



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

February 2013

Calendar

Program at 7:00 PM

***Tuesday, Feb. 5, 7:00 pm: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Monday, Feb. 4, 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
					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		

Program at 7:00 PM this meeting only

Washington Big Year Fund Raiser Competition

by Arden & Sherry Hagen, Eric & Tammy Bjorkman

As a Fund Raiser for VAS, the Hagen's and the Bjorkmans did a Big Year in the state of Washington trying to see as many species as they could. This special time program will review the many adventures they endeared during the year and the wonderful birds they saw. As it turned out the Hagen's set a new state record of 370 species. The old record of 359 species was also broken by the Bjorkmans with their total of 360.

Birding in 35 mph winds of pelting rain, vehicle problems, climbing steep hillsides as thunder hits, driving the back roads of the state and running into each other, meeting many birders and getting their advice, chasing birds on a moments notice, birding with migraines and loving it (maybe not) or just checking off birds from their own yards. This should be an enjoyable time spent with what some would describe as Crazy Birders.

March Program:

Bird Friendly Buildings and More

by Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director
Audubon Society of Portland

FIELD TRIP

Woodland Bottoms



Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: Feb. 9, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

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

NOTE: The 134th St. Park & Ride has been relocated near Fred Meyers on 134th west of the old location closer to the I-5 and I-205 merge. Watch for the signs to the Park & Ride.

This will be a half day trip birding the bottoms just west of Woodland, WA. Bring lunch, snacks and clothing for the weather at the time.

INJURED BIRDS: WHAT TO DO?

Many of our Board Members receive many calls **especially** during Breeding Season on injured birds or baby birds that seem to be abandoned. 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?

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 and a bird requires transport to the Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center then the volunteers suggest they receive a gas mileage compensation and a small donation to the Care Center for the care of the bird at the time of pick up.
3. Please do not call other Board Members since they are unable to help at this time.

Treasurer's Report – Joan Durgin

Revenue for November 2012: **\$2,832.32**

Expenses for November 2012: **\$369.42**

Cash & Investments: **\$26,893.48**

New Business

1. National Audubon's convention will be held at Skamania Lodge on July 12 – 15, 2013. Eric will ask Wilson to make an announcement at the general meeting.

2. The Hagen's relayed their experience at the Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center when they brought in an injured Barred Owl recently. The center has a list of expenses near the entrance for the rehabilitation of an injured bird and the costs are significant. The board discussed how much they appreciate that the center is there as a place to refer the public to. A suggestion was made for VAS to consider putting a standing donation into our yearly budget (beginning in 2013) to support this vital resource.

Tammy Bjorkman, VAS Secretary

WA Big Year VAS Fund Raiser Competition

*Vancouver Audubon President Eric Bjorkman and his wife Tammy are involved in a year-long fundraising competition with fellow board members Arden and Sherry Hagen. Both couples are conducting a 'Big Year' in Washington State. Throughout 2012, Eric & Sherry will keep a journal of the adventures of **Team Bjorkman** and **Team Hagen** respectively & contribute articles to Columbia Flyway each month sharing the high-lights and low-lights of their quest.*

Team Bjorkman: In Remembrance of a Big Year

As 2012 wound down and the list of available birds Tammy and I could still see shrunk, we enjoyed a much needed recuperation period. We looked at it as a withdrawal time so we didn't experience the shock of going cold turkey when the year came to an abrupt end at midnight December 31st.

While reflecting on this past year, it's obvious that we've been profoundly impacted by it. Yes, it took up a vast amount of our free time, but it was also a blessing to have the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people during our journeys. Let's face it — we were pests to the rest of the birding world in Washington State. We e-mailed, phoned, and cajoled countless folks requesting help and information for finding the latest unusual species that suddenly showed up in their area. These fellow birders were part of our quest and we discovered they wanted to be a part of it. We realized early on they were an invaluable resource and we send our sincere thanks for their assis-

tance in helping with our successful year.

We were the recipients of many gestures of hospitality and goodwill throughout the year. A few examples include permission to come into a stranger's home to stake out a feeder, or an offer to camp on their property, good Samaritan Don Kohler towed our tent camper home from Wenas when we lost our trailer hitch on the rugged roads, and we were the fortunate beneficiaries of excellent small town customer service (special shout out to Betty Jo Reilly of The Big R store in Colville!). Everyone was kind and generous which made this grueling year not only bearable, but a blast.

Another unexpected pleasure was getting to know Arden and Sherry better. We shared a lot of time in a car and found that we travelled well together. Their enthusiasm was infectious. Despite being absolute bulldogs when it comes to competition, they have been great fun all year. We're certain that the friendship that grew out of this competition will last a lifetime.

And thanks to all of **you** who have helped make this a successful fundraiser for Vancouver Audubon. Your generosity and interest in our quest was a huge factor in keeping us on task. We salute you all!

*We two have run about the slopes,
and picked the daisies fine ;
But we've wandered many a weary foot,
since auld lang syne.*

VAS President, Eric Bjorkman

Team Hagen: (see page 5)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

New Members: Hope Brillante • Jason Buis • Samantha Burger • Jean Carpenter • Nancy Carvalho • Carolyn Cole • Craig Collins • John Cordell, Bridgette Cottral, Jim Cummings, Thomas Duffy, Linda Dygert, Patricia Eilts, Pamela Evans, Isabella Flora Graves, Linda Forsgren, Kenneth Fowler, Betty Frakes, Tiesa Gaston, Kate Hamer, Andrea Hanson, Thomas Hillis, William Hoover, Christopher Hudson, Anne Jackson, Walter Johnson, Niels Jorgensen, Marion Kanthak, Jan Kennedy, Sharon Kenoski, Muriel Klopman, Elisabeth Kratzer, Scott Kuter, Ron Kvalsund, Joanna Lasof, Loretta Layton, Lori Layton, Westonsalyn Livingston, Robert Lockhorn, Jackson Lombardi, Teresa Lumpkins, Rae Matheson, Barbara Mc Kee, Cindy Morawski, Roy Morgan, Dennis Nash, Carrie Neeshonee, Joan Nelson, Carolyn Neth, K. Nusom, Janet Oster, Elaine Parker, Amelia Pessin, Hajar Puteh, Karen Ray, Judy Richstad, Ronald Rikken, Shannon Rini, George Rochat, Starla Ryan, Carole Scheel, Glen Smith, Eric Solari, Milton Steinmueler, Barbara Stewart, Louie Strong, Joan Tyrrell, Jane Walker, Linda Warren, Nancy Yakish, June Yamrick, Richard Zeimer

Transfers: Lorraine Blue • Auda Marie • Walter & Mary Oswald • Katherine Bryan Preas



IMPORTANT!

Environmental Lobby Day

February 19, 2013

**For Information Contact Gretchen Starke:
gstarke@pacifier.com**

The Environmental Legislative Priorities for 2013

Now that Christmas is past, and the urgencies of December (holiday and non-holiday) are behind us, it is time to concentrate on the upcoming legislative session. The Environmental Priorities Coalition, of which Audubon Washington is a part, have come out with three legislative priorities for this next session. These priorities and other potential legislative priorities for Audubon were discussed in a recent conference call meeting of the Washington Audubon Conservation Committee. This laid out the groundwork for the chapter coordinator, soon to be hired by Audubon Washington, and for the chapters as we contact our legislators.

Priority number one is called Toxic-Free Kids and Families and concerns the efforts to get toxic fire retardants out of children's products and home furniture. This is a leftover from last year and that is why it is a priority this year. The bill last year was killed by the efforts of the chemical industry in a campaign that was revealed by the newspaper, *The Chicago Tribune*, to be full of fraud and lies, including bogus claims about the increase in children suffering more burns where fire retardants have been banned. While an important issue, this issue does not have much to do, either directly or indirectly, with birds, wildlife, or habitat. We will not ignore this issue, but it will not be at the top of our list.

The second priority is called Clean Energy Solutions. As it is written, it is broad and vague. Basically, we want to discourage oil and coal and encourage wind and solar. An east-side chapter mentioned the issue of transmission lines all over the place in eastern Washington as these lines have an impact on the shrub-steppe habitat. We need to keep an eye on potential legislation on this issue, especially if there is a bill to promote oil or coal. The Washington Environmental Council is the lead on this issue.

The third and last priority is called Conservation Works and refers mainly to the capitol budget. (As a point of information, the legislature appropriates money in three

budgets: operating, capitol, and transportation.) The third priority has three buckets. One concerns new money for projects within the Puget Sound area. Only. As someone on the conference call pointed out, such a proposal might have a better chance of passing if some money were to be spent in other parts of the state as well. Vancouver Audubon would, of course, support the funding to clean up Puget Sound. It is a state asset. But, so is the Columbia River. The second bucket concerns forest health, including marbled murrelet habitat. The third bucket is funding of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. This is an important program for preserving wildlife habitat, as well as providing for parks. The governor's budget for this program is inadequate.

In the conference call meeting, the Conservation Committee agreed to a particular Audubon priority: funding of parks from the general fund. As things stand now, the state park system will lose all funding from the general fund and will need to depend totally on park fees for maintenance. That will mean the eventual loss of our park system. Fees are not only unpopular, they would be totally inadequate to pay for our parks.

At the County Commission Level

Friends of Clark County, a fellow environmental organization, is getting ready to monitor the county commissioner hearings. I will also be participating, as I am also a member of Friends. It would be great if members of other environmental organizations would also attend the hearings from time to time.

What makes the need for monitoring commissioner hearings more urgent is -- how to phrase this delicately -- that our newest commissioner seems to have a hazy understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and powers of the county commissioners. I have heard that among his ideas is one to take over Battleground State Park. Because he hates park fees and the state requires a pass to park there. State Parks started the fee system because the legislature didn't give them enough money. See the item above. That the county doesn't have the money to take on the state park or that the legislature would have to approve any county take over does not seem to be a problem.

There will be other issues of concern to us: impact fees, rural lands, transportation, continued urban sprawl. Any one of these could adversely affect wildlife habitat. It will be important to watch and see what happens. The commissioner hearings are usually every Tuesday; the first Tuesday hearings are in the evening and the rest of the month are at 10:00 AM. Contact me if you would like to help out occasionally.

Gretchen Starke





- Dec. 8, Tyler Hicks found a stunning and surprisingly vocal male **BULLOCK'S ORIOLES** feeding in the riparian vegetation about 1 mile upstream from La Center. This species is very rare during the winter when they should be in Central America. A **RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER** was found by Bob Flores, at Capt. William Clark Park, near the Cottonwood Beach entrance in Washougal. This is probably the same bird that was there all of last winter.
- Dec. 9, Les Carlson and I were joined by Russ Koppendray, for our last Skamania County Big Day of the year. We came up with a 81 species for the day, our twelfth month of setting a new record. Some better birds for the day were **REDHEAD, EARED GREBE, RED-SHOULDERED HAWK, PEREGRINE FALCON, VIRGINIA'S RAIL, ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD, CANYON WREN,** and **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW.**
- Dec. 16, A **COMMON REDPOLL** at our feeder on Mt. Pleasant, in the Gorge, was our second one this year.
- Dec. 19, Sherry Hagen said that a wet and very rufous-red colored **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** was perched on a sign on SR500, south of Vancouver Mall.
- Dec. 21, Kevin and Carol Healy had two **EVENING GROSBEAKS** at their feeder near Paddon Parkway and NE 152nd Ave. Glenn and Mary Ann Teague also had an **EVENING GROSBEAK** at the feeder along with a flock of **RED CROSSBILLS** in their backyard. Randy Hill reported an immature **ROSS'S GOOSE** mixed in with a large flock of cacklers at the Ridgefield NWR. He also heard a **TRUMPETER SWAN** calling from Mantrap Lake and spotted a **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** in the trees on Quigley Lake.
- Dec. 24, Janet Bentley-Jones River was birding the Ridgefield NWR River "S" and found one of the **SHORT-EARED OWLS** being reported from there.
- Dec. 26, Susan Saul went for a walk along Burnt Bridge Creek, and at her favorite pond for finding **HOODED MERGANSERS** she saw a drake and two hen **CINNAMON TEAL.** This is one of the ducks that are common here as nesting birds but usually leaves this region by early fall.
- Dec. 27, Rob Conway reported having a **CASSIN'S FINCH** coming to feeders at his Camas home for about a week. This is a species seldom reported from western Washington, but they do wander here coming down the Gorge from their normal Ponderosa Pine habitats. At Rest Lake, on the Ridgefield NWR, Greg Baker, had two **TREE SWALLOWS** and a **BARN SWALLOW.**
- Dec.29, Tom Mansfield found a **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK** at Hamilton Island in Skamania County. While I was searching futilely for the Rough-legged Hawk I ran into Rick and Tina Taylor who told me about a **RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER** at Skamania Landing. I relocated it just before dusk for my 188th bird in Skamania County for 2012, a new Skamania County Big Year record.
- Dec. 30, Rick and Tina Taylor spotted the **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK** at Hamilton Island and also had a **WESTERN GULL** below the dam.
- Dec. 31, A female **COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD** at Joan Durgin's home in Camas, was enjoyed by Arden and Sherry Hagen and Eric and Tammy Bjorkman. This is a species that is normally only found in southern Arizona and Mexico.
- Jan.4, Steve and Sybil Kohl found three species of falcons during a visit to the Ridgefield NWR, **MERLIN, PEREGRINE FALCON** and **AMERICAN KESTREL.**
- Jan. 7, The first 2 **SHORT-EARED OWLS** ever2 **SHORT-EARED OWLS** reported from Skamania County were found by MaryFrances Mathis, on Fitzgerald Road. on Mt. Pleasant. This road is just east of Washougal and parallels the Clark County border.
- Jan.10, Lyn Topinka photographed a male **TUFTED DUCK** that Bill Johnson just found for the second year at Lacamas Lake Park in Camas.
- Jan.12, While conducting the Skamania County stretch of the annual Columbia River Gorge USFWS winter waterfowl survey, Stuart Johnston and Jim White found 6 **REDHEADS** (two drakes, 4 hens) diving with **RING-NECKED DUCKS** in Rock Creek Cove, and a drake **EURASIAN WIGEON** was also there in Stevenson. A second **EURASIAN WIGEON** was on Drano Lake. Rob Conway of Camas, saw the Tufted Duck and reports that at his Camas home he has a Chickadee trifecta with **MOUNTAIN, BLACK CAPPED,** and **CHESTNUT-BACKED.** He is still getting 2-3 **CASSIN'S FINCHES** coming to his feeders and at sunset he could hear close by **NORTHERN SAW-WHET** and **BARRED OWLS.**

This has been a great year for VAS birders with the Bjorkmans and Hagens traveling the state in their quest to set a new record for the number of species seen in Washington in one year. The old record was 359 and just breaking 300 is quite a feat, which is exactly what Les Carlson was able to do in 2012, something I have yet to do.

Les Carlson and I were joined on some of the Skamania Big Days by Barry Woodruff, George Mayfield, Bob Rowe and Russ Koppendray. We ended the year with a total of 164 species seen just on the Big Days, including two county firsts, Forster's Tern and Eastern Kingbird. We located fifteen species that are rare in the county and I added nine new species to my county life list. Les ended the year with a Skamania County life list of 176 and a county year list of 173, six species higher than the year list record that I set in 2011.

A total of 239 birds were reported as having been seen in Clark County in 2012 and 210 were reported from Skamania County, both are new high year counts. I will be compiling the records for these two counties again in 2013, so please send me your sighting records of even common species for the Cumulative Year List and this column.

February is still a period of wintering birds with waterfowl, raptors and finches providing most of the viewing opportunities. But by the end of the month the first Spring migrants will start appearing, Say's Phoebes, Tree Swallows and bluebirds are among the early arriving species and some years even Rufous Hummingbirds show up before March.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

WA Big Year VAS Fund Raiser Competition

Team Hagen: But We Never Set Out to Break a State Record

On the morning of January 1st, 2012 as Arden & I started out the new year with this Big Year Fund Raiser Competition just starting, we hoped that we would break the 300 species mark and we hoped the Bjorkman's did too. Although, we hoped we had a least ONE MORE species than they did at the end of the year in order for us to win.

As I arose a bit late that morning and was about to open the bedroom door, Arden almost knocked me over as he rushed to tell me that we had a COMMON REDPOLL on our deck. We had never had one before or for that matter even in the county. I rushed out as I grabbed my camera and got a photo of my 1st species of the year. As soon as Eric heard about our 1st adventure right at home, he said "I quit!!" Wow! Was this an Omen of what was to come?

We did not set out to break the 11 year old state record of 359 species seen in one year. We did not think we would even get close to that number. Having studied the bird list of the state we figured if one of the teams got into the mid 330's they would for sure win this competition.

We jumped ahead of the Bjorkmans but by the start of the 4th month we were only 1 apart and by the beginning of May we were tied. It was anybody's game. If we were to win we would have to step it up. As migration got fully underway we picked up a few more and as summer progressed we inched a little further ahead. We were lucky to be in the right place at the right time. There were several birds we saw that were rarities that were not seen again after we saw them. No we didn't ship them back to where they should have been so the Bjorkmans could not see them!!!

By the September meeting we were 20 species ahead of them but we were leaving on a 3½ week trip to Australia and the fall migration was in full swing. We had 357 species when we left and only 2 from tying the old record. How could this be. What a year. Rarities were showing up left and right. Two new species were added to the state list

this year, the Eastern Meadowlark and the Wilson's Plover and we had them both. And now we were leaving. What would the Bjorkman's get while we were gone? Would we miss beating the old record now that it was within reach? But as you know by now it didn't matter. Birding seemed to halt while we were gone. Nothing new showed up but when we returned, we jumped right back into the adventure as more fall migrants began showing up and we were there to see them. We found the Common Eider that was the bird that broke the old record. And then we went on to see 10 more species hitting 370. Unbelievable.

We said at the beginning of this whole competition that there was NO WAY that we would even get close to the record. We believed that. We knew the numbers...unless it was a phenomenal year... and as it turned out it was!

by Sherry Hagen, Newsletter & Web Editor

See you at the meeting at 7 PM on February 5th.

Listen & watch slides of both our Adventures and see who wins the prizes from the Fund Raiser. It might be you if you bought a ticket.

	Bjorkmans	Hagens
Feb 7	142	161
Mar 6	161	181
Apr 3	189	190
May 1	227	227
Jun 5	293	305
Jun 30	316	326
July 31	327	338
Sept 4	336	356
Oct 2	346	357
Nov 6	355	366
Dec 4	358	368
Dec 31	360	370

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 2013

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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