

Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

February 2008

Calendar

***BIRDING CLASS ... Tuesday, **February 5, 6:45 PM** before the meeting.

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

***Monday, **Nov. 4, 6:30 pm**: VAS Board Meeting at the home of Sydney Reisbick
806 N. Main, Ridgefield, WA 360-887-7880

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	

PROGRAM:

Kamchatka Peninsula & The Kurile Islands (Russia)

by Al Larrabee

Please join us as Al Larrabee shares his trip to Kamchatka in Eastern Siberia, a part of Russia and the Kurile Islands. The Kurile Islands were occupied by Japan until Russia took possession after World War II. The islands are the result of volcanic activity, there are still 49 active volcanoes today and the Islands are virtually uninhabited. A trip there in August revealed very large numbers of birds, but relatively few species. At that time nesting is still active and many bird observations were of immature or of eclipsed plumages. This part of the world also hosts other forms of wildlife and provides some beautiful scenery, history, and cultural aspects of another world.

FIELD TRIP

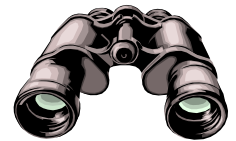
Yaquina Bay

Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: February 23, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

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



This will be an all day trip for waterfowl, seabirds and wintering passerines. Be prepared all types of weather and bring a lunch and snacks.

*****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% or the sale price on other art work. For more information call:

Sydney Reisbick 360-887-7880

VAS Upcoming Programs:

Pending.....

Mt. St. Helens by Charlie Crisafulli

Brazil by Cindy & Mike Kinnie

Polar Bears by Randy Hopfer

Alaska by a rep from National Audubon



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Treasurer's Report. Income for November was \$1,390.71 and included \$620 in donations and \$620 in Newsletter subscriptions. Expenses were \$773.65. Total cash and investments on hand were \$17,532.63. The Community Foundation fund totaled \$230,043.22. \$700 was paid out in a grant and third quarter interest was \$10,708.07.

New Business. A number of people have called about the monk parakeets in Yacolt. Arden talked to Jeff Wittler (PUD) about it. They present a safety problem and are not protected under the Migratory Bird Act as they are not natives. The grant program needs to be publized better so that people are aware of it.. It will be put on the web page.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Ellifrit

OLYMPIC PENINSULA BIRDFEST SEQUIM, WASHINGTON

April 4-6, 2008

Visit the rain shadow of the *Olympic Peninsula* to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest—Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, dippers, Black Oystercatchers, Long-tailed Ducks, and more. Guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and a salmon banquet with our partner, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe.

New this year: A three-day, two-night birding cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 6-8, 2008, immediately following BirdFest. The festival with the most spectacular setting!

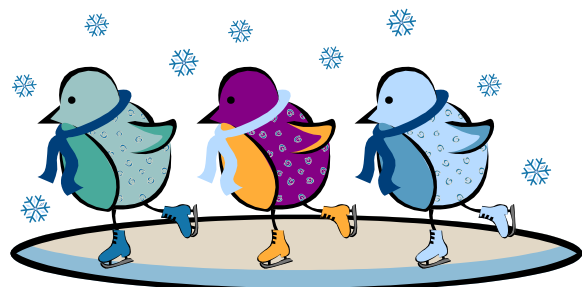
Contact: Dungeness River Audubon Center,
P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382
360-681-4076

info@olympicbirdfest.org
www.olympicbirdfest.org .

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

New Members: Deraret • Moore • Marie Anicci • Sarah Anderson • Stuart Anderson • Sandy Babbitt • Cece Backensted • Donald Bleth • James Briggs • Linda Broke • Donna Brown • Geri Brown • Susan Cady • The Crone, Jim Davis • The Demre • George Dopson • Margaret Dykgraaf • Tracy Everett • Gordy Fabeck • Cyrtia Frankel • Robert Garlett • Al- Debbie Goldstein • Peter/ Kate Harker • Anna Helm • Marlene Jaskari • Liz Lambert • Clara Lincoln • Diarne Marheimer • Marjorie Mc Cauley • Alexandra Mc Laughry • Sue McDowall • Brenda Nelson • Donna Orr • Rudy Podhora • James Porzetti • Nettie Pulella- Barca • John Reavis • John Rickard • Grace Rippinger • Steve Rogers • Earl Rose • Pamela Schultz • Elaine Scott • Anja Selton • Mark Soderburg • Fred Stollenwerk • Polly Stricker • Jeanine Thomason • Rosame Thompson • Dolly Truax • Carl Tuttle • Kathleen Waldron • Eric Wilgus and Family • Elaine Young

**Due to illness,
Gretchen Starke was
unable to write
her normal "Conservation"
article this month.
We all wish her a
fast recovery.**



The Backyard & Beyond...

As I wrote in April, 2007 started out great for Arden & I as we took another birding trip to Ecuador. This time we visiting the southern part. We added birds to our "Life List" (birds we have never seen before). It was great. Our oldest son was married in Las Vegas in April and then the duties of work and getting the yard ready for summer began to take over our time. In May, I came down with a case of shingles (not fun), then within days Arden lost his 95 year old father. The next week while on a field trip with Eric Bjorkman in the gorge, I had an appendicitis attack which followed with an operation and healing. We had a garden wedding to put on in early July for friends, a 40th wedding anniversary garden party for ourselves in September, numerous trips to Spokane to visit family, etc. The year was slipping away.

By November, Arden was getting anxious over the fact that this was the first year that we had not added a single species to our "ABA" list. (American Birding Association.... The official record keepers for the bird listing enthusiastic in the USA and the World). Yes, we had seen new species in Ecuador but not here in the USA or Canada (the ABA area). He was scared of being "skunked" this year for the first time since 1979. So he investigated where we could go to get an ABA lifer. We needed a sure thing if we were to travel across the states since nothing was showing up in our area.

The Maine coast was the only sure place where we could almost definitely pick up one species, the GREAT CORMORANT. This wasn't a world life species but it would be an ABA life species. We had seen them in Kenya but they do look different there. We also had a chance to see Ivory or Iceland Gulls. So he used a free ticket, I used airline credit and then with 2 free motel stays Arden had, we set off for New Hampshire and Maine just after Thanksgiving.

We headed to Maine in the winter! Was it cold? YES! Was it windy? YES! But it did not snow and the sun was out two of the days.

We landed in Manchester, NH late at night and then headed for the Maine coast the next morning. At the first stop, we saw some cormorants sitting on the rocks off shore. At first they seemed to be just dark Double-crested Cormorants but with the scope the birds we sought popped into view. As I said they are differently marked than the ones in Kenya which have lots of white on the breast. The ones in the USA (they winter along the upper eastern coast coming down from Canada and the north) only have white under the bill. They also have some orange but they also differ in the fact that the bill is light. So now Arden was happy and we didn't get skunked this year. We birded the next few days with no luck at finding any other new species or new photographed species to add to my collection. We had fun but it was cold and the storm that had started in the South West was now over the Mid-

west and was headed for New England. We got out in time but did have a few flight delays due to the weather.

Ok, so he wasn't skunked BUT..... due to the ABA's decision to remove the White-winged Parakeet from it's list, we had also lost a species this year. No gain. The parakeet was removed from the list because it was originally an introduced species that flourished for years then declined as the Yellow-chevroned Parakeet took over the nesting spots (another introduced species).

Then..... Arden saw via the internet that a NORTHERN JACANA was still being seen in Arizona as was an Aztec Thrush, a species we had made two quick trips to Arizona to try to find before with no luck. Southwest Airlines ran some mid-December specials and he booked a flight to Arizona.

We got off the plane, rented a car and drove from Phoenix to Casa Grande to the edge of the golf course where the jacana was being seen. But no jacana was visible. Then the course marshal drove up and asked us if we were looking for "that" little bird. We said yes, he looked around from where he was on the course and said it was over in the little pond on the other side of him. We asked if there was any way we could see it and he invited us to come onto the golf course and view it with him. WOW!!! What luck! We walked over, watched it and talked to him while took photos from quite a distance for good shots. Then the bird flew over and landed next to me in good photography light. Wow what luck. We thanked him for letting us on the course to see it. Funny thing was, he had just heard about the bird that morning and also had seen it for the first time., not evening knowing what it was called. We were then off on our next adventure. This was a new ABA life species BUT not a lifer again. We had seen the species in Costa Rica but at least we were now a species ahead in our ABA list.

We met up with Jerry & Jan Beale (past president and treasurer of VAS who moved to Sierra Vista area in 2006) along with Nancy Ellifrit who was visiting them. This area of Arizona is cold in the mornings in the winter but then with the sunrise it can warm up and be really nice. We tried for the Aztec Thrush one morning by climbing up Madera Canyon. We ran into snow and reached the area



Northern Jacana

("Backyard" Continued on last page)



Nov. 12, In the Vancouver Lake Lowlands Bob Flores had **19 SNOW GEESE** on Lower River Rd. At Post Office Lake, on the Ridgefield NWR, there was a **EURASIAN WIDGEON** mixed in with a large group of other ducks. At the Vancouver Lake flushing channel he found a **HORNED GREBE** and two **CLARK'S GREBES** mixed in with several **WESTERN GREBES**.

Nov. 16, Rex Eads who lives just south of Salmon Creek, near Highway 99, north of Hazel Dell photographed a **BARRED OWL** in his backyard.

Nov. 17, Bob Flores observed a **WHITE-TAILED KITE** and **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK** at the River "S" Unit.

Nov. 19, A **WESTERN SCREECH-OWL** was calling from the woods at our home on Mt. Pleasant in Skamania County.

Nov. 24, Bob Flores, Steve Mlodinow, Bill Tweit, Shawneen Finnegan and Tom Schooley found two **WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS** along Lower River Rd. in the Vancouver Lake Lowlands. Other good birds were a **BRANT** mixed in with **CAACKLING/CANADA GEESE**, one **AMERICAN TREE-SPARROW** at the parking lot at the end of Lower River Rd. and a **COMMON TEAL** on Campbell Lake, Ridgefield NWR. A Common Teal is the Eurasian subspecies of Green-winged Teal.

Nov. 25, Bill Clemons and Carol Ledford spotted a **BARRED OWL** on the access road for the River "S" Unit of the Ridgefield NWR. They led Roger Windemuth back to the owl when they bumped into him on the refuge. Roger, Bill, Carol and Al Larrabee also located an adult **WHITE-TAILED KITE** just north of the blind. I was following up on the tree sparrow found the prior day and found it and a **COMMON YELLOW-THROAT** when was alerted to the owl sighting by a phone call from Randy Fortish. He drove down to Vancouver Lake from Ridgefield and got to see the **AMERICAN TREE SPARROW** for a life bird and then led me back to the owl for a county list bird for me.



Common Yellowthroat

Nov. 28, Roger Windemuth and Al Larrabee saw a "yellow-shafted" **NORTHERN FLICKER** on the Roth Unit today while surveying the Goose population there. The flicker had both the head marking and the yellow wings of the Eastern variety.

Nov. 30, Susan and I were birding at Rock Creek in Skamania County when we spotted a **WESTERN GULL**, an

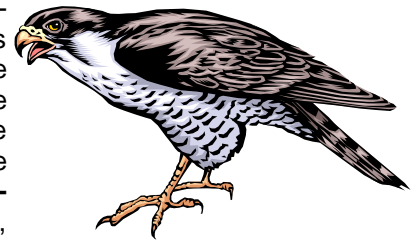
unusual bird away from the coast.

Dec. 3, Bob Flores had two adults and one immature **TRUMPETER SWAN** on Rest Lake at the River "S". The Refuge was closed at the time because of weather and safety issues.

Dec. 3, Roger and Al Larrabee saw a **ROSS' GOOSE** on the Roth Unit during their Wednesday Goose survey.

Dec. 14, It has been a good season for **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS** at Ridgefield NWR, according to Bill Clemons. He has also noted that there has been a wide variety of plumages in the **RED-TAILED HAWKS** there including a "Harlan's" variety. A **WESTERN GREBE** seen on Rest Lake was the first or the first in years for him on the River "S" Unit.

Dec. 21, While Al Larrabee and Bill Clemons were standing in the parking lot at The Blind, out of nowhere came a juvenile **PEREGRINE FALCON** from the marsh, and made a strike at a flock of Golden-crowned Sparrows.



Peregrine Falcon

Five to 7 **RIVER OTTER** were seen in the canal along the Auto Tour Route. Susan and I were also out birding that day and had spotted a **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** in the Vancouver Lake Lowlands before driving up to Ridgefield where we found 6 **TRUMPETER SWANS** on Rest Lake that we were able to share with Bill Clemons when we bumped into him there.

Dec. 24, A male **ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD** at our home furnished our first winter sighting of a hummingbird in the thirty years we have lived there.

Dec. 26, while scouting for birds for the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) I found a **NORTHERN SHRIKE** at Shillapoo Lake and a **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** at Frenchman's Bar Park along with a **RED-THROATED LOON** in the Columbia River at the end of Lower River Rd.



Mountain Bluebird

Dec. 27, In the rain, snow and wind Ken Knittle went to look for the **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** at Frenchman's Bar County Park on Lower River Road and saw both it and the **RED-THROATED LOON**.

Dec. 28 Arden and Sherry Hagen and re-found a photographed the **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** and saw **RED-THROATED LOON**. Bob Flores also saw both birds on his visit earlier in the morning.

("Afield" Continued on next page)

("Afield" Continued)

Carol Kohler missed the bluebird but did find 3 **RED-THROATED LOONS** in the river at the end of the Lower River Road.

Dec. 29, During the Christmas Bird Count Arden Hagen, Bob Rowe and Gary Settje relocated the **RED-THROATED LOON** and the **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD**. Scott Murray covered the Ridgefield River "S" Unit and counted nine **TRUMPETER SWANS**. Bob Flores found a **GLAUCOUS GULL** on Bachelor Island and Susan and I found another **RED-THROATED LOON** and a **PACIFIC LOON** at the mouth of the Lewis River. This was the first Mountain Bluebird ever found on the Sauvie Island CBC.

Jan. 1, Arden and Sherry Hagen spent the first day of the year morning at Brownsmead, Oregon where she photographed a very cooperative **ARCTIC LOON**. Susan and I also ran down a little later in the day to start my year list with this good bird. This bird was first found in late December and many people including Bob Flores, Ken Knittle, Anne Kahle and Carol and Don Kohler all went down at earlier dates to see this rare visitor from Siberia.



Arctic Loon by Sherry Hagen

Jan. 2, Randy Fortish and Steve Canter sent me some photos of a **RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** and **TOWNSEND'S WARBLER** coming to a hummingbird feeder. I have heard of them coming to suet but not sugar water.

Jan. 4, While checking the flocks of thousands of blackbirds in the fields at the Shillapoo Lake Department of Wildlife area in the Vancouver lake Lowlands I spotted at least one **TRICOLORED BLACKBIRD** among the many Red-winged Blackbirds.

Last year 234 different species of birds were reported as having been seen in Clark County and 169 were found in Skamania County. We are going to track that number again in 2008 so please let me know of any unusual or interesting birds that you find in either county for this list. And when you do spot something out of the normal please alert Arden and Sherry and myself as soon as possible.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

("The Backyard & Beyond" Continued)

where it was being seen but the tree it visited was bare of fruit so there was no reason for the bird to come back there. No Aztec Thrush AGAIN.

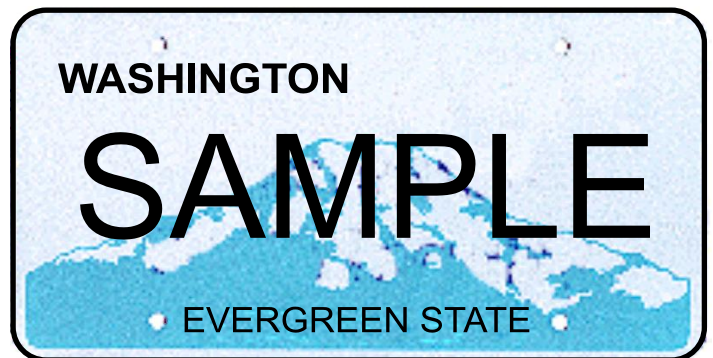
Nancy's last morning there, we headed up the Coronado National Monument entrance road. Jerry had been told you can see Montezuma Quail early in the morning along the road as they feed and warm up with the sun. Montezuma Quail are a difficult species to see. They stay hidden most of the time so when you do see them you feel lucky.



Montezuma Quail

As he drove slowly, Arden spotted the century (the one on watch for the group). It was just a small lump along side the road. The rest of us hadn't even settled down in our seats yet. We drove slowly up to the group and then went about eating as they kept an eye on us. What a view. We saw 3 groups before we left. This was not a life species for us but it was for Nancy. And it was a life photo for me.

Sherry Hagen, Happy Birding 😊



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



February 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.

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