

Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

May 2008

Calendar

*** NO BIRDING CLASS due to the Potluck.

***Tuesday, **May 6, 6:30 pm**: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Monday, **May 5, 6:30 pm**: VAS Board Meeting at the home of Gretchen Starke 308 SE 124th St., Vancouver 360-892-8617

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	29	30	31

PROGRAM:

Alaska & It's Importance to Birds & Other Wildlife

by Taldi Walter

Taldi recently joined the National Audubon Society's Washington DC Policy Office Grassroots team and is the Alaska Field Coordinator, and will talk about how we can work together to preserve natural areas vital to birds and wildlife.



As the debate over the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge rages on, many other Alaska natural treasures, set aside decades ago for the benefit of the American people, are also threatened including the Tongass National Forest, Chugach National Forest, and National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

Taldi Walter
Alaska Field Coordinator, National Audubon Society
1150 Connecticut Ave, NW #600
Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 861-2242
(twalter@audubon.org)

The Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership

will be teaming up with SOLV on Saturday May 17. Vancouver Lake will be one of the sites scheduled for **cleanup**. For more information check the Columbian and www.vancouverlakepartnership.org.

FIELD TRIPS

Join the Birdathon May 2-4

or

Attend Washington Audubon's Memorial Day Weekend

Wenas Campout May 23-25

Free

See inside for details.



ANNUAL POTLUCK

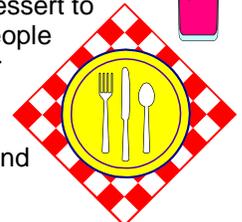


When: May 6, 2008

Time: 6:30 PM

Where: Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

Please bring a main dish, salad or dessert to serve at least 10 people to share. Bring your own table service (plate, utensils, cup, napkins, etc) and your own drinks.



Treasurer's Report. Income for March was \$560.31 and included \$500 from Walmart which was requested for last year's Birdathon. Expenses were \$359.23. Cash and investments were \$20,328.02 and the Community Fund was \$226,066.03.

Publicity. Tracy Snow will be the publicity chair.

Old Business. Sydney Reisbick will be in charge of anything we do for IMBD. VAS will be a partner on three of the summer camps Columbia Springs is having. Carol Peterson will be helping on camp projects but volunteers from VAS would be welcomed.

Colleen Kohler needs help contacting teachers for Audubon Adventures this spring. We had 60 teachers last year.

The board approved a grant request of \$5,000 by the Friends of Ridgefield NWR. It will assist their student education program on the refuge and will pay for binoculars, bus transportation, and bird signs on the Oaks to Wetlands trail.

**Your Help
is Needed**

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Ellifrit

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

New Members: Rachael Carlson • Mary Sandheger • Don Nissen • Karalie Kanneh • Jeff Stark • Erica Wheatley • Carol Kreiter • Donnia Jones • Laura Thomas • Dorothy Lee Demaray • Jill Mc Lean

COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE FIELD TRIP

On March 29th, eleven hardy birders, including trip leaders Wilson Cady and his wife Susan, braved just about every type of weather Mother Nature could throw at us on a VAS field trip up the Columbia Gorge on March 29th. Two of the participants were brand new to birding, a mother and daughter, and another had just started some months ago. He was able to pick up around ten "lifers."

The mother and daughter were a rapt audience for Wilson. He had the young girl eating just about every plant we could find, which astounded her mom who said that she could barely get her to eat salad at home. Wilson also had her believing that the best way to catch a cougar was to sprinkle sardine juice on her foot while hiking through the woods. I think she caught on that he was not always telling the truth, though that may be a pretty good way to attract one.

Highlights included a cooperative Merlin perched atop a tall tree, a Loggerhead Shrike, eight Bald Eagles, the first-of-season Osprey in Skamania County, and a rambunctious Red-tailed Hawk giving chase to a very large Golden Eagle. Our species count for the day totaled 68.

by Eric Bjorkman

YOU ARE INVITED! WENAS CAMPOUT May 25-28, 2007

www.wenasaudubon.org

For over 38 years Audubon families have been camping at the Wenas Creek Campground officially named the Hazel Wolf Wenas Creek Bird Sanctuary. The location, SW of Ellensburg, is now in an "Important Bird Area" which Auduboners have been assured will be in protective status soon.



The free, "primitive" campground along the north fork of Wenas Creek has exceptional opportunities for birding, botanizing and enjoying spring in the eastern foothills of the Cascades.

- The campground is about 2,500' elevation, can be quite cold at night, hot during day.
- Bring water for drinking (the creek is beautiful and bountiful but not potable).
- We set up tents or use "pick-up" type campers.
- We all share in the rent of portable toilets for four days.
- Bicycles and Frisbees are fun, telescopes and cameras standard gear.
- Please leave pets at home.
- There are organized field trips throughout the Wenas drainage and WA DF&W management areas and some on private property at owners' requests
- In camp we have natural history workshops with some of the state's top birders, WNPS botanists, entomologists etc.
- There is an old-fashioned campfire in the evening with singing, story telling and recapping the sightings of the day.

Visit the new Wenas Website, by Webmaster Michael Hobbs, to see a familiar smiling face and get lots of downloadable information about our campout. www.wenasaudubon.org. There's a bird checklist, wildflower checklist, outline of field trips and program, directions to the campground, and more. If you don't do websites, contact me and I'll send you printed information.

Bring friends, family, and join us at Wenas Memorial Day Weekend - May 25-28, 2007!

See you there, Helen Engle,
hengle@iinet.com 253-564-3112.



Victory at the Legislature

The good news is that the legislature passed all four of the environmental priority bills and the governor signed them. The not so good news is that there were amendments that weakened some of the provisions of those bills. But, never mind, this session provided a darn good start in solving some of our more serious environmental problems.

Evergreen Communities: This was Audubon's priority. During the legislative process, the bill was amended to make it more incentive-based. It is still a good bill and should result in Washington cities getting their trees back. The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) is to develop a model ordinance and may provide assistance to cities in creating their ordinances and programs. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is to conduct an urban tree inventory to provide a base-line for the state. The votes of Clark County legislators are as follows: yes votes in the House, Wallace, Fromhold, and Moeller; no votes in the house, Dunn, Herrera, and Orcutt; yes votes in the Senate, Pridemore; no votes in the Senate, Benton and Zarelli. Moeller was one of the co-sponsors.

Global Warming, Local Solutions: Whether or not the governor would sign the bill was a cliff hanger. She finally did on April 1st. Alas, all the regulation was taken out and there still is no Growth Management Act goal on global warming. Nevertheless, the builders and industry pulled out all the stops trying to get the governor to veto the bill. To quote April Putney from FutureWise, "...it's accurate to say they don't like the bill for the same reason we like it - it's a first step in enabling cities and counties to consider climate change when making decisions about how and where to accommodate growth." By the end of 2009, CTED is required to develop tools for local governments to use in determining the global warming impacts of their proposed growth plan changes. So, it is good news, after all. The votes of Clark County legislators are as follows: yes votes in the House, Wallace, Fromhold, and Moeller; no votes in the house, Dunn, Herrera, and Orcutt; yes votes in the Senate, Pridemore; no votes in the Senate, Benton and Zarelli. Pridemore was one of the co-sponsors.

Climate Change and Green Jobs: This bill was one of the governor's priority bills, so when she signed it, there was some press attention. It is a good bill, as far as it goes. The best thing is that it sets limits on carbon emissions and provides for creating green jobs. Among other provisions, it sets up a framework for establishing a cap-and-trade system for carbon. Although cap-and-trade should be helpful in reducing carbon output in the long run, I was impressed with comments that I heard from Pridemore when he was on a panel. He supported the bill, but has reserva-

tions about cap-and-trade. Europe has established a cap-and-trade system and there are problems. Companies were selling credits for improvements they had made years before and the caps were too high. Pridemore prefers a carbon tax. The votes of Clark County legislators are as follows: yes votes in the House, Fromhold, and Moeller; no votes in the house, Dunn, Wallace, Herrera, and Orcutt; yes votes in the Senate, Pridemore; no votes in the Senate, Benton and Zarelli. Fromhold was one of the co-sponsors.

Local Farms-Healthy Kids: This bill enables school districts to purchase fruits and vegetables from local farms and provides for planning to encourage school districts to do so. There is a provision for grants to school districts that would fund programs creating partnerships between the schools and farms. This was a non-controversial bill and the only no vote in the entire legislature was from Dunn.

Look over the vote patterns carefully. You might want to keep these in mind, come next November. All House members and all three Clark County senators are up for re-election.

The County is Planning Again This Time it is the Rural Areas' Turn

To hear that the county is preparing to plan the rural areas is enough to strike terror into the hearts of those of us who want some semblance of beauty, some division between city and country, left in Clark County. I attended a commissioners' work session on rural planning. The commissioners discussed appointing a task force to define "rural character." According to the conversation, the commissioners would prefer to appoint people who live in the county, outside of cities. A representative from the Building Industry Association said that some of their members have experience in building in rural areas, so he requested that one of them be appointed also. We will need to keep an eye on this process.

Gretchen Starke



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March 9 -- Susan Saul reported that the **VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS** have returned to Rowena Plateau, in Hood River County. She also saw a **GOLDEN EAGLE** at this fantastic wildflower and scenic area owned by the Nature Conservancy. Mary Ann and Glenn Teague found **12 RED-THROATED LOONS** in Tidewater Cove on the Columbia River just upstream of the Water Resources Education Center. This is the largest concentration of loons that has ever been reported to me from Clark County.

March 11 – A **TURKEY VULTURE** was seen near Washougal by Susan Saul. **RUFIOUS HUMMERS** returned to George and Cindy Mayfield's feeders in the Dollars Corner area.

March 12, After birding at the Ridgefield River "S" unit where we found a **MERLIN**, Susan and I followed up on the report of the **RED-THROATED LOONS** at Tidewater Cove. We found 11 of them there in the evening where I feel they were gathering for the evening. The first of the season **PURPLE FINCH** showed up at the sunflower seed feeders at our place on Mt. Pleasant in Skamania County.

March 15, Carol Ledford and Bill Clemons birded together for the day, using 2-way radios to stay in contact with Clay Davis. They spotted about **200 SNOW GEESE** that flew over, which was treat as Ridgefield does not get too many of them. The wintering **NORTHERN SHRIKE** and **HARLAN'S RED-TAILED HAWK** were also spotted by this group. Following up on the on line reports, Mary Reese & Jim Allen of NE Portland found **8 RED-THROATED LOONS** in the little bay at Tidewater Cove. Susan and I went up the Gorge to Klickitat County to view some early migrant birds and spring wildflowers, our best birds were **WESTERN BLUEBIRDS** at Catherine Creek and **43 WILD TURKEYS** near Appleton.

March 17, Benjamin Berkompas, of Yacolt, WA birded around Vancouver Lake and found his lifer **NORTHERN SHRIKE**. These lovely songbirds with the habits of a raptor have been fairly widespread this winter after years of few reports.

March 22, Bill Clemons, Carol Ledford, and Bill's mother (Olive) birded the River "S" Unit at Ridgefield NWR and watched at Canvasback Lake as a **PIED-BILLED GREBE** swallowed an adult **BULLFROG** whole. The other feeding species they found were **2 GREAT BLUE HERONS** hunting Garter Snakes. A **HERMIT THRUSH** was seen by them at the top of the entrance road in to the refuge. Doug Robberson led a Washington side birding trip for a group of Oregon birders including Annette Lange Hildebrand, John Notis, and Rob Neyer, with a stop at the Columbia Springs Environmental Learning Center on the Old Evergreen Highway producing **GREEN HERON**, **OSPREY**, and **PILEATED WOODPECKER**. When they walked the dike trail at Steigerwald Lake NWR they located a **NORTHERN SHRIKE** and male **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD**, the first ever found on the refuge. At Beacon Rock they spotted a **PEREGRINE FALCON** on the rock where they have nested in the past. While I was with a group of volunteers planting native shrubs at Steigerwald Lake I noticed that Lonesome George, the **MUTE SWAN**, that had been there since Feb. 6, 2006 was gone. Last year he disappeared for several weeks before returning to the refuge. At home our first of the year **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** showed up, a female with a male there the next day.

March 24, While heading to Vancouver Lake to do a little birding Susan and I spotted a kettle of 6 **OSPREY** circling above the Highway 14/205 interchange. At Vancouver Lake we found **8 WESTERN GREBES** off of the Flushing Channel that were doing courtship displays although they don't nest locally.

March 25, I checked Steigerwald Lake for birds after hauling some materials down for a project and found a female **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** along the dike trail where the male was seen earlier and a **BALD EAGLE** nest in a tree along the river. This is the first eagle nest on the refuge that I know about.

March 26, Jim Danzenbaker had a male **NORTHERN HARRIER**, one **TURKEY VULTURE** and a returning adult **COOPER'S HAWK** from the deck in Battle Ground, and his first local breeding species of **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** of the year.

March 27, Bob Flores reported **30 WHITE-FRONTED GEESE** mixed with Canada and Cackling Geese along the east side of Post Office Lake, in the Vancouver Lake Lowlands.

March 29, A **TOWNSEND'S**

SOLITAIRE was spotted in North Bonneville by Larry Price. This was the first of this member of the thrush family reported to me from our area this spring. Bill Clemons and his mom, Olive saw a male **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** on the Ridgefield NWR River "S" Unit. Carol Ledford found a **SAY'S PHOEBE** in the same area while showing the bluebird to another person. Clay Davis was driving along right behind Carol and saw a female **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD**. This is all part of a widespread incursion in western Oregon and Washington of these lovely birds this Spring.

March 30, Carol and Don Kohler spent the day at Ridgefield in a futile search for the Say's Phoebe and Mountain Bluebird. They did find the **GREAT HORNED OWL and its nest & baby**. They also saw the **NORTHERN SHRIKE**, several **WILSON'S SNIPE** and 1 **GREATER YELLOWLEGS**. Glenn and Mary Ann Teague spotted an early returning **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER** at their home above the Pearson Airfield.

March 31, Susan and I went in search of the Say's Phoebe and Northern Shrike without luck but did see the **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** at Ridgefield. We ran into Bill Clemons, Barry Woodruff and Clay Davis who had seen all three of the rare birds there in the morning but were unable to locate my two target species for us in the afternoon.

April 1, Marilyn Hall reported that she had **LESSER GOLDFINCHES** coming to her feeder in Orchards. And Gretchen Starke commented that she has had numerous **LESSER GOLDFINCHES** at her feeder just north of Mill Plain all winter. The first migrant **AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES** I had heard of were at Sue and Don Cannard's feeders. After failing to find the **SAY'S PHOEBE** at Ridgefield I was surprised by spotting one on the fence line at Steigerwald Lake. Another noteworthy bird was a **NORTHERN SHRIKE** I located by Benjamin Berkompas near the Vancouver Lake at the end of La Framboise Rd. Despite numerous attempts to see this species in Clark County this year I have been unsuccessful in that quest.

April 2, A **CHUKAR** was photographed by Mark Boys at his feeder in Camas. This was obviously a released bird as it had no fear of people. Lyn Topinka saw **2 REDHEAD** ducks on South Quigley Lake at Ridgefield NWR, the first reported this



year. At Lacamas Lake, which I feel is an under birded part of the county, Bob Morgal found an **OSPREY, BALD EAGLE and PEREGRINE FALCON.**

The annual Wenas Campout, will be held on the Memorial Day weekend, May 23 -26. This is a great event for all people who enjoy the outdoors whether you are a birder, wildflower enthusiast or just enjoy sitting under the pines in a wonderful setting with like minded people. This is probably the only public spot where you are assured of a camping spot on this busy weekend. For more information check the article on the campout in this newsletter, visit the website at: www.wenasaudubon.org or contact me.



The cumulative bird lists for species reported in Clark County in 2008 is at 132 as of April 1st, for Skamania County the total was 94.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

NEW OFFICERS & CHAIR PERSONS

Our Newly Elected Officers will be installed at the May General Meeting and take over their positions at that time.

President: Eric Bjorkman
 Vice-President: Marilyn Hall
 Treasurer: Joan Durgin (returning)
 Secretary: Nancy Ellifrit (returning)

Publicity: Tracy Snow
 Volunteer coordinator: Bob Rowe

VAS Upcoming Programs:

June *Continental Divide Hike*

by Eric Allen

Sept. *Polar Bears* *by Randy Hopfer*

Oct. *Ecuador* *by the Hagens*

Nov. *Show & Tell* *by members & guests*

Dec. *Condor Tales* *by Sandy Wilsbur*

OUR CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE Sponsor ... AUDUBON ADVENTURES

It is that time of year again the recruitment for Audubon Adventures sponsors for the next school year. The price is the same as last year. This is such a versatile program and reaches more students and families than we can in impact in person, I hope we can reach 60 classes this year.

For those of you that are new to Audubon Adventures this is a set of award-winning newspapers which feature readings and investigations; activities and puzzles; and suggestions for involving families. Students explore principles and processes such as adaptation and interdependence of species. Each teacher receives a copy of each newspaper for each student plus posters, videos and a activity guide.

Audubon Adventures is coming out with an all new Classroom Resource Kit for grades 4 thru 6, and the topics that will be covered include:

- Migration
- Animal Builders
- Animal Defenses
- Plants

Because of all of you, we had a successful year supporting this program last year .

If you gave last year please consider giving the same amount or more. If you have never supported Audubon Adventures, this is your chance to get involved in the environment education of our children... the future leaders of our country.

Sponsor Audubon Adventures

Please give us your support. This very versatile environmental education material really gets the Audubon message to lots of students, teachers and parents. To sponsor a classroom starting next fall the cost is \$38.50 + \$7.15 postage = **\$45.65 per classroom.**

For more information, call: Colene Koehler 360-574-5220

I am enclosing \$_____ to sponsor Audubon Adventure Classes for the 2007-08 school year.

_____ Please use my gift for general support of Audubon Adventures (give any amount towards a sponsorship)

_____ Please use my contribution of at least \$45.65 to fund AUDUBON ADVENTURES in this school:

_____ Teacher (optional) _____ (School)

Please make checks payable to "Vancouver Audubon Society" and send them to:
 Colene Koehler , 3013 NW 106th Cir., Vancouver, WA 98685

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.*



May 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.

VANCOUVER AUDUBON ** NEWSLETTER & DONATION COUPON

Help support Vancouver Audubon

I wish to subscribe to Vancouver Audubon's newsletter "The Columbia Flyway" for \$10/year.
 I wish to support Vancouver Audubon with an additional donations of \$_____

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date:**
November 1st
every year

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