



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

June 2013

Calendar

*** FREE BIRDING CLASS June 4, 6:45 PM for 30 minutes.

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

***Monday, **June 3, 6:30 pm:** VAS Board Meeting hosted by Bonnie Bingle
8705 E 51st Ave. Vancouver 360-576-0330

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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

PROGRAM:

Skillapoo Lake Project

& Current

Ridgefield NWR Developments

SHILLAPOO LAKE PROJECT:

by Darin Hauswald, Manager, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

WDFW is in the planning stages of breaching the Columbia River dike to flood the Skillapoo Lake area. This project will enhance habitat for salmonids.

Study and funding alignment will take a couple years. DARIN HAUSWALD will describe the project, show its location and discuss funding.

REPORT FROM RIDGEFIELD NWR ON CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS:

by RANDY HILL of the Refuge Staff:

Randy will report on the status of the plans to add a new bridge crossing to the River S Unit; report on the transfer of White-tailed Deer from JBHansen Wildlife Area; and take your questions about other program developments.

FIELD TRIP

Rock Creek & Bickleton



Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: June 8, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

Meet at: Meet at the Port of Camas-Washougal Boat Launch and we will car pool. Do not forget to pay your driver gas money.

Bring a lunch, water and dress for the weather and if you have a FRS two-way radio bring that too. This will be an all day trip. Expected species will be Mountain Bluebird, Ash-throated Flycatcher Lewis's Woodpecker, Canyon Wren, Rock Wren, Lazuli Bunting and more.

GO PAPERLESS

with the VAS Newsletter

We hear it everywhere, "GO GREEN". If you would rather have a paperless VAS Newsletter then you can email Sherry Hagen at littlebirder@comcast.net to receive a "PDF" copy of The Columbia Flyway in color sent to you. Include the email address that you wish to have it sent to.

The PDF form is also available on line at:
vancouveraudubon.org

Treasurer's Report – Joan Durgin

Revenue for April 2013: \$122.08
Expenses for April 2013: \$188.15
Cash & Investments: \$25,215.79
Community Foundation Endowment Fund –
balance as of 3/31/13: \$219,740.90

Tammy Bjorkman, VAS Secretary

National Audubon Society 2013 Convention

TAKING FLIGHT TOGETHER

The National Audubon Society will hold it's national convention this summer at the Skamania Lodge, Stevenson, WA in the Columbia River Gorge.

When: July 12-15, 2013

What:

- Four full days of exciting field trips, inspiring speakers, in-depth hands-on workshops, and tens of program options highlighting strategic conservation successes from the four flyways.

- And the camaraderie only Audubon can provide.

<http://www.audubon.org/audubon-convention-2013>

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.**

Welcome New Members: Richard Beusse • Stephanie & Bra Smith • Joan Brown • Chlovena Byrd-Metzger • Cindy Cohen • Jennifer Conley • Lindy Coq • Madelyn Crockett • Robert Demory • Joanne Dixon • Fred Dobson • Barbara Doenecke • Wanda Eisenbeis • Karen Fox • Claudia Fredricks • Shelly Hansen • Bill Herring • William Herring • Randy Hill • Thomas Hitchcock • Judith Hodges • Nels Holmstrom • Deborah Houlihan • Ann Hutchinson • Laura Issula • A. Jobson • Jenny Johnson • Maurice Johnson • Robert Johnson • E. Koenig • Tom & Robin Lander • Jean Lane • Monica Maxa • E. McDaniel • Meredith McKay • Susan Murphy • Wm Nicolay • Terry Nyquist • Lynn Parker • Debra Perkins • Katherine Pierce • Karen Poulin • Virginia Pryhorocki • Nancy & Russell Freeland • Lois Saastad • Judy Schable • Stephen Sharber • Joelle Sherman • Patricia Sutherland • Jennifer Syrowitz • Jeanine Thomason • Gayle Travalia • Elizabeth Tupper • Alice Vaughan • Patricia Watterworth • John Weimer • Diane Wick

**The Next Newsletter will be
at the end of August**

**After our June Meeting the
next General Meeting will be
Tuesday September 3rd**

Have a Great Summer!!!

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All it Takes for Evil to Prevail is For Good People to Do Nothing

A strong statement, yes. How else to describe the rogue behavior of two of our county commissioners? These two commissioners, Tom Meilke and David Madore, in a surprise move at a commissioners' board time, hired Don Benton, state senator from the 17th District, as the county's Director of Environmental Services. Without following any of the procedures the county has in place for hiring people. Over the protests of the third commissioner, Steve Stuart.

What does this have to do with Vancouver Audubon? The Department of Environmental Services (DES) has responsibility for county services such as protecting our streams, watching for habitat destroying invasive plants, and watching over the county's legacy lands. These services are, of course, needed to protect our wildlife and birds and their habitat. The Director of DES must have knowledge of and, hopefully, sympathy for the necessity of protecting our environment.

Don Benton is not qualified. He has been opposed to environmental protection for at least as long as he has been in the legislature. Washington Conservation Voters has given him a life-time pro environment score of 30%. -- not at the bottom, but not what you would want to see as director of the DES. He does not have either the educational or work experience to qualify for such a position. Further, there is his work history. About ten years ago, give or take a year or two, he was the chair of the state Republican Party for eight months. It was a stormy eight months. The republicans eventually fired him for misuse of party funds. (Benton says he quit, but he was just one step ahead of being formally let go. The republicans were not happy with him.) I will just mention the difficulty those of us supporting the environment have had with Benton in the legislature. I have experienced Benton's glad-handing me and promising me he would support a bill or position and then to see him doing exactly the opposite.

The hiring of Don Benton as director of DES is bad enough. The manner of the hiring of Don Benton was appalling. To ignore procedures, to blind-side Stuart, to hire a political buddy for a job he is not qualified for, screams of tyranny and corruption. This is where the good people must do something.

First, stay on top of the situation. Much as you might dislike *The Columbian* (and I get mad at it, frequently), please read it. They have been doing a darn good job of reporting the situation day-to-day. If you cannot bring yourself to do that, please check out their website (or do both -- hard copy of the paper and website). Next, as you are able and as you feel comfortable doing, attend meetings and hearings and speak out. Call the commissioners or e-mail them. Or both. Also, as a point of information, there is a movement to explore the possibility of recalling Madore and Meilke, on the charges of the irregularities in hiring Benton, as well as the manner in which the board (M and M) are considering waiving traffic and development

fees. If you want more information, you can contact me, at gstarke@pacifier.com. To complain, condemn, praise, or otherwise contact the county commissioners, their e-mails are: david.madore@clark.wa.gov tom.mielke@clark.wa.gov & steve.stuart@clark.wa.gov

Our Right to Speak Before the County Commission

The usual way the county commissioner agenda is set up, there is a period before the scheduled hearing for citizens to have an opportunity to come forward and speak on any topic he or she pleases. It doesn't have to be germane. It doesn't even have to make sense or be on a topic the commissioners can do anything about. It is the citizen's right. It can be exasperating if you are waiting to speak to an item specifically on the agenda. One day, I heard citizens complain about: a ball field being built in a county park (no longer moot -- it was a done deal), the Columbia River Crossing (sigh), and immigration (a federal issue). Nevertheless. It is a chance for people sound off, and it shouldn't be tampered with. The regularly scheduled commissions' hearing, which was an evening hearing, right after the Benton hiring attracted a lot of people with a lot to say. Madore and Mielke moved and seconded a motion to switch the agenda around and put citizens' comment at the end instead of the beginning. It obviously was to try to discourage people from staying to speak. Now, according to *The Columbian*, Madore wants to always put citizens' comment at the end of the hearing. He objected to being "filibustered."

Other County Commissioner Doings

The surplus lands issue is still out there. A work session that had been scheduled has, of this writing, been cancelled. We are still at risk of losing small, but valuable, bits of land that provide some habitat, open space, and informal recreation.

The other big item is the proposed waiver of traffic impact fees and of permit fees for businesses. Madore is under the impression that would create jobs, even though studies indicate otherwise. What this proposal would do is to leave another hole in the county budget, leaving the citizen and taxpayer to pick up the tab, either through reduced services or increased taxes. Any decrease in county revenue puts environmental programs at risk. The waiver of these fees was what was on the agenda the night of the Benton protest. Here is what went wrong on the procedures of the fee waiver item. Stuart brought out that Madore had meddled with a staff report and had pressured staff to add something that was not part of the analysis. Because the county capital budget was being changed, it would require the proposal to go before the planning commission first. Madore threw a mild hissy fit, but Stuart finally prevailed and got a continuance on the hearing.

Gretchen Starke





April 11, While biking and birding the Discovery Trail in Vancouver, Les Carlson had a pair of **CASSIN'S VIREO'S**.

April 12, While birding from the Oregon side of Bonneville Dam, Adrian and Christopher Hinkle photographed an **ARCTIC TERN**, flying back and forth over the state line. This was only the second record of this species in Skamania County.

Randy Hill reported that a **ROSS'S GOOSE** was at the Ridgefield NWR, where he also confirmed that **BLACK PHOEBES** were incubating for the third consecutive year. The refuge is the only known nesting site in Washington for this species.

April 13, Bob Flores had two **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRDS** chasing each other around his Ridgefield area yard. On the VAS field trip to the Pierce NWR, in Skamania County and then continuing up the Gorge, we were lucky to see the **ARCTIC TERN** at Bonneville Dam. Other birds seen on this outing included **WILD TURKEY** in Underwood and **WESTERN BLUEBIRDS** in Klickitat County.

April 14, Les Carlson had good looks at an **AMERICAN PIPIT** in a short grass field near his north Vancouver home.

April 17, At the Battle Ground home of Jim Danzenbaker, he had an immature **NORTHERN GOSHAWK** in view for about five minutes, only my second ever for his yard.

April 20, Les Carlson, Barry Woodruff and I went on a Washington Ornithological Society field trip to Whakiakum County, led by Ken Knittle. The trip ended up with a 100 species for the day, including hundreds of **WHITE-FRONTED GEESE**, a **WHIMBREL**, a **BLACK PHOEBE** and a **NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD**.

April 21, A **BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD** was at the feeders at Alex Chmielewski's home. The first **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** of the year at our place showed up while a visiting birder was there hoping for one as a new addition to their county list.

April 22, Skamania County's first of 2013 **WESTERN KING-BIRD** was at the ponds on Beacon Rock State Park, just east of the bridge at Skamania Landing.

April 25, Scott Carpenter reported that a **BLACK-NECKED STILT** originally found by Leah Rude remained in Schwartz Lake on the River S Unit of Ridgefield NWR and there was also a relatively late male **EURASIAN WIGEON** on the River S Unit.

April 26, Frenchman's Bar Park provided Bob Flores with a nice mix of migrants including; **ORANGE-CROWNED**

WARBLER, BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER, YELLOW WARBLER, YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER, WILSON'S WARBLER, RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET, GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET and WHITE-THROATED SPARROW.

Les Carlson and I went on a pelagic trip out of Westport, Grays Harbor County. After we neared the Continental Shelf, approximately 35 miles from shore, we began to encounter our first **BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS** along with other deepwater species like **SABINE'S GULLS** and **NORTHERN FULMARS**. Les added his lifer **POMARINE JAEGER** on the trip.

April 27, the first **LARK SPARROW** ever recorded from Skamania County was found by Rick and Tina Taylor, at the Saint Cloud Recreation Area along Highway 14.

April 28, At the entrance canyon at Ridgefield NWR, Jim Danzenbaker found; **HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER, WARBLING VIREO, WILSON'S WARBLER, BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK and BULLOCK'S ORIOLE.**

In his Battle Ground yard he added **WESTERN Tanager, LINCOLN'S SPARROW, BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD and PURPLE MARTIN.**

April 29, 2 **RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS** were in the Columbia River near the Sternwheeler Dock in Stevenson, Skamania County. This is a species usually associated with a saltwater habitat.

May 4, At Frenchman's Bar Park, Bob Flores found his first of the year; **OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER, HAIRY WOODPECKER, WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE, PACIFIC-SLOPED FLYCATCHER, TOWNSEND'S WARBLER and WARBLING VIREO.** He also saw; **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER, WILSON'S WARBLER, WESTERN Tanager, VARIED THRUSH and HERMIT THRUSH.**

While doing Purple Martin nesting colony work in a closed portion of the Ridgefield NWR on Bachelor Island, Randy Hill and Ron Friesz found: a **SAGE THRASHER, GREAT EGRET, MERLIN, AMERICAN PIPIT, CHIPPING SPARROW** and a **BLACK PHOEBE** nest with 4 eggs in a new location from last year. A very quick trip around River S was stilled by very productive shorebird activity that included: **SEMIPALMATED PLOVER, SPOTTED SANDPIPER, GREATER YELLOWLEGS, LESSER YELLOWLEGS, WESTERN SANDPIPER, LEAST SANDPIPER, DUNLIN, LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER, WILSON'S SNIPE and a HOUSE WREN.**

May 5, Another check of Frenchman's Bar Park by Bob Flores produced: **DOWNY WOODPECKER, PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER, WARBLING VIREO, RUBY-**

The Backyard & Beyond...

CROWNED KINGLET, WESTERN TANAGER, WILSON'S WARBLER, TOWNSEND'S WARBLER, ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, YELLOW WARBLER, YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER and his first of the year **BULLOCKS ORIOLE**.

A **BONAPARTE'S GULL** was photographed by Pam Gunn near Beaches Restaurant.

May 8, Randy Hill had a **CALIFORNIA QUAIL** on the Ridgefield NWR, by coincidence it was in the same place as the earlier Sage Thrasher, another bird more common in eastern Washington.

Bill Freeman, who regularly walks the Salmon Creek Trail reported seeing numerous **WARBLING VIEROS** about half mile west from the baseball field. Earlier in the week he had found **WESTERN TANAGERS** along this trail.

May 6, Our first of the year **MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER** was calling from our woods and it took a long time to finally locate it in the low underbrush where they dwell.

May 19, Susan and I birded up the Gorge and found one **BONAPARTE'S GULL** in Skamania County at the mouth of the Wind River. In Klickitat County, near the Lyle-Balch Cemetery, we found both **ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER** and **SAY'S PHOEBE**.

The first **HERMIT WARBLERS** that I have heard about were found by Glenn and MaryAnne Teague, while they were hiking in the Gorge. Black-headed Grosbeaks returned about the end of April and were widely distributed with reports coming from Nancy Ellifrit and George Mayfield in northern Clark County to our place at the west end of the Columbia Gorge in Skamania County.

What has been most noticeable to me this Spring has been the almost complete lack of any numbers of migrant birds passing through our property. We usually have mixed flocks of flycatchers, warblers, vireos, tanagers and other species during migration but this year despite warm temperatures we have only had a few individuals of only a couple of the expected species so far.

The 2013 Cumulative County Bird List for Clark County is at 170 species reported as of the first of May and for Skamania County the list is at 151 birds. To see the list go to the VAS website where there is a link to the lists. Please continue to send your sightings to me for this column and the cumulative check list.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

After all the World Birding we have done, our friend and guide from Ecuador, Edison Buenano from Swordbilled Expeditions came to visit us for a few days and we got to take him birding at few places in our area. His only birding in our country was last year in early May for a week or so in Ohio at Magee Marsh during the Big Week of Birding as he was representing Wildside Nature Tours whom he is in affiliation with. Along with Tammy & Eric Bjorkman, we had traveled to India with Adrian from Wildside Nature Tours on an incredible trip. Magee Marsh is famous for it's migrating warblers and others birds in May. Eddy, as we call him, gets some of our warblers in Ecuador but they are wearing their drab winter colors so seeing them in their bright breeding plumage was pretty exciting.

The first day he was with us we took him to the Oregon coast. One of his target birds was the Tufted Puffin and as they are pretty easy to see at Haystack Rock at Cannon Beach, we headed there.



We weren't disappointed as there were several flying around the rock and he got some good looks at them. Unfortunately, it was a little early and they were not landing on the rock searching for burrows for nesting for stationary views. But he was quite happy. As we saw more and more shore birds he also got excited. He said, "I always wondered why people got excited over shorebirds". "They are just these gray birds". In fact if you look at what they call a Black-bellied Plover in a South American Bird Guide it will say "Gray Plover" because that is the only way they ever see them. But we are fortunate here in the Pacific Northwest to see shorebirds on their way north in the spring in breeding plumage and that is what Eddy was seeing and getting excited about.

We made a trip to Spokane so he could meet his "brothers" and "the family" and we birded some on the east side. Back here he was treated to a displaying Bittern at Ridgefield and a displaying Sooty Grouse in the trees on Larch Mountain. We wetted his appetite to come back either a little earlier or a little later. Birds common at our feeders a week before were either off nesting nearby or had taken off for higher grounds.

Sherry Hagen, Happy Birding ☺

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.*



June 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.

VANCOUVER AUDUBON ** NEWSLETTER & DONATION COUPON

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