

Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

February 2010

Calendar

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

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

***Monday, Feb. 1, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting hosted by Eric Bjorkman, 360-695-3116 Held at the Columbia Land Trust Office on Officers Row.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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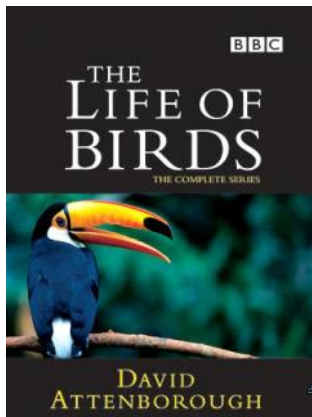
PROGRAM:

**VAS Presents Movie Night
with Popcorn & Treats**

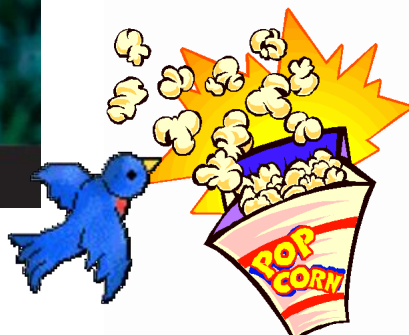
THE LIFE OF BIRDS

a BBC Production

Colorful, mysterious, noble and intriguing, birds have fascinated us since the dawn of history. **David Attenborough**, one of the world's foremost naturalists, hosts an extraordinary exploration into the secret lives of these magnificent birds.



Join us for a relaxed evening of popcorn, treats & a wonderful production



FIELD TRIP

Brownsmead & SJCR



Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: February 13, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

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

We will head to the Brownsmead-Astoria area and the South Jetty of the Columbia River. This will be an all day trip, so dress for the weather, bring lunch and snacks.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

New Members: Kari Andrell • John Blake • Susan Bradley • Becky Bremmer • Liz Crandall • Ann Galvas • Kim Hollopeter • Nada Jarvis • Rachael Karlson • Jeff Lee • Carl Leonard • Ingrid Nazarchyk • Ewaryst Polch • David Richardson • Elizabeth & Rol Waters • Kris Sawyer • Angelene Shelton • Laura Skehan • Janet Smith • John & Rosemarie Tibbels • Beverly Truex • Tim Tuttle • Doug Uno • Floyd Wall • Neal & Nora Webb • Karol Wheeler

VAS Upcoming Programs:

Bird Nest by Idie Ulsh (March)

Peru by The Hagen's (April)

Sauvie Island Christmas Bird Count - Vancouver Side

List compiled by Tammy Bjorkman (CBC held Sunday Dec. 27, 2009) *(2008 / 2007 totals)

WATERFOWL

- 3 Greater White-fronted Goose (0/19)
- 44 Snow Goose (31/3)
- 0 Ross's Goose (1/0)
- 14,490 Cackling Goose (9,674/10,703)
- 1,793 Canada Goose (1,137/1,578)
- 23 Trumpeter Swan (6/64)
- 2,266 Tundra Swan (1,589/1,991)
- 2 Wood Duck (5/10)
- 424 Gadwall (497/376)
- 1 Eurasian Wigeon (3/3)
- 1,745 American Wigeon (1,130/1,379)
- 2,535 Mallard (1,828/1,400)
- 12 Cinnamon Teal (3/1)
- 1,049 Northern Shoveler (434/598)
- 3,922 Northern Pintail (3,017/4,645)
- 855 Green-winged Teal (100/1,249)
- 171 Canvasback (40/63)
- 7 Redhead (0/2)
- 591 Ring-necked Duck (487/1,333)
- 0 Greater Scaup (2/17)
- 78 Lesser Scaup (164/329)
- 192 Bufflehead (149/132)
- 0 Common Goldeneye (2/10)
- 103 Hooded Merganser (67/49)
- 507 Common Merganser (100/59)
- 343 Ruddy Duck (254/183)

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

- 3 Ring-necked Pheasant (4/2)

LOONS, GREBES

- 0 Red-throated Loon (0/6)
- 0 Pacific Loon (0/1)
- 13 Pied-billed Grebe (22/42)
- 0 Horned Grebe (0/3)
- 4 Western Grebe (1/6)

PELICANS, HERONS, IBIS

- 264 Double-crested Cormorant (54/224)
- 0 American Bittern (1/1)
- 117 Great Blue Heron (107/131)
- 43 Great Egret (27/66)
- 0 Black-crowned Night-heron (1/0)

RAPTORS

- 0 White-tailed Kite (1/1)
- 29 Bald Eagle (71/54)
- 47 Northern Harrier (62/59)
- 4 Sharp-shinned Hawk (1/2)
- 2 Cooper's Hawk (3/3)
- 1 Red-shouldered Hawk (0/1)
- 0 Swainson's Hawk (1/0)
- 107 Red-tailed Hawk (107/139)
- 2 Rough-legged Hawk (5/11)
- 49 American Kestrel (28/56)
- 2 Peregrine Falcon (3/1)

RAILS, CRANES

- 1,033 American Coot (1,500/1,604)
- 532 Sandhill Crane (891/939)

SHOREBIRDS

- 15 Killdeer (8/17)
- 0 Greater Yellowlegs (7/23)
- 0 Long-billed Dowitcher (1/0)
- 11 Wilson's Snipe (6/8)

GULLS

- 1 Mew Gull (3/59)
- 60 Ring-billed Gull (72/27)
- 1 California Gull (0/0)
- 3 Herring Gull (37/13)
- 0 Thayer's Gull (1/0)
- 5 Glaucous-winged Gull (28/31)

DOVES, PIGEONS

- 2 Rock Pigeon (7/281)
- 43 Mourning Dove (15/31)

OWLS

- 3 Barn Owl (3/2)
- 9 Great Horned Owl (5/10)
- 5 Short-eared Owl (27/5)

HUMMINGBIRDS

- 1 Anna's Hummingbird (6/6)

KINGFISHER

- 13 Belted Kingfisher (14/10)

WOODPECKERS

- 10 Red-breasted Sapsucker (4/5)
- 27 Downy Woodpecker (14/14)
- 2 Hairy Woodpecker (4/2)
- 93 Northern Flicker (110/114)
- 3 Pileated Woodpecker (3/5)

SHRIKES

- 3 Northern Shrike (1/1)

CORVIDS

- 30 Steller's Jay (44/32)
- 156 Western Scrub-Jay (76/91)
- 137 American Crow (78/489)
- 2 Common Raven (5/1)

LARKS, SWALLOWS

- 1 Barn Swallow (0/0)

CHICKADEES, BUSHTITS

- 188 Black-capped Chickadee (86/186)
- 13 Chestnut-backed Chickadee (15/5)
- 107 Bushtit (59/130)

NUTHATCHES, CREEPER

- 8 Red-breasted Nuthatch (4/5)
- 17 White-breasted Nuthatch (10/11)
- 10 Brown Creeper (10/12)

WRENS

- 27 Bewick's Wren (6/18)
- 0 House Wren (0/1)
- 12 Winter Wren (1/13)
- 13 Marsh Wren (0/13)

KINGLETS, GNATCATCHERS

- 34 Golden-crowned Kinglet (18/35)
- 21 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (21/41)

THRUSHES

- 0 Mountain Bluebird (0/1)

- 3 Hermit Thrush (1/4)
- 309 American Robin (167/222)
- 15 Varied Thrush (4/18)

STARLING

- 6743 European Starling (1016/2394)

PIPITS

- 1 American Pipit (32/32)

WAXWINGS

- 25 Cedar Waxwing (0/0)

WARBLERS

- 2 Yellow-rumped Warbler (0/3)
- 0 Townsend's Warbler (0/2)
- 1 Common Yellowthroat (0/0)

SPARROWS

- 102 Spotted Towhee (44/105)
- 40 Savannah Sparrow (40/11)
- 7 Fox Sparrow (32/19)
- 278 Song Sparrow (226/334)
- 17 Lincoln's Sparrow (0/8)
- 0 White-throated Sparrow (2/1)
- 194 White-crowned Sparrow (18/37)
- 604 Golden-crowned Sparrow (194/423)
- 326 Dark-eyed Junco (221/133)

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES

- 2463 Red-winged Blackbird (618/1691)
- 29 Western Meadowlark (3/90)
- 1 Rusty Blackbird (0/0)
- 1100 Brewer's Blackbird (122/254)
- 210 Brown-headed Cowbird (0/7)

FINCHES, WEAVER FINCH

- 0 Purple Finch (7/13)
- 35 House Finch (112/140)
- 47 Pine Siskin (0/94)
- 21 American Goldfinch (2/128)
- 20 Evening Grosbeak (2/0)
- 34 House Sparrow (25/39)

Totals: 102 species+ (102)

- 218 unidentified gulls (0/8)
- 1 Unidentified Goldeneye

WA side: 24 participants, logging 74.5 hours, drove 161.5 miles, & walking 47.2 miles.

Eric Anderson; Bonnie Bingle;
Eric Bjorkman; Tammy Bjorkman;
Wilson Cady; Scott Carpenter;
Bob Carson; Carol Carson;
Bill Clemons; Clay Davis
Kathy Davis; Tom Finn; Dan Friesz;
Mike Hiner; Carol Ledford;
Cindy Mayfield; George Mayfield
Scott Murray; Roger Phillips
Ruth Phillips; Ian Sinks; Nathan Sinks
Barry Woodruff



The Legislator Returns

The legislators -- and all of us -- face a great problem this year. No money. Or rather, too little money. The recession has left the state reeling. The state constitution requires that the state legislature pass a balanced budget, with no deficit. If revenue declines because the economy is in a tailspin, the legislature must do one of two things (or a combination of two things): cut programs and services or somehow raise revenue. Understand this, environmental and conservation programs are a lower priority to the general public than schools and prisons.

Because of ballot initiatives approved by voters and because of actions of past legislators, the legislature has little wiggle room in finding revenue. A general anti-tax political climate that has prevailed in this country for the past three decades makes it even more difficult to raise money. No politician wants to be accused by an opponent of being for taxes. Even worse, conventional wisdom holds that you should not raise taxes during a recession. If, however, we want to maintain the progress we have made, we must convince the legislature that revenue must be found somewhere.

One of the three legislative priorities of the Environmental Priorities Coalition in Washington is to protect environmental programs in the state budget. Among the environmental programs to take a hit in Governor Gregoire's proposed budget (the all-cuts budget she is required to submit) are toxics contamination cleanup, the air quality program, and the water quality program. Among the programs that would be reduced in the Fish and Wildlife budget are species protection (including protection of bald eagles), habitat protection and review of hydraulic permits, and response to oil spills. As I read the summary of the budget, it appears to me that wildlife department review of development plans would cease. To prevent this, we must encourage the legislature to find revenue, even if it means raising some taxes or fees.

A second environmental priority of the Coalition, is a leftover from last year. Senator Craig Pridemore last year introduced a bill (with a companion bill introduced in the house) to levy a fee on petroleum products, with the revenue to be used for projects to control storm water runoff. Much of storm water contains oil and grease from cars and traffic. Storm water runoff is now the greatest source of pollution in most waterways in the country, as well as being the most difficult to deal with because we all are polluters. Last October, the Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee agreed that the Invest in Clean Water bills would be Audubon's priority for the 2010 session. After all, water quality is important for many species of birds. The third priority concerns getting the chemical BPA out of plastics, especially plastics used in children's products, such as baby bottles. While this issue is important, it does not have a connection with Audubon's mission to protect birds and other wildlife.

Clark County Legislators

17th District (East Vancouver and north to Battleground): Senate, Don Benton (R); House, Tim Probst (D) and Deb Wallace (D).

18th District (North county down to and including Camas and Washougal) Senate, Joe Zarelli (R); House, Jamie Herrera (R) and Ed Orcutt (R).

49th District (West Vancouver, including downtown): Senate, Craig Pridemore (D); House, Jim Jacks (D) and Jim Moeller (D).

The legislative hotline number is 1-800-562-6000.

As a point of interest, Wallace, Pridemore, and Herrera have announced that they will be running for Congressman Brian Baird's seat after he announced that he would not run again next year.

Wither Audubon Washington? (Refer Back to the December Flyway)

The survey of chapters has been completed. The results showed that a statewide presence is important to Audubon chapters. Most important was a presence in Olympia and help in keeping track of statewide issues. The survey also indicated that the chapters would support some kind of state presence. This is encouraging. There has been one conference call of the group that met last October to save a state office (We now call it the Phoenix Project), which I participated in. By the time you read this, there will have been another conference call. So, we make progress.

Gretchen Starke

VAS Board Meeting: Dec. 7th at the Hagen's

Treasurer's Report. Income for November was \$417.24 with \$210 in donations and \$160 for newsletter subscriptions. Expenses were \$167.43 with \$152.15 spent on Conservation. Cash and investments totaled \$21,516.00. The Community Foundation Fund was up to \$207,516.94 as of 30 September.

Membership. We have about 1,000 members and about 250 receiving the newsletter.

Programs. February will be movies and popcorn.

New Business. Jim Clapp, in charge of Steigerwald NWR, asked that we support their proposal to buy 80 acres of the Washougal Oaks. A motion was MSP to support the USFWS buying 80 acres of the Washougal Oaks area.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Ellifrit



●**Nov. 8,** Carol and Don Kohler were able to see the rare BROWN BOOBY at Coos Bay for a life bird for both of them. Other birds found on this outing were HARLEQUIN DUCKS, RED PHALAROPES and swarms of BROWN PELICANS. I found 29 EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVES ALONG 32ND Street in the Port of Camas-Washougal Industrial Park.

●**Nov. 10,** a LESSER GOLDFINCH at a feeder at their Washougal home was a yard first for Steven Clark and Cheri Kearney.

●**Nov. 15,** A Harlen's Hawk form of RED-TAILED HAWK was seen at the Steigerwald Lake NWR by Bob Rowe. This form used to be considered a separate species since it lacks a red tail and has a mottled gray and white tail instead. They breed in Alaska and the Yukon and normally winter in the south-central United States.

●**Nov. 20,** Stuart Johnston and Cathy Flick were birding at John Day Dam from the Oregon side of the Columbia River and picked out a LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL in the large flock of gulls above the dam. This is a very rare winter visitor from Europe and attracted many observers who posted conflicting details on the web. The reason for differing descriptions was resolved when it was discovered that there were two of these rare birds at the dam.

●**Nov. 22,** I joined Arden and Sherry Hagen along with George Mayfield for the Rarity Run VAS field trip to look for the gull reported at John Day Dam. Arden decided to check below the dam first where we immediately spotted a HEERMAN'S GULL on the shore for the fourth Columbia Gorge record. After looking at his bird a while we looked up to see that the LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL was in the water just off shore from where we were standing. Sherry filmed the bird flying across the face of the dam and when at home compared her photos to Google Earth to see that the bird had entered into Washington State. This gave me my 400th bird for my list of birds seen in Washington State. Going back west I spotted a male WHITE-WINGED SCOTER below the Briggs Bridge.

●**Nov. 23,** Gerald Hamilton Ridgefield NWR birded the River-S Unit and found BALD EAGLE, NORTHERN HARRIER, RED-TAILED HAWK, RED-SHOULDERED HAWK, ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS and AMERICAN KESTRALS. SNOW GEESE were in the mix of waterfowl species seen.

●**Nov. 25,** Bob Flores had 14 WESTERN MEADOW-LARKS between the east side of Rest Lake at the Ridgefield NWR. I found a female RED-BREASTED MERGANSER at Vancouver Lake Park, this species is more common on saltwater.

●**Nov. 27,** Lyn Topinka was able to photograph the RED-BREASTED MERGANSER at Vancouver Lake.

Nov. 28, Bob Flores found 2 WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS mixed in with about 100+ GOLDEN-CROWNED and WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW flock at the North end of the Fazio cattle feedlot and another one next to the old barn further north on Lower River Road. Eric and Tammy Bjorkman drove up to the John Day Dam and easily found

one of the LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS by looking for where all the other birders were congregating. Carol and Don Kohler also made the trip to put the John Day Dam LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL on their life lists. I spent the day covering Skamania County with Ken Knittle and Tom Mansfield who are attempting to see 150 species in every county in Washington. Our good birds of the day were Slender-billed WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH on Marble Road, a PEREGRINE FALCON at Cape Horn, 6 TRUMPETER SWANS and a GREAT EGRET at Franz Lake, a CANYON WREN at Beacon Rock, a WHITE-THROATED SPARROW in North Bonneville and a RED-BREASTED MERGANSER at the Spring Creek Hatchery. We finished up the day by calling in a NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL at our house.

●**Nov. 30,** Steven Clark reported that they now have a couple of WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS coming to their feeder in Washougal.

●**Dec. 3,** Bob Flores reported that on the Ridgefield NWR there were 8 CINNAMON TEAL at Rest Lake and 7 SNOW GEESE on Swartz Lake. He also checked the Flushing Channel at Vancouver Lake and saw the lingering female RED-BREASTED MERGANSER.

●**Dec. 4,** Jim Danzenbaker checked Vancouver Lake and spotted the female RED-BREASTED MERGANSER off the west end of the flushing channel. While scoping Vancouver Lake, he was surprised to see two TREE SWALLOWS and two BARN SWALLOWS.

●**Dec. 5,** I accompanied a dozen members of the Eastside Audubon Chapter on a tour of the Columbia Gorge and re-found the TRUMPETER SWANS at Franz Lake and the CANYON WREN on Beacon Rock. The swans were still there in early January.

●**Dec. 8,** Jim Danzenbaker had an adult tan-striped WHITE-THROATED SPARROW on the backdeck of his Battle Ground home.

●**Dec. 9,** Eric and Tammy Bjorkman got a nice photo of a MERLIN at the Ridgefield NWR Auto Tour Route.

●**Dec. 13,** A "Slate-colored" DARK-EYED JUNCO at her Vancouver feeder was a first for Lyn Topinka. There is a subspecies of junco that is all gray and black without brownish tones and nests east of the Cascade Mountains.

●**Dec. 24,** Wendy Duncan photographed a leucistic CACKLING GOOSE at the Ridgefield NWR. Leucistic is a pigmentation defect with a partial lack of color but not completely albino. This bird had a white body and a gray "stocking" on the neck instead of the normal black one.

●**Dec. 27,** I joined Eric Bjorkman and Ian and Nathan Sinks to cover the Vancouver Lake Lowlands for the Christmas Bird Count. The best bird for our sector was a male RUSTY BLACKBIRD feeding on spilled grain along the rail tracks in the industrial area. Interesting was the congregation of at least 500 COMMON MERGANSERS on Vancouver Lake.

("Afield" Continued on next page)

("Afield" Continued)

•Dec. 29, Carol and Don Kohler went to Gaston, Oregon and saw a HOODED ORIOLE that was coming to a hummingbird feeder.



•Jan. 1, Tammy and Eric Bjorkman started the New Year off with a trip to the Walla Walla area. Among the birds seen were LONG-EARED OWL and PRAIRIE FALCON. The best sighting of the trip, were two BIGHORN SHEEP just off I-84 near Blalock Canyon.

•Jan. 6, 11 TRUMPETER SWANS were seen by Bob Flores in Carty Lake below the Ridgefield NWR office at the Carty Unit of the refuge.

Once again I will be keeping cumulative lists of all the birds seen by anyone in Clark and Skamania Counties in 2010. So far there are only about fifty birds on either list and I could use your reports of birds you have seen in these counties. In 2009 there were 219 species reported as having been seen in Clark County with and 182 in Skamania County.

Battle Ground resident Jim Danzenbaker spent nearly a month as a bird guide aboard a cruise ship in the Antarctic and you can read his daily reports on BirdFellow at: <http://birdfellow.com/>

This was the eleventh year Jim has been a leader on these tours and the reports make good reading as do all of the postings on this birding site.

Please continue to send me your sighting reports for this column and the county cumulative list project.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com



Olympic Birdfest 2010 April 9-11, 2010 in Sequim, WA

A bird watching vacation for beginners to experts, from leisurely strolls to active hikes. Bird for a few hours, or all day ... from the dawn chorus to the evening owl prow!

Enjoy the show from guided birding trips, boat tours, silent auction, salmon banquet, and more.

Also this year! Stay on for a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands. Register at www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org.

BirdFest program information and registration can be found at www.olympicbirdfest.org

Great Backyard Bird Count



FEBRUARY 12-15, 2010
[Cornell & Audubon]



The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent and in Hawaii. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. We'll be adding updated GBBC materials for the next count as they become available. See the website for details if you are interested.

<http://birdsource.org/gbbc>



Birding Adventures TV focuses on destination and adventure bird-watching. Explore the best exotic birding destinations on the planet; the most unusual, rare and highly sought after bird species; amazing cultures and wildlife. Thanks to our informative, passionate - and sometimes crazy! – host, BATV portrays a unique blend of information and adventure, making bird-watching refreshing, contemporary, interesting and exciting. The program has a strong conservation emphasis and highlights the importance and urgency of preserving the planet's incredible birdlife.

Check your TV carrier for details.

Comcast: FSN (HD-734) Thursday at 3:30 PM



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.*



February 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

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November 1st
every year

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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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