

# Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

May 2010

## Calendar

\*\*\*NO BIRDING CLASS DUE TO THE ANNUAL POTLUCK.

\*\*\*Tuesday, May 4, 7:30 pm: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 715 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

\*\*\*Monday, May 3, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting hosted by Gretchen Starke  
308 SE 124th St., Vancouver 360-892-8617

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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:

### Ridgefield NWR

by Bob Flores, Project Manager

Bob will describe and show us plans for changes and updates at the Ridgefield NWR. He will report on plans for a new bridge over the tracks at Carty Unit and plans for a bridge from downtown over Lake River to the River S Unit. Recreation and hunting uses will be described.

Bob's own birding observations are usually quite interesting as he closely follows the movement of species onto the refuge.

## FIELD TRIP

### Mt. Tabor (Portland)



Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: May 8, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

Meet at: Fred Meyers at Mill Plain & Chkalov (Cascade Park), south side parking lot

We will be hiking the trails on hilly terrain at Mt. Tabor in Portland, OR looking for spring migrants and resident species. This will be a half day trip.

## Up Coming Field Trips

Call Arden Hagen for details 360-892-8872

### The Hummocks, Mt. St. Helens

Leader: Eric Bjorkman, 360-695-3116

When: July 10, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

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

### High Lakes, Mt. Adams area

Leader: Eric Bjorkman, 360-695-3116

When: August 18, Wednesday

Time: 6:00 AM (EARLY!! Giving time to drive to the trail)

Meet at: Port of Camas-Washougal near the boat launch.

### Four Day Trip to Malheur NWR, OR

Leader: Marilyn Hall 360-253-6865 (reservations)  
& Arden Hagen 360-892-8872 (trip leader)

When: September 2-5, Thursday-Sunday

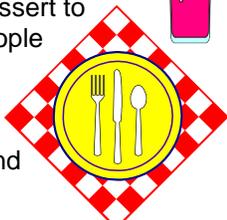


## ANNUAL POTLUCK



**When:** May 4, 2010  
**Time:** 6:30 PM  
**Where:** Genealogy Society at 715 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.





The April Board Meeting was at Nancy Ellifrit's. A quorum was present.

Treasurer's Report. Income for March was \$455.13 with \$372.92 in donations and \$70 for newsletter subscriptions. Expenses were \$284.46. Cash and investments were \$22,904.93. The Community Foundation Fund was \$209,217.29 as of 31 December.

Field Trips. Birdathon will be 8 May. Pledge forms are in the newsletter. The North Dakota trip has been cancelled. There will be a trip to Malheur in September.

New Business May 8 & 9 is International Migratory Bird Day. The Refuge will have events at the Carty Unit and Vancouver Audubon will lead walks on the Kiwa trail on the River S Unit at 9 AM on Saturday and Sunday.

*Respectfully submitted, Nancy Ellifrit*

---

---

## NEW VAS OFFICERS ELECTED

Three of our previous officers, Eric, Marilynn & Joan agreed to run again for the office they have held for at least the last two years. Nancy Ellifrit (Secretary) has resigned from the position she has held since 1995.

VAS Officers:

President Eric Bjorkman  
Vice-president Marilynn Hall  
Secretary Tammy Bjorkman  
Treasurer Joan Durgin

Thanks to these special people for their service in the past and for the next 2 years. They will be installed at the May meeting.

---

---

## Migratory Bird Day Celebration May 8th & 9th

Vancouver Audubon is participating in Migratory Bird Day at the Ridgefield NWR by leading birding walks in the mornings during the weekend on the Kiwa trail located on the River "S" drive unit.

May 8th, Saturday: Eric Bjorkman leader at 9:00 AM

May 9th, Sunday: Arden Hagen leader at 9:00 AM

Plan to allow 1.5 hours for the walk, 30 minutes to get from Ridgefield to the Kiwa Trail and another 30 minutes to get back to Ridgefield. More if you want to watch birds on the way. Mosquito repellent may not be necessary, but it is safest to bring it. Wear sturdy shoes.



Song birds will be migrating and Wilson's Snipe will be winnowing.

## YOU ARE INVITED TO THE WENAS CAMPOUT May 28-31, 2010

For decades Audubon families have been camping over Memorial Day weekend at the Wenas Creek Campground.

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

Officially named the Hazel Wolf Wenas Creek Bird Sanctuary, it's located SW of Ellensburg, in an "Important Bird Area" and has been assured of protective status. 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.

There are wonderful field trips scheduled, and there will be an old-fashioned campfire in our "approved" fire-pit device each evening. We have a program item or two, singing, story telling and recapping the sightings of the day.

Please visit the Wenas Website, beautifully done by Webmaster Michael Hobbs You'll see Hazel Wolf's familiar smiling face and get lots of downloadable information about our campout: [www.wenasaudubon.org](http://www.wenasaudubon.org)



There're checklists of birds, and wildflowers, outline of field trips and program, directions to the campground, and lots of photos.

For people who don't "do websites," contact me and I'll send you printed information.

Bring friends & family, and join us at Wenas Memorial Day Weekend for as many days and/or nights as you want to stay - May 28-31, 2010.

---

---

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**New Members:** Robert Barrow • Jacqueline Boyle • Brown • Sandra Bush • Kay Campbell • Christine • W. Davis • James Ericson • Cynthia Faulkner • Gretchen Grevelding • M.S. And Carol Hartsell • Gladys Howe • Carol Kelly • Gary Laugen • Sarah Maxwell • Rhonda Miller • Lucille Norton • M. O'Rourke • Keith Oval • Adam Purner • Lynne Radke • Ruth Rogers • Mytzi Rudolph • G Raven Sheppard • Donald Stringer • Cheri Sullivan • Marlene Sussman • Peni Thunen • Kari Vinnard

**Transfers:** Bette Phillips, Kenneth Van Epps



*The following information is from  
the website of Birders United*

[www.birdersunited.com](http://www.birdersunited.com)

---

---

## Greater Sage-Grouse Listed as a “Candidate Species” for Federal Protection

In 2005 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) declined to add the sage-grouse to the list of endangered species. But last December a federal court ruled that the Bush administration’s FWS succumbed to political pressures and ignored important scientific evidence when making its decision. The court ordered the FWS to reconsider all the evidence and to reassess its decision not to list the sage-grouse.



Now, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has issued its long-awaited reassessment of the status of the greater sage-grouse. The FWS determined that the prairie bird deserves protection under the Endangered Species Act but would not be listed because other species were more deserving of the service’s time and resources. Thus, the greater sage-grouse would be listed as a candidate species.

There are more than 250 species that the FWS has ruled are deserving of protection but have not been added to the endangered species list due to lack of resources.

### Birding Groups Oppose Plans for Oil Drilling on the Continental Shelf

The Obama administration announced plans to permit drilling for oil and gas off the Atlantic coast, in additional tracts in the Gulf of Mexico, and in the Arctic Ocean off the coast of Alaska. There are no plans to increase oil and gas exploration off the California coast.

The announcement generated a large number of statements of protest from birding and environmental groups. These groups noted that there are 27 National Wildlife Refuges along the Atlantic coast where new drilling is proposed.

Eric Draper, executive director of Audubon of Florida, stated, “Opening Florida’s offshore waters to oil drilling puts everything that makes Florida special at risk; its

aquatic reserves and resources, its incredible beaches, stunning birds and wildlife, and its rich tourism and marine economies.”

Democratic Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey added, “Giving Big Oil more access to our nation’s waters is really a ‘Kill, Baby, Kill’ policy: it threatens to kill jobs, kill marine life, and kill coastal economies that generate billions of dollars.”



Brendan Cummings, senior counsel for the Center for Biological Diversity, concluded, “Today’s announcement is unfortunately all too typical of what we have seen so far from President Obama – promises of change, a year of ‘deliberation,’ and ultimately, adoption of flawed and outdated Bush policies as his own. Rather than bring about the change we need, this plan will further our national addiction to oil and contribute to global warming, while at the same time directly despoiling the habitat of imperiled wildlife.”

## More Than 1,000 Species of Birds Now Protected Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced recently that there are now more than 1,000 bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The list of birds covered under provisions of the act was last updated in 1985. Now an additional 186 bird species have been added and 11 bird species were removed from protection under the treaty. The treaty covers the hunting, possession, transportation, and sale of birds under the act’s jurisdiction.

## Scientists Warn That Climate Change May Have Devastating Impact on Birds

A consortium of government agencies and conservation groups warns in a new report that climate change will increasingly pose a threat to birds currently listed as threatened or endangered and will likely put in peril dozens of other bird species that are currently doing well. The birds that will feel the greatest impact are seabirds and shorebirds.

The authors of the report conclude that greater emphasis must be placed on a reduction of carbon emissions, conservation of bird habitats, the removal of invasive plants and animals that threaten bird habitats, and the protection of birds’ food supplies.



March 13, Clay Davis and Kathy Davis birded the River "S" Unit at Ridgefield NWR and saw two adult **GOLDEN EAGLES** flying over the south end of Rest Lake. Matt Bartels stopped at the St. Cloud Ranch along Highway 14, in Skamania County, and saw his bird of his trip a **PINE GROSBEEK**. These members of the finch family are usually at higher elevations in the forested mountains.

March 18, Susan and I had our first **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** of the year at our home in Skamania County. This is the latest return date for our place in over 35 years.



March 19, Bob Flores had a **OSPREY** on the Columbia River near Camas, WA. John and Loraine Allinger saw the **TUFTED DUCK** at Drano Lake at the mouth of the Little White Salmon River in Skamania

County. This interesting bird from Europe and Asia has brought many birders to Skamania County. There were also a number of **BARROW'S GOLDENEYES** still there.

March 20, Tom Mansfield and Ken Knittle birded Hamilton Island, Drano Lake, and Carson in Skamania County. Hamilton Island was very productive with **AMERICAN PIPITS, NORTH-ERN SHRIKE, BALD EAGLE, SAVANNAH SPARROWS, EVENING GROSBEEKS, and PINE SISKINS.** Behind the fish facility they found a **THAYER'S GULL** and driving out they had **HORNED LARKS** and a **HUTTON'S VIREO.** The **TUFTED DUCK** was on Drano Lake mixed in with scaup. Passing through Carson they had a **SAY'S PHOEBE** seen in Skamania County this year.



Susan and I finally had a chance to see the Drano Lake Tufted Duck.

March 25, At the Steigerwald Lake NWR, Randy Hill and Bob Flores found a **SAY'S PHOEBE** dancing on the barbed wire fence near the barns along the river dike.

March 26, the **TUFTED DUCK** was seen again by John Allinger at Drano Lake.

March 27 & 28, Eric and Tammy Bjorkman traveled through Othello and up into the Okanogan Highlands for a nice birding trip. Among their highlights were a pair of **BURROWING OWLS** just outside of Othello, 3 **TRICOLOR BLACKBIRDS, 3 SNOW BUNTINGS** at a feed lot and a big flock of **300-400 GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCHES.** About **30 SAGE GROUSE** were using the lek, which is a communal dancing grounds, at Leahy Junction in Douglas County.

March 28, a **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** was under or feeder,



this was a bird of the locally nesting subspecies, which has a yellow bill instead of the pink bill on our wintering birds. Carol and Don Kohler took a Spring Break driving tour that took them through five western states which gave Carol the opportunity to add a **PINYON JAY** in California to her life list. They also encountered and photographed **GRAY WOLF** tracks crossing a snow covered road in Idaho.

March 30, Brush Prairie resident, Steve Kohl saw the Drano Lake **Tufted Duck.**

March 31, Lyn Topinka spotted the **OSPREY** back at their nest on the light pole at the junction of the 205 Freeway and Highway 14 on her daily commute.



April 1, Francis Lenski spotted a **MERLIN** at the Ridgefield NWR River "S Unit.

April 3, The VAS Columbia Gorge field trip subjected the seven participants to cool windy weather, plentiful wildflowers and some surprises among the bird species see. At Bonneville Dam we found a pair of **WESTERN GULLS,** a species normally found along the ocean shore. We

did find most of our hopped for birds such as **ACORN WOODPECKER, LEWIS'S WOODPECKER and LESSER GOLDFINCH.**

April 4, Barry Woodruff and I gave a Spokane area birding friend a tour of the Gorge hitting all of the sites visited the day before and a few other spots. Species added to the list were a **CANYON WREN** at Beacon Rock and a **SAY'S PHOEBE** in Stevenson. At a feeder in Underwood we found about **500 EVENING GROSBEEKS,** a very noisy gathering of birds.

A **BARRED OWL** was found in the Brush Prairie-Hockinson area off of Ward Road by Roger Windemuth. This recent arrival to the Northwest may soon become one of our more common owls as it is well adapted to living in a wide variety of habitats.



The 2010 cumulative year list of the species seen by anyone in Skamania County was at 110 and in Clark County people had reported 142 species so far this year. These lists for all the counties in Washington can be viewed at: <http://www.wabirder.com/> With the cool weather at the end of March and early April the migration has been slow so far but will pick up with warmer temperatures. Please keep track of the arrival dates of these birds and please send me your sightings for inclusion in this column and the cumulative year lists.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

# The Backyard & Beyond...

As many of you already know, Arden is in the process of retiring after 39½ years in the baking business. He is on "vacation" now with his retirement day of April 30th fast approaching. He had to make one last business trip to Ohio in March.

We have tried over the years to add the **AMERICAN WOODCOCK** to our life list but to no avail. We birded Moosehorn NWR in Maine where one of it's specialty birds is the woodcock but we were too late in the year for them to be displaying (June). We've looked for them in Florida in late fall but we were possibly too early for the wintering birds or we just weren't finding them. We looked for them where they nest in New Jersey but it was August and all we got was covered by Deer Tick Nymphs (70 of them on me alone).

The American Woodcock males arrive on their breeding grounds in early spring (March) and immediately begin setting up territories. Just after sunset the males start their mating displays with a buzzy "preent" call about every 5 seconds as they strut on the ground in a clearing waiting for a female to show up. Then all of a sudden he bursts into flight, making large circles in the sky as he rises higher & higher until all you see is a small, dark speck in the sky. While flying, his wings make a high-pitched fluttering sound. Eventually, he tumbles back toward the ground, like a leaf swaying & falling from a tree. He makes a chirping sound to announce his arrival and he will land nearly at the same spot where he took off. He repeats this many times.

A trip to Ohio in March sounded perfect to see this species so I went with Arden. Columbus, Ohio has wonderful Metro Parks with great natural areas & many of them have woodcock as we soon learned from the little seasonal booklet they put out. **But...** with an unusually late snowfall, we were afraid we were too early for them. There were several "Woodcock Watch" gatherings that weekend so on Friday night we joined 30 other people and sure enough the

birds put on their display & we got to add this species to our Life List. They had just returned to Ohio that week. Whew!!! It rained hard that night and the next day too but it broke up just before 6 PM so we headed to another park & this time it was just the 2 of us with the naturalist so she took us out into the field to see the birds close up.

Now here we are out in the middle of a field carefully watching where we walked due to the mud and puddles of water that had accumulated after the night & day of steady rain. It's getting darker by the minute and we are "hunting" woodcock. It brought back memories of the childhood prank of getting some unsuspecting youngster to go "snipe hunting". This was a ritual that was sometimes used as a rite of passage or initiation for youngsters in some groups or just a good gag to pull on young relatives. The idea is that you take a gunny sack, a flashlight & go into the woods & "call" the Snipe. If you do the call correctly the snipe will walk right into your sack. Success!!! Of course, as birders we know that the snipe is a bird of open areas not the woods &

active during the day not at night. I made the comment while we stood there that I felt like we were doing a snipe hunt. We laughed. But the fact is that the woodcock & the snipe **are** similar type "shorebirds". The naturalist used her flashlight for us to "catch" close up views of the American Woodcock.



Sherry Hagen, Happy Birding ☺

## Birdathon: Fund Raiser

**We need your donations to fund our programs and educational services.**

Arden Hagen will be counting species and will report to donors the total species he or his group find. You may join him for the day with a pledge of \$100 per individual or for a donation of \$100 collected from friends or neighbors. If you can't physically participate, you can receive a bird-house for a \$100 donation. Please bear in mind that the Birdathon is a day of hard work at a fast pace.

Call Arden at 360-892-8872 for more information.

### VAS BIRDATHON 2010 FUND RAISER - May 15

I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in support of the VAS's Birdathon

I would like to pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per species in support of the VAS's Birdathon

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number (       ) \_\_\_\_\_

Please Mail to: **Vancouver Audubon Society**  
P.O. Box 1966  
Vancouver, WA 98668

OR

**Arden Hagen**  
2203 SE 135th Ave.  
Vancouver, WA 98683-7133

**VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 1966  
Vancouver, WA 98668-1966

**NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Vancouver, WA  
PERMIT# 976**

**vancouveraudubon.org**

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



**May 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**

**Help support Vancouver Audubon**

**Flyway Renewal  
date:**  
November 1st  
every year

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 \$\_\_\_\_\_

**Renewals:** please send your renewal directly to National Audubon with the forms sent to you. Thanks!

\*\*\* This will **not** include *The Columbia Flyway* \*\*\*

**C9ZY130Z**

**Do Not share** my name or any of my personal information with other organizations

**Please include this coupon** and make check payable to and send to:  
Vancouver Audubon, P.O. Box 1966, Vancouver, WA 98668-1966

For more Info Call:  
George Mayfield 360-687-0360  
Eric Bjorkman 360-695-3116

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

President.....	Eric Bjorkman .....	695-3116 .....	bjorkmante@iinet.com
Vice-Pres .....	Marilynn Hall .....	253-6865 .....	marilynnhall@comcast.net
Secretary.....	Tammy Bjorkman.....	695-3116 .....	bjorkmante@iinet.com
Treasurer .....	Joan Durgin .....	834-5621 .....	jdurgin1@hotmail.com
OPEN .....	Education.....		
Conservation.....	Gretchen Starke.....	892-8617 .....	gstarke@pacifier.com
Membership .....	George Mayfield .....	687-0360 .....	gomayf@comcast.net
Field Trips .....	Arden Hagen.....	892-8872 .....	iambakerman@comcast.net
Publicity.....	Tracy Snow.....	503-335-5361 .....	tracy.now@orport.ang.af.mil
Programs .....	Randy Hopfer.....	573-6000 .....	rhopfer@hotmail.com
Sightings .....	Wilson Cady.....	835-5947 .....	gorgebirds@juno.com
Editor.....	Sherry Hagen.....	892-8872 .....	vas@pacifier.com
Mailings.....	Bonnie Bingle.....	576-0330 .....	
Volunteer Cor .....	Bob Rowe .....	254-8699 .....	rowe9629@comcast.net
Refreshments.....	Cindy Mayfield .....	687-0360 .....	gomayf@comcast.net