



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

May 2013

Calendar

*** NO BIRDING CLASS due to the Potluck...

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

***Monday, **May 6, 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
			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:

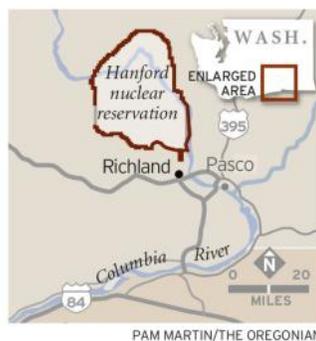
Hanford Nuclear Reservation

Cleanup:

Effects on the Columbia River

by *Theresa Labriola,*
Columbia Riverkeeper

Recent news reports have reminded us that there are ongoing problems in managing Hanford's hazardous nuclear waste. The leaking storage containers pose risks for water quality, fish, birds, and man. Columbia Riverkeeper (www.columbiariverkeeper.org) is a private, non-profit advocacy organization that promotes the preservation and restoration of the river and its wildlife. THERESA LABRIOLA will present an update of the Hanford cleanup and describe advocacy efforts to speed recovery of the water quality and habitat. She will explain some of the state and federal agency overlapping responsibilities, projects, and funding needs and comment on downstream implications. Columbia Riverkeeper is striving to keep agencies transparent. Broadened public awareness is important.



FIELD TRIP

Wenas Campout

You're invited to attend a celebration of birds, botany, and the beauty of spring in eastern Washington.



The **Wenas Audubon Campout** will take place on Memorial Day Weekend (**May 24-27**) at the **Wenas Creek Campground**. This three-day annual event invites campers to participate in a variety of activities, including birding field trips, flower walks, field sketching, and bat and owl prowls. You do not need to be an Audubon member to attend. All are welcome.

(For more info see page 4)



ANNUAL POTLUCK



When: May 7

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.



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.

Cornell Education Website of Hawkwatch

A fun site to test your knowledge of the ID of flying hawks.

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/roundrobin/2013/04/03/hawk-watching-quiz-crossley-style/>



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



message/fax (360) 253-5771

Everything for the Wild Bird enthusiast™

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Vaux Swifts in Chimney?

Fluttering wings in your chimney in May to June and "feed-me" chirps in June-July indicate that you are in a Vaux Swift area. If you and/ or your dog or other pet do not do well with either the idea or actual presence of life forms nesting in your chimney, open your damper.

Swifts will not nest in a hollow tree, smoke stack or chimney that has a hole in the bottom. If you welcome their presence, then be sure to close your damper as soon as possible this month. They may try your patience when most vocal in July, but by the first of August, they will be gone.

In September, you can go to Chapman School, where Vaux swifts gather from all over the Portland Basin before migrating in a swarm. Imagine that your family/clan may be in one of the groups gathering there.

Sydney Reisbick,
honored to have a swift chimney



Both Chimney & Vaux's Swifts have adapted to the presences of humans and now will nest in chimneys.



The Situation is Dire

In considering the results of last fall's election, those of us who are working to conserve what is left of Clark County's nature, knew the situation would be bad. Turns out we were partly wrong -- the situation is worse.

Not only did two-thirds of the county commissioners vote to remove the parking fees, thereby leaving a \$325,000 hole in the parks budget, but the reasoning behind the decision was totally irrational, from any point of view. In addition, the manner in which the decision was made demonstrated that logical arguments from both the county staff and the public and the lack of support for removing the fees (in the hearings, just the opposite was shown) made no difference whatsoever.

The hole in the parks budget was filled from the general fund. Which, of course, then leaves a \$325,000 hole in the general fund budget. In the county, budgets are prepared, argued over, and adopted in November. Emergencies do happen, but removing the parking fees at six park sites (out of 24 that have on-site parking), does not constitute an emergency. What makes the hole worse, is that the year is one-fourth over. Which means that something, or several somethings, will have to be cut. And because the county departments have been spending their money on the budget adopted late last year based on having the money allocated to them for a twelve month period, the impact of any cuts will actually be deeper than if the cuts had occurred at the beginning of the year.

To get the full flavor of how the commissioners came to eliminate the park parking fees, I will include excerpts from notes I prepared for the group, Friends of Clark County, of the work session the commissioners held on the then proposed elimination of the fees. The commissioners often hold work sessions on the issues before them, in which the staff briefs the commissioners and ask for direction. Work sessions are for the commissioners to discuss and learn, not to make a decision. The public may attend, but testimony is not presented (although the commissioners may ask for comment). It was David Madore who proposed to eliminate the park parking fees, Tom Meilke who went along, and Steve Stuart who opposed the action.

"Steve asked Madore why he wanted to cut the fees. Madore said it was about the quality of life. Steve was incredulous...Madore tried to make a motion (on another topic, not directly having to do with the park fees), and Steve stopped him. Motions are **not to be made in a work session**...

Madore had asked the staff to produce the two charts under discussion that showed the percentage that would be taken out of the general fund. Naturally, the percent-

age is low --about .3% of the discretionary funds...(Steve) asked Madore to explain why the amount of money the Humane Society (at a hearing the previous day) had asked for was significant, but the amount being discussed now is not significant when the Humane Society was asking for a bit less. Madore's response was ... what? Confused -- everything is significant?...

Madore said that free parks promotes tourism. Steve had pointed out that there is evidence that many Oregonians come over to enjoy our parks. They don't pay taxes to us. Madore kept going back to promoting tourism...it was difficult to determine what Madore's views (other than hating the parking fees) are. He was all over the place and would contradict himself with every other statement."

This gives a flavor of what we are dealing with. I did not attend the hearing, but another member of Friends of Clark County did. She said that it was useless to go. Despite the good testimony on the adverse effects of the budget cuts and despite the amendments that Stuart offered (but not seconded) that would have reduced

the impacts of removing the parking fees and would still have helped out lower income people, the minds of the other two commissioners were made up ahead of the time. So, the county budget is now down \$325,000 for the rest of the year. Indeed, the parks department will refund money to those who had bought yearly passes.

The lesson of all this is that we have a county commission that will be difficult to work with. It appears that if one of the commissioners gets a notion in his head for whatever reason and if he can convince his partner, nothing else will matter. Serious issues will be coming up, issues that will have an impact on birds and wildlife and habitat. There is the rural lands update and the traffic impact fees (and possibly other impact fees?) and, eventually, the update of the comprehensive growth management plan. I will be watching the commissioners and working with the reasonable one. I may need help from the rest of you to contact the board of commissioners if something really bad comes up. Please send me your contact information. My e-mail is gstarke@pacifier.com.

By the way, there has been talk of starting the process of adopting a charter and home rule for Clark County. Depending on who gets involved and what is proposed, this could be good or bad. Please pay attention, should the talk get serious.

In other News ...

The bill the governor wanted to set up a program of studying the best way to reduce Washington's greenhouse gas emissions passed both houses. Of course the Senate had to take out any specific mention of climate change, but never mind. It's a small step forward.

Gretchen Starke 

Not only did two-thirds of the county commissioners vote to remove the parking fees, thereby leaving a \$325,000 hole in the parks budget, but

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>

Rare, Tree-nesting Seabirds Survive Timber Industry Attacks

Marbled Murrelets kept their protections after a Washington, D.C., district court ruled *not* to eliminate their federally protected "critical habitat" and remove Endangered Species Act protections they've had since 1992.

The judge ruled in a lawsuit spurred by a proposal by the timber industry to remove protections -- the industry's third try in the past decade to toss out murrelet protections so that it can increase logging of forests more than 100 years old. This is despite undisputed scientific evidence that murrelets are disappearing from the coasts of Washington, Oregon and California. The Center for Biological Diversity has been fighting to protect murrelets since 2005, and we were one of several environmental groups defending the murrelets in the latest timber industry case.

"This industry assault ignores the biological reality that murrelets in our region continue to struggle to survive," said the Center's Endangered Species Director Noah Greenwald. "Without old-growth forest protection, these beautiful birds will disappear from our coast."

50th Anniversary of the Wenas Campout

WENAS AUDUBON CAMPOUT 50TH ANNIVERSARY Memorial Day Weekend, May 24-27, 2013

You're invited to attend a celebration of birds, botany, and the beauty of spring in eastern Washington. **The Wenas Audubon Campout will take place on Memorial Day Weekend (May 24-27) at the Wenas Creek Campground.** This three-day annual event invites campers to participate in a variety of activities, including birding field trips, flower walks, field sketching, and bat and owl prowls. You do not need to be an Audubon member to attend. All are welcome.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Wenas Audubon Campout. In the spring of 1963, three women (Hazel Wolf, Bea Buzzetti, and Ruth Anderson) wandered into the Wenas Creek area while on a bird walk. Struck by the abundance

of wildlife they found there, the women rallied to protect the area and reserve the site for bird-lovers to gather on Memorial Day Weekend for years to come. In 2013, the tradition continues. Event organizers have planned additional programming to celebrate the last half-century of Wenas Audubon Campouts, including a photo gallery and fireside presentation of the natural and home-steading history of the Wenas Valley. Commemorative t-shirts will also be available for purchase.

Visit the Wenas Audubon website at (www.wenasaudubon.org) for directions, an outline of field trips, programming, and more information. Pre-registration is not required. The campout is free and open to all ages. This is a Department of Natural Resources campground so every vehicle must display a **Washington State Discover Pass**. For more information contact Wilson Cady: gorgebirds@juno.com





- March 10, A day of birding in Skamania County, by Rick and Tina Taylor produced a **MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE** and the continuing **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** at the St. Cloud recreation area. These chickadees are scarce at low elevations in our area.



- March 13, A male **RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD** returned to Colleen Sibelman's Ridgefield yard, about ten days later than last year.

- March 15, **LESSER GOLD-FINCHES** and two **WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS** were at Les Carlson's feeders and he had

nice views of a light colored **MERLIN** at his north Vancouver home.

- March 17, We got our first **RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD** of the season at our place in Skamania County, a little later than our 30 year average.

- March 18, Les Carlson, Jeff Jendro and I did some birding in the Gorge. In Skamania County we had 9 **GREAT-ER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE** at Beacon Rock State Park, several lingering **BARROW'S GOLDEN-EYE** at Franz Lake and a **RING-NECKED PHEASANT** in Carson. We then checked some areas in Klickitat County finding both **MOUNTAIN and WESTERN BLUEBIRDS**, a **GOLDEN EAGLE** and a **LONG-BILLED CURLEW** on Dalles Mountain Road.



- March 23, During a visit to Fallen Leaf Lake Park in Camas I saw the continuing male **TUFTED DUCK** and 2 **BROWN CREEPERS**. I then checked Steigerwald Lake NWR in Washougal where there was an **AMERICAN BITTERN**, a **MERLIN**, a **NORTHERN SHRIKE** and a **SAY'S PHOEBE**.



- March 28, The first **CLIFF SWALLOW** of the year was reported by Randy Hill from the Ridgefield NWR.

- March 30, A trip to Larch Mountain by Randy Hill and Jim Danzenbaker provided them with a hooting **SOOTY GROUSE** and a flat tire, but few other Spring migrants..

- April 1, Colleen Sibelman spotted a **CALIFORNIA QUAIL** in her Ridgefield garden, these ground-nesting bird's numbers have been greatly reduced by predation

from cats and dogs as the county has become more developed.

- April 2, At his Battle Ground home, Jim Danzenbaker had a calling **LONG-EARED OWL** and **WESTERN SCREECH OWL** at night and during the day **AMERICAN BITTERN**, **GREATER YELLOWLEGS**, **PILEATED WOOD-PECKER**, **WHITE-BREASTED NUT-HATCH**, **RED CROSSBILL**, **EVENING GROSBEAK**,



and his first of the season **OS-PREY** and **AMERICAN GOLDFINCH**.

There are only a couple of prior records of a



- April 5, My first of the year **ORANGE-CROWNED WAR-BLER** was in the shrubs around our home.

By the time you receive this newsletter the migration will be in full swing, with new species arriving daily. If you would like to see the average return dates for birds in the Portland/Vancouver area check out:

<http://birdsoverportland.wordpress.com/oregon-migration-phenology/>

For daily Nexrad radar images of the migration click on "Home" in the upper left of the page. Please send me your reports of the arrival dates of the migrants in Clark and Skamania Counties for the Cumulative County List Project: http://www.wabirder.com/county_yearlist.html



Clark County Year Count so far: 152



As of early April there have been 152 species reported from Clark County in 2013, in Skamania County there were 112 birds seen so far this year.

Wilson Cady
gorgebirds@juno.com

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.*



May2013

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 \$_____

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

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

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

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George Mayfield 360-687-0360
Eric Bjorkman 360-695-3116

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

C9ZY130Z

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