

Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

December 2010

Calendar

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

***Tuesday, Dec. 7, 7:30 pm: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 715 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Monday, Dec. 6, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting hosted by Arden & Sherry Hagen, 2203 SE 135th Ave., Vancouver 360-892-8872

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	31	

PROGRAM:

Avian Fatalities From Wind Farms

By David Anderson

DAVID ANDERSON, a Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife Biologist, working in Klickitat county, will present a program on WDFW findings and policy on this subject.

National energy policy supports expansion of renewable sources including wind power. This "green" form of power presents those interested in bird populations with a dilemma, due to the accumulation of data documenting avian deaths from wind turbine blades. This is especially high for raptors, bats and some songbirds. Avian mortality is in the thousands in Washington and Oregon.

There is rapid expansion of wind farms in the Columbia Gorge on both sides. Klickitat county now supports many wind farms.

Let us take a look at this dilemma.



FIELD TRIP

Newport, OR & the Coast



Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: December 4, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

Meet at: Inn at the Quay, west side parking lot

We will head to the Newport, OR area and the coast looking for wintering waterfowl, seabirds, loons, grebes, all 3 species of cormorants and anything else that might show up in the area.

December 4th



Please Note....

There are no...

- Meetings
- Field Trips
- Newsletter

...in January

*There will be a Newsletter
mailed during January
for the February events.*

Treasurer's Report – Joan Durgin

Revenue for August: \$4,634.16

Expenses for August: \$4,849.95

Balance in Community Foundation as of September 30, 2010 is \$214,379.86

Response to our recent mailing has been very good for both newsletter renewals and extra donations made for our annual support.

Membership –George Mayfield

George gave the Board a breakdown of who gets our newsletter. 76 are paid subscriptions, 27 are complimentary, 38 are for teachers, and 131 are from new members who have transferred over from National Audubon.

Conservation – Gretchen Starke

Gretchen gave an update on strategies currently being developed by the group who are re-establishing a state Audubon.

Old Business

We have given away all the money allowed in 2010 from our bequest fund at the Community Foundation. We'll need to wait until 2011 to fulfill the remaining \$1,000 grant to Friends of the Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge.

New Business

Eric (via Tammy) requested the Board discuss newsletter update and/or changes at our December meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Tammy Bjorkman

If you require a written notification of your donation for your tax records, please contact me at bjorkmante@iinet.com and I will send it to you via email.

A Great Gift

By Eric Bjorkman

You may or may not know that Vancouver Audubon has a grant program that offers money to local organizations that do work that supports our mission. The funds for our grant program came through a generous bequest we received several years ago. At that time, Vancouver Audubon's board of directors set up a fund through the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington. The money generated in investments is available for grants. The board set a minimum dollar amount that the fund must remain at. If the value falls below the set amount due to economic conditions then we cannot commit any of the principal to the grant program.

Recently, 'The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge' requested a grant that would help pay transportation costs for school children to attend outdoor classes at the refuge. This is exactly the type of work we envisioned funding and fits perfectly into our mission. Unfortunately, our fund did not have the monies available that would allow us to make the grant and stay above the required minimum balance. Thankfully, we had some money available and we were able to grant a portion of the grant request. Now we could only wait and hope the fund grew enough and would allow us to fulfill the grant before the 2010/2011 school year was completed.

On October 19th, I received some great news. A Vancouver Audubon member, who wishes to remain anonymous, heard about our dilemma. She told us she was inspired by our grant program and commitment to helping other groups. She decided she wanted to help too and before the end of the day we had a check for \$2,000 donated specifically to helping us meet our commitment to the Friends. What a sense of community!

On behalf of Vancouver Audubon and the Friends of Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge, I want to thank our generous benefactor for this gift. Your spirit and love of community is truly inspiring to me.

Renewal is good for the soul

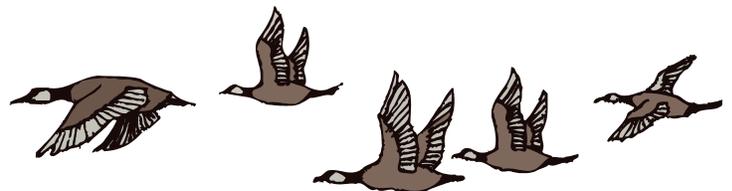
By Eric Bjorkman

Vancouver Audubon is in the midst of our annual newsletter renewal campaign. In October, the board of directors decided to mail a reminder that November 1st is the time to renew your subscriptions to the "VAS Flyway". Also in this letter we asked you for an additional gift to help support our organization. It has been four years since the last time we asked and we struggled with this decision. Asking for money is a tough thing to do, especially in this economy, and we were a little nervous.

Wow! What should come as no surprise to anyone, we have had a very generous response. Thank you all for showing us that we can count on you.

These additional funds will help us meet our financial obligations and allow us to continue to be an all-volunteer organization while helping with newsletter costs, the rental fee for our meeting space, and other operating expenses.

Thank you all for your continued support!





Election Post-Mortem What Does It Mean for the Environment?

Nothing good. Those who denounce cap-and-trade, who think global climate change is unimportant or doesn't exist, won or retained seats in Congress. Those who think corporate profits are more important than clean air and water, let alone bird habitat, won or retained seats in Congress. A few of those who won seats have a view of the world that can charitably be described as fantasy.

Audubon's new president, David Yarnold, sent out a message putting the best face on the situation. He mentioned the coming lame duck session, when the current members of Congress will go back to D.C. to deal with unfinished business. Yarnold said that two issues should be dealt with: using the fines levied against BP to clean up the mess in the Gulf of Mexico and fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund. He then went on to discuss the new Congress coming in, in January. An excerpt from his message discussing climate change legislation stated, "Passage of a nationwide renewable energy standard can still fuel new cooperation after the new Congress convenes in January. Other climate legislation may face a tough road ahead, but a nationwide renewable energy standard that puts us on a clean energy path can still make a dent in our energy use and climate-altering emissions."

On the other hand. I heard on the OPB program, *The World*, that there are those in the new leadership in Congress who will want to defund climate research and even investigate the climate scientists. If so, we can expect to see government scientists hauled before Congressional committees for browbeating. This is not a farfetched concern. The attorney general of Virginia has been serving subpoenas on a University of Virginia climate scientist.

At the state and local level, as I write this, it appears that the Democrats will still hold a slim majority in both houses of the legislature. It is no longer the 1970s, so it is unfortunate, but true, that it is easier for us to talk to and educate the members of one party than the other party. With the Democrats still in control of the legislature it may be possible to prevent total disaster. One big handicap is the drastic reduction of revenue to the state. On Tuesday, the voters have not helped there, either, by voting against taxes. We are in for rough times. In the county commissioner race, Steve Stuart is still holding on to

his lead. As his opponent is totally ignorant of land use and other issues, it would be very bad news if Stuart should not win.

Audubon Washington May Live Again

I attended a meeting in October of the Audubon chapters in Washington. We agreed to two approaches to ensure an Audubon presence in Washington, especially in Olympia. Short term, we will try and hire a part time lobbyist for the next legislative session. For that, we need all the chapters to pledge at least some money toward the lobbyist. For the long term, we will probably try working with National Audubon to build a state presence. More details later, when I get the notes from the meeting and as things progress. The state conservation committee will meet in early December in Olympia.

County Issues: Rural Lands and Legacy Lands

The rural lands task force has finished its work for now. The county is going through the process of eventually adopting a few of the task force's recommendations. These are minor and do not greatly affect our concerns. Other, long range, recommendations will be troublesome. Recommendations that require changes in the comprehensive growth management plan will not be addressed until 2014, when the plan is to be updated. One recommendation is to expand cluster developments into resource lands -- forest and agriculture land in which the minimum lot size is 20 acres and on which the primary use is supposed to be farming and forestry. Timber harvest in Camp Bonneville was another recommendation. Both these proposals will adversely affect bird habitat.

On legacy lands, the program to identify and obtain land for the county for conservation purposes, the news is bad. Bill Dygert, who has been working with the county for years on land conservation, has stopped doing that. Commissioner Mielke is the stumbling block. I will find out more, later.



Gretchen Starke





Oct. 9, Bob Flores had a single WILLET at Rest Lake on the Ridgefield NWR. This was the first record of this large shorebird in Clark County.

Oct. 10, Ken Meyer found an AMERICAN AVOCET on South Big Lake on the Ridgefield NWR, the first report of this species in Clark County since 1997. Many lucky birders including Jim Danzenbaker, Randy Hill and Bob Flores were able to see this bird.

Oct. 13, A NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL was calling from our woods at our home in western Skamania County.

Oct. 14, A juvenile NORTHERN GOSHAWK took a squirrel below our feeder.

Oct. I saw an adult male NORTHERN GOSHAWK flying down one of the trails at our property.

Oct. 16, Tyler L. Hicks had a few WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS in the Ridgefield area over the past week. One was at the Carty Unit, Ridgefield NWR, another in a blackberry bramble at the end of 8th St. Court and one at his feeders. He also had a male Slate-colored Junco at his feeders.

Oct. 17, Dave Irons and Shawneen Finnegan birded the Woodland Bottoms area of Cowlitz County. Their best bird we found was a BLACK PHOEBE along Dike Road, a new addition to the Cowlitz County bird list. Another NORTHERN GOSHAWK was hunting at our feeders where there are numerous squirrels and rabbits attracted to the seed.

Oct. 19, A BLUE JAY was photographed in Skamania County at a feeder in Carson. This appears to be an invasion year for these jays that normally reside east of the Rocky Mountains as they started being reported from scattered locations in eastern Washington in early October.

Oct. 21, Bob Flores found a very late YELLOW WARBLER on Bachelor Island, Ridgefield NWR.

Oct. 22, This morning Randy Hill found a single BLACK PHOEBE and in the afternoon Bob Flores returned to the site and found 2 Black Phoebes. Barry Woodruff was also able to add this species to his Washington list. On Bachelor Island, Randy Hill viewed five species of geese in one feeding flock, CANADA GEESE and CACKLING GEESE, WHITE-FRONTED GEESE, SNOW GEESE, and one ROSS'S GOOSE.

Oct. 25, A first winter WHITE-THROATED SPARROW was in Les Carlson's yard.

Oct. 27, Lyn Topinka birded the Ridgefield Auto Tour Route and saw EURASIAN WIGEON, COMMON RAVEN, 2 LESSER SCAUP and the BLACK PHOEBE. Don and Sue Cannard found 41 RED PHALAROPES AT Westport in Gray's Harbor County and then continued south to Tokeland to view the 500 MARBLED GODWITS at the marina

Oct. 28, Eric Bjorkman drove out to Ridgefield and saw a WHITE-THROATED SPARROW in the blackberry bush next to the road for bird species #285 for the year in Washington. Moments later the BLACK PHOEBE made an appearance on one of the white stakes near the corn

field for #286. He also saw the NORTHERN SHRIKE that was being reported. Bob Flores had 12 TUNDRA SWANS at THE Ridgefield NWR, the first of the fall for the area.

Oct. 29, Cathy Flick and Stuart Johnston stopped in at Bonneville Dam to see what might be there, and noticed: 5 female-plumaged BUFFLEHEAD, a changing plumage drake scaup and 2 SURF SCOTERS as well as 10 or more WESTERN GREBES. And on the Oregon side of the Columbia River they spotted 2 RED-NECKED GREBES. While at home I followed the sounds of irritated birds and found a NORTHERN-PYGMY-OWL with a freshly killed Dark-eyed Junco. In the evening another NORTHERN GOSHAWK came in at sat on the rocks near our feeders.

Oct. 30, Eric Bjorkman called reporting a BARRED OWL perched along the Auto Tour Route at the Ridgefield Refuge. Sherry Hagen was woken by a calling WESTERN SCREECH-OWL which was the 111th species they have seen in their yard. Ken Knittle and Tom Mansfield birded the Woodland bottoms in Cowlitz County and found a SURF SCOTER and WHITE-WINGED SCOTER, ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, and a BLACK PHOEBE. Susan and I watched a MERLIN take a Dark-eyed Junco at our feeder.

Nov. 1, Susan and I birded western Skamania County and found a GREATER YELLOWLEGS at Skamania Landing, a RED-NECKED GREBE at Bonneville Dam, 2 BONAPARTE'S GULLS at Rock Creek in Stevenson, where we saw a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW, the third ever reported from Skamania County. We then went up to the mouth of the Wind River where a GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE was at the boat launch.

Nov. 2, Lyn and Gene Topinka relocated the CLAY-COLORED SPARROW at Stevenson and obtained great photos of the bird. A flock of 25 WESTERN MEADOW-LARKS were among 45 species seen at the Ridgefield NWR by George Mayfield. In Klickitat County, Susan Saul spotted a GOLDEN EAGLE perched on Horsethief Butte. A bike ride in Swale Canyon provided views of 4 ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS, 4 "Harlen's" RED-TAILED HAWKS and a MERLIN for Bob Rowe.

There have been many unusual or out of place birds being reported this fall and I expect that the weather or food supply conditions that are causing this will continue through the winter. The three Black Phoebes in our area at one time is a good example of what is happening, prior to 1997 there was only one record for Washington.

The wintering waterfowl and raptors are now on territory and will provide great opportunities for study in places like the Ridgefield NWR, Vancouver Lake and along the Columbia River. Among the numerous Cackling and Canada Geese you may spot unusual birds such as Emperor

("Afield" Continued on next page)

Sauvie Island Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

Washington Side: Friday December 17th, 2010

For two weeks before and two weeks after Christmas, tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas will take part in an adventure that has become a family tradition among generations. The **SAUVIE ISLAND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - WASHINGTON SIDE** is scheduled for Friday, December 17.

Please join us in helping to make a difference!

Families and students, birders and scientists, armed with binoculars, bird guides



and checklists participate in this annual mission. For more than one hundred years (since December 25, 1900!), the desire to both make a difference and to experience the beauty of nature has driven dedicated people to leave the comfort of a warm house during the Holiday season and help with this project. To learn more about the history of this honored tradition, check out the website at:

<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/history.html>



VAS Contact Person: Tammy Bjorkman

If you have questions or would like to sign up to

join a team, call or email: (360) 213-6489 or bjorkmante@iinet.com



("Afield" Continued)

Goose or Ross's Goose. Large flocks of ducks can contain surprises like Long-tailed Duck or a scoter or maybe Tufted Duck, Baikal Teal or other stragglers from Asia. Winter finches such as Snow Bunting, Gray-crowned Rosy-finch or Common Redpoll can appear anywhere. If you find anything unusual please contact me or Arden and Sherry Hagen as soon as possible to share your find.

As of the end of October the cumulative year list of species reported from Clark County was 225 species and in Skamania County people have reported seeing 180 species this year. You can see the lists on line at: <http://www.wabirder.com/bartel.html> If you have seen anything in the counties this year that hasn't been checked off please let me know.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com



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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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Transfers are: Hill Family • Lauralee Martin

Looking for a place to display your photos?

Your photos can be posted on the website for others to enjoy. I have offered this for many years but so far have had no takers. If you would like to post a few, send your digital photos to me at:



vas@pacifier.com

Sherry Hagen Editor

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

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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.*



December 2010

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

Help support Vancouver Audubon

**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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