE** was seen by Al Larrabee on Rest Lake at the Ridgefield NWR River "S" Unit.

Khanh Tran led George Neavoll, of Portland, to the Skamania County high lakes again in search of **SPRUCE GROUSE**, finding two which were lifebird number 550 for George. They also were able to find both **BOREAL OWL** and **NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL** near Takh Takh Meadows.



Nov. 4, 10 **LESSER GOLDFINCHES** were eating shelled sunflower seeds at Ken Knittle's feeder in Hazel Dell area of Vancouver WA. This was a first for his yard.

Nov. 7, At the Ridgefield NWR, Bob Flores found single **BLACK BRANT** at the south end Rest Lake. Also there were 10 **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER, 46 GREATER YELLOWLEGS, 48 LEAST SANDPIPERS, 15 DUNLIN AND 190 TUNDRA SWAN and 91 SANDHILL CRANES**.

("Afield" Continued on next page)

("Afield" Continued)

This is shaping up to be another interesting season for out of place or unusual birds in our region. Watch your feeders for anything that appears to be unusual as well as when you are out birding and please contact either me or Arden and Sherry Hagen immediately if you find anything interesting.



The Common Myna has been added to the official checklist of birds of North America after their population in Florida became large enough to become self-sustaining. So far this exotic member of the starling family hasn't expanded its' range but they probably would be able to survive our winters as the Crested Mynah had a breeding colony in Vancouver, B.C. for over a hundred years until dying out in about 2002.

Pine Siskins have returned to our feeders in large numbers and Evening Grosbeaks are once again common after several winters when these two members of the finch family did not move onto the area to winter. The siskins are susceptible to diseases when visiting feeders so be sure to clean up under your feeders or move them on a regular basis to prevent infections from accumulated droppings. I hoe the seed hulls and dropping into the soil to compost them.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

*****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



message/fax (360) 253-5771

Everything for the Wild Bird enthusiast™

8101 N. E. Parkway • Vancouver, Washington 98662 • (360) 253-5771



Project FeederWatch

Embrace the winter. Count feeder birds for science!



The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has just released its newly revised, FREE **Homeschooler's Guide to Project FeederWatch**.

For more than 20 years, Project FeederWatch has been an easy, fun way for children to learn about birds and strengthen their skills in observation, identification, research, computation, writing, creativity, and more. FeederWatchers keep track of the numbers and kinds of birds at their feeders through the winter and report what they see to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

The **Homeschooler's Guide to Project FeederWatch** will guide you through bird-related activities that promote learning across many disciplines, including science, math, history, and the arts. Examples of these activities include:

- **Natural history:** Observe and research a bird's behavior and life cycle
- **Math:** Calculate average seed consumption rate and graph data
- **Writing:** Keep a nature journal to write stories and poetry
- **Geography:** Research the geographic ranges of birds
- **Art:** Keep a feeder-bird sketch book or create a papier mache mask

To download the **Homeschooler's Guide to Project FeederWatch**, visit www.FeederWatch.org and click on the "Education/Home School" button. You'll be able to download the PDF in low (2.2MB) or high (6.7MB) resolutions.

You may choose to use the free guide as a stand-alone resource, or sign up for Project FeederWatch to submit the data you gather. If you would like to be a project participant, the signup fee is \$12 for members of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, \$15 for non-members. There are discounts for group participation.

If you have any questions, please let us know how we can help by emailing feederwatch@cornell.edu.

Sincerely,
David Bonter
Project Leader, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

**NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Vancouver, WA
PERMIT# 976**

vancouveraudubon.org

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



December 2008

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.

**Did you
Renew Your
subscription?**

VANCOUVER AUDUBON ** NEWSLETTER & DONATION COUPON

Help support Vancouver Audubon

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 \$_____

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

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

**Y-13
7XCH**

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

Please include this coupon and make check payable to and send to:
Vancouver Audubon, P.O. Box 1966, Vancouver, WA 98668-1966

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