



# Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

*A Chapter of the National Audubon Society*

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

February 2014

## Calendar

\*\*\* Tuesday, Feb. 4 6:45 pm: Free 30 minute class before the General Meeting

\*\*\*Tuesday, Feb. 4, 7:30 pm: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

\*\*\*Tuesday, Jan. 28, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting hosted by Eric & Tammy Bjorkman, 4110 NE 54th Ave., Vancouver 360-695-3116

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## PROGRAM:

### *Fire & Forests, East of the Cascade Divide*

A conversation about the past philosophies and future policies of forest fire management in Eastern Washington.

Speaker: JOHN MARSHALL, Fire Ecology photographer for the US Forest Service.



[www.humanities.org](http://www.humanities.org)

Humanities Washington Speakers Bureau is his sponsor.

John's presentation is a combination of history and science. Fire has a huge role in determining habitats that creatures live in. Changes in the forest and severe fires are of concern. He has been studying the changes in forests following fires for 20 years. He has contributed to National Geographic Magazine articles about Mt. St. Helens.

Among other things, John is the son of the late naturalist, David B. Marshall, organizer and co-author of: BIRDS OF OREGON: a GENERAL REFERENCE. John became a proficient birder in his teens while on family outings filled with wilderness hikes and birding excursions. John lives in Wenatchee.

## NO FIELD TRIP

*Due to the Vancouver Audubon  
Fund Raiser Trip to Okanogan  
there will be no other field trips  
in February*

## A Happy Holiday for Birds that Depend on the Alaskan Wildlife Refuge

On December 23, migratory birds received a fantastic holiday gift—Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell signed the final decision to keep Izembek National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska intact, denying a proposed road that would have run through the heart of designated Wilderness in the refuge. Audubon has been working to protect this irreplaceable, globally Important Bird Area for nearly 20 years.

After three years of study, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded in early 2013 that the road would harm the refuge lands and wildlife. Facing Congressional pressure, Secretary Jewell spent the past several months reexamining that decision, including a visit to the refuge. After months of review, Secretary Jewell's announcement last month reaffirms the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's earlier decision to protect this globally significant bird habitat.

# Vancouver Audubon

## Treasurer's Report – Joan Durgin

Revenue for November 2013: **\$1440.15**

Expenses for November 2013: **\$267.79**

Revenue includes Audubon Adventures donations, newsletter subscriptions, and unrestricted donations toward general operating fund.

## Old Business

1. AUDUBON ADVENTURES - 36 classrooms have signed up to receive kits this school year. We received donations for 29 kits and VAS will purchase the remaining seven.

## New Business

1. MALHEUR FIELD STATION DONATION – VAS received a fundraising letter that Malheur Field Station is requesting a donation from their supporters to help retire debts and help fund their staff. An anonymous donor has stepped up and will match the first \$30,000 in donations. The Board agreed that Malheur Field Station falls into the same category as the Paton's Birder's Haven. Many local birders and all of the Board members consider Malheur NWR and the Field Station as important birding habitat worthy of our support. **MOTION: Moved by Bonnie (seconded by Arden) that Vancouver Audubon make a donation of \$500 (anonymous match will make the donation total \$1000) to the Malheur Field Station. MOTION CARRIED (11-0)**

Tammy Bjorkman, VAS Secretary

## INJURED BIRDS: WHAT TO DO?

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?

**Many Birds that hit a window just need some time to rest to get "their wind back" before taking off again.**



Try putting them in a box with plenty of air for an hour or more until you hear movement then take them outdoors and test if they are ready to fly off.

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. There is 24 hr **Animals Hospital called DoveLewis** in downtown Portland that will take the bird overnight if the Portland Audubon Wildlife is closed.

1945 NW Pettygrove 503-228-7281

4. Please do not call other Board Members since they are unable to help at this time.

**In the meantime....**

Keep the bird in a box with small air holes.

You might offer water via a dropper, and if necessary watered down puppy chow to supply nutrients.

**Welcome New Members:** Tom Ambrose • Marjorie Ball • Paul & Barbara Allais • Cathie Bigelow • Judy & Bill Coddington • Lisa Bobyk • Theresa Brennan • Delores Burns • Steven Busick • Catherine Campbell • Gordon Carlton • Dawn Charvat • Anna Wiancko Chasman • Myron Combelic • Janice Davidson • John & Dawn Harrison • Phyllis De Lindt • Patrick Dillon • Julie & Don Phillips • Paul & Donna Bettasso • Peter Durant • Coco Eckmann • Nancy Engleman • Dorrie Estribou • D. Ferguson • Deborah Gage • Margaret & Greg Walters • Rebecca Gulling • Pam Gunn • Christine & Han Sigg • Myron Haun • Judith Heath • Oliver Hidden • Cynthia Hoffman • Joan Holmes • Ann Horstman • Phil Hunt • James Hurley • John Johnson • Paul Jones • Chris King • Jeanne Kojis • Christine Kramer • Gregory Liplin • John & Juanita Lopez • Martin Lougen • Barbara Ludwig • Veronica McClaskey • Gerda McMillan • Dawna Meek • Barbra Meisenheimer • Philip & Mildre Kimery • Ian Mills • Freida Moisant • Chris and Shirley Morgan • Annie Myers • Mary Onslow • Ellyn Papenfuse • Darlene Paulsruide • Sashi Pedapati • Conquita Perry • Wayne Powell • Ted Price • L. Reinhart • Marie Roads • Jennifer Scarborough • Trink Schurian • Wilma Scott • Joyce Seelhorst • Robert Staab • Linde Stallings • Dawn Thompson • Ronald Thorn • Kathryn Thornton • Joyce Tobias • Loretta Unrein • Bryson Valdez • Rick Williams

**Welcom Transferred Members:** Lila Ellis • John Keeler • Barbara Keltz • Kiana Lee Rose • John & Juanita Lopez • El Dora Merrill • Debra Robillard • Jo Svoboda



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## No Lobby Day this Year

The Environmental Priorities Coalition (EPC) decided not to hold a lobby day this year. Instead, they are having a program called 60 days/60 ways to get involved. I must confess that I am not clear how this might work. I checked the EPC website and the focus seems to be on the Puget Sound counties. As of this writing, I sent an e-mail to Audubon Washington's policy person, Jennifer Syrowitz, asking for clarification. In the meantime, there are important issues that will need to be tracked. As I find out what is going on, I can let any of you know, provided you send me an e-mail with your e-mail address. Please understand the importance of issues and public involvement in order to keep birds in our lives. It is not enough to just go birding.

In addition, I plan on exploring the idea of going up to Olympia on my own (and would welcome anyone else coming along), should something of importance come up.

## Audubon Legislative Priorities

Yes, we have priorities that the state conservation committee chose while on a conference call in early December. Two priorities are Audubon's, selected on the basis of our interest in birds and getting people outdoors. Three are related to EPC priorities.

Climate change is a big issue -- I would say it is *the* issue. It is certain that Governor Inslee will be pushing some legislation. Audubon also will support the state parks' supplemental budget request. For several sessions the legislature has tried to make the park system "self-sufficient." The parks were to operate strictly on fees. Thus, the decrease in park funding from the general fund and instituting the Discover Pass that was required to park in the parks. But, a parks system is a government service that can't pay for itself and it is time to provide the necessary funds.

Two issues that relate to oil are explicitly EPC priorities. The big oil companies have a big loophole (for this biennium it is \$41 million) that does not benefit Washington in the slightest. We need to capture that money for our needs. There is also the Oil Spill Prevention Act that will help give the state more information on the amount and composition of the oil moving through our state. Oil issues have suddenly become very important to us in southwest Washington.

The fifth issue is the need to play defense. The EPC calls this issue accountability. Whether it is an attempt to weaken clean water laws and regulations or to gut the Growth Management Act, we need to keep watch and act to prevent that.

## Speaking of Oil: The Oil Train Explosion in December

Which caused me even further apprehension about oil at the Port of Vancouver. And going through the Columbia River Gorge. Imagine such a thing happening in mid-September. When it hasn't rained in three months. And the east wind is blowing. Hot and hard.



## Meanwhile, Back Home in Clark County ...

The local scene is busy, busy. Issues that will be faced in 2014 or were touched upon in December include growth management and parks and open space.

The commissioners held a work session on the conservation lands program. This was an information work session to help the commissioners get up to speed on the program. I am apprehensive about what direction two of the commissioners might take. My feeling is that conservation lands are not a priority with them. It may be that I will be pleasantly surprised, however. Several of us will continue to keep an eye on the situation.

To meet state requirements, 2014 is the year the county needs to update the growth management plan. This is dangerous because it provides an opportunity for the opponents of growth management to totally mess up Clark County's future. As an example, I heard a rumor that one of the commissioners would like to do away with the 20-acre lot zoning.

The first step in the update is the selection of an estimate of the future population of Clark County. This population number drives the rest of the plan: how large the urban growth areas must be, where the roads must be, what the taxpayer costs will be. The process to select the population number is, of this writing, ongoing. Stay tuned.

Gretchen Starke 

# Vancouver Audubon

OLYMPIC PENINSULA  
April 4-6, 2014

## BirdFest

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- ◆ Bird Drawing Class
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- ◆ Photography Workshop
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*Noah Strycker*

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[www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org)  
[info@olympicbirdfest.org](mailto:info@olympicbirdfest.org)  
or 360-681-4076



## Tillamook Loop Field Trip

by Susan Setterberg

On Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, a small group headed out between rainstorms to bird the Tillamook area. It was a cool but satisfying day with a couple of small sun breaks. Our birding started on Fenk Road, a farm area near Tillamook. The drive along the road, which weaves along a long pond (..with a nice look at a male Belted Kingfisher). Keeping the windows up, to minimize the fragrant cow barn odors, we searched the fields for **White-tailed Kites**. One was spotted across the fields at some distance by its "kiting" activity; hovering in search of prey. We piled out of the car and set up the scope for distant but distinct views of not just one, but two kites perched at the tops of distant small trees as they frequently do. It was a good start to our birding day.

Moving on, we drove Bay Ocean Spit Rd to check out water birds. Arden schooled all of us on the finer points of distinguishing hunter decoys from real ducks as we watched a mallard with spinning wings hover in one place (a decoy). There was a nice flyby of an adult Bald Eagle.

We took a short tour through the hamlet of Cape Meares, searching for feeders. Fortunately, there was a woman setting an attractive table for the local birds where we counted nine Steller's Jays who seemed to dominate the feeder.

Our next stop was the Lighthouse. We started at the view platform overlooking the small cove north of the lighthouse. A **Peregrine Falcon** pair is known to nest in the cliffs there. Right on queue, the bird circled up the cove cliffs giving us a magnificent view at eye level. It was probably the most spectacular view I have ever had of a flying Peregrine Falcon. You couldn't ask for better.

Skirting around Tillamook Bay to Bay City, we found the usual mix of gulls. We stopped at the oyster plant. Our goal was **Black Turnstone** and we weren't disappointed. Along with the turnstones there was a number of Dunlin.

Continuing north, we stopped on the west side of Garibaldi to view the rock outcroppings for Harlequin. None were found but we did have **Common Loon** and, finally, **Black Oystercatcher**. At this point, we decided there was enough time in the day to go a little farther north to Nehalem. It began to rain for the first time during our trip. We stopped at the sewer treatment plant for a quick look at the ducks and gulls. There were quite a few birds on the first pond and we were able to identify a nice **Mew Gull** before the rain began in earnest and drove us back to the car. A short foray down another farm road netted us a nice **White-fronted Goose** on the road near a flock of Cackling Geese. Arden found the **Eurasian Collared Doves** for us. The large flock was fully decorating a tree like Christmas ornaments. What a sight. But the real treat was a hawk which flew up onto a telephone pole, then flew back behind us to perch on the eaves of the barn. What a treat to get excellent views of a **Red-shouldered Hawk** as Arden artfully gave us a 360 degree car view by driving in circles. It was a great way to end a day which started with the White-tailed Kite.

We had **53 species overall**. Not bad for a trip between storms. Thanks to Arden for again leading a very satisfying trip and being the driver for the group.

Location: Sequim, WA

Description: 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, silent auction, and a gala banquet. Our featured speaker is Noah Strycker: "Bird World: the fascinating parallels between bird and human behavior". The festival with the most spectacular setting!

Immediately following BirdFest, join us for a three-day, two-night birding cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 6-8, 2014. Register separately at

[www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon](http://www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon)

Birdfest website address:

[www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org)

E-mail address: [opas.birdfest.info@gmail.com](mailto:opas.birdfest.info@gmail.com)

**Nov. 25,** a female **VERMILION FLYCATCHER** was found by George and Cindy Mayfield, along the Auto Tour route at the Ridgefield NWR. This bird was in the same location that they found one on Nov. 2012, that bird wintered on the refuge was still being seen as late as early March of 2013. This bird was a juvenile, so it was not the same bird as was here last winter. There are less than half dozen records of this species in Washington, three of them from the Ridgefield Refuge.

**Nov. 28,** Dwight Porter photographed an **AMERICAN TREE SPARROW** at Steigerwald Lake NWR on the Gibbons Creek Wildlife Trail, this was the first record of this Arctic nesting bird for the refuge.

**Nov. 30,** A visit to the Ridgefield NWR provided Carol and Don Kohler with views of a **BLACK PHOEBE**, this refuge is the best spot to find this species in Washington.

**Dec. 5,** Eric Bjorkman spotted the first **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** for their list of species seen in their yard in Vancouver. He also had an odd looking **FOX SPARROW** at Ridgefield River "S" Unit. Looking at Sibley's made him think it was the Rocky Mtn. subspecies.

**Dec. 19,** Steven Clark photographed a **RUSTY BLACKBIRD** coming to the bird seed he spreads in front of his Washougal home. I saw the bird the next day as did Carol and Don Kohler for whom it was a life bird. This bird stuck around to the delight of many birders from across the Northwest.

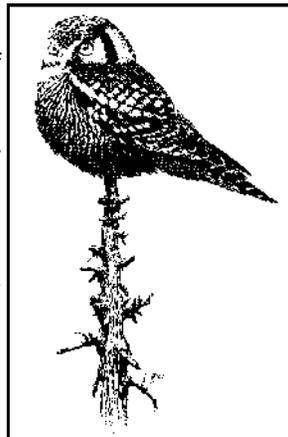
**Dec. 22,** While doing the Christmas Bird Count, Les Carlson and I found another **RUSTY BLACKBIRD** and **2 TRUMPETER SWANS** north of Ridgefield.

**Dec. 23,** Loretta Layton, who lives along Canyon Creek, on the upper Washougal River, has **AMERICAN DIPPERS** that visit her deck and her backyard pond, not a common yard bird.

**Dec. 25,** Carol & Kevin Healy, who live East of Orchards spotted a "**Slate-colored**" **DARK-EYED JUNCO** among the more common "Oregon" Juncos. The all gray junco that we get in our area is a subspecies called a "Cassiar's" Junco. They nest in the Canadian Rocky Mountains and a few show up locally every year.

**Dec. 26,** Doug Schurman found a flock of about 1,000 **SNOW GEESE** with **1 ROSS'S GOOSE** in it, about half way to Ridgefield NWR on the Lower River Rd from Vancouver Lake. Colleen Sibelman had a female **RUSTY BLACKBIRD** at their seed feeder overlooking the refuge in Ridgefield, the third one of these East Coast blackbirds to be found in Clark County this year.

**Dec. 30,** Les Carlson and Bob Rowe had good views of a **NORTHERN HAWK-OWL** that has been in Moscow, Idaho. This is a gorgeous owl



that hunts by day and is scarce this far south, it was a life bird for Les.

**Dec. 31,** On the way home Les Carlson and Bob Rowe stopped at Clarkston, WA. and saw a **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** for a another life bird on their trip. Lesser Black-backed Gulls are European species that has had a dramatic increase in sightings in North America during the last couple of decades. Bob Flores went to 45th Avenue and 15th Street in Ridgefield, where the he found at least one **RUSTY BLACKBIRD** and thought he had another one as well as two **BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS**. Gene and Lyn Topinka birded Lower River Road and the area around Vancouver Lake and found a **BRANT** in a flock of about 1,000 geese in the field near Frenchman's Bar Park, a new State bird for Lyn. This is a saltwater species that usually feeds on eelgrass in the ocean. Carol and Don Kohler went down the Willamette Valley to see an out of place **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** at the Ankeny NWR for a life bird on the last day of the year. The next day they saw a female **PAINTED BUNTING** at Coos Bay to start out 2014 with another life bird.

**Jan. 8,** Loretta Layton and Susan Setterberg spotted **2 GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE** in the flocks of Cackling Geese at the Ridgefield NWR.

In mid-November, someone sent Ken Knittle photos of a **BLUE JAY** in Hazel Dell, but he never learned where the bird was being seen, it probably wintered in the same neighborhood and is still out there somewhere.

Lyn Topinka reported seeing **2 "Blue" SNOW GEESE** among the large flock of white Snow Geese in the Vancouver Lake Lowlands. The Blue form is rare in the population that winters in the Pacific Northwest but are fairly common in New Mexico, Texas and eastward.

By the end of February the first migrant birds will start arriving, Say's Phoebes, Western Bluebirds and Tree Swallows are among some of the earlier arriving birds. These early returning birds will most likely be found in low elevation areas around water like Steigerwald Lake, Vancouver Lake or Ridgefield where it is warmer. Our wintering waterfowl will stay around into March before they begin moving north making for some good birding opportunities in the lowlands.

In 2013 a total of 218 species of birds were reported as having been seen in Clark County, 199 species were reported from Skamania County. The numbers in 2012 were: Clark County 239, Skamania County 210.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

**VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY**

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



**February 2014**

**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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