



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

November 2012

Calendar

***BIRDING CLASS ... Tuesday, Nov. 6, 6:45 PM before the meeting.

***Tuesday, Nov. 6, 7:30 pm: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Monday, Nov. 5, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting hosted by Arden & Sherry Hagen
2203 SE 135th Ave., Vancouver, WA 360-892-8872

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	

PROGRAM:

SHOW & TELL

by members and guests



This program is put on by our members. It is your chance to show your vacation or wildlife photos to a willing audience.

Our projector can play either home made DVD's if you want to share video or CD with music, as well as just jpegs saved on DVD or CD.

The projector does not handle really large files very well so you will need to reduce any large ones OR bring your laptop to connect to the projector. A good size might be 4x6 inches with a dpi of 125. Call Bob Rowe for information and to sign up: 360-254-8699

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360-254-8699

Limit your slides/photos to share:
20 only

FIELD TRIP

Rare Bird Run



Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: Nov. 17, Saturday

Time: 8:00 AM

Meet at: 134th St. Park & Ride in Salmon Creek near the Fred Meyers store.

Dress warmly and bring rain gear. Bring lunch and snacks. This will probably be an ALL day field trip as we search for whatever rare birds show up within driving distance and back in one day.

The Columbian Flyway Renewal Notice



November 1st is the deadline for renewing your Columbia Flyway subscription.

USE the enclosed Envelope for ease of mailing. If you have already paid, you will not have an envelope enclosed. If you want to continue receiving the flyway, see the coupon on the back page of this publication for mailing in your \$10 renewal plus any donation you wish to include.

VAS Board Meeting at the home of
Bob Rowe on Oct 1, 2012

Treasurer's Report – Joan Durgin

Revenue for September 2012 :**\$250.58**

Expenses for September 2012: **\$464.86**

Community Foundation Endowment Fund – balance as of
June 30, 2012: **\$212,154.09**

Big Year Fundraising Challenge YTD: **\$2,752.50**

Membership – George Mayfield

November is newsletter renewal time. There will be an
article in November's newsletter explaining the procedure
to our subscribers.

New Business

A representative from Washington Waterfowl Association
(WWA) requested VAS's support in opposing Washington
Dept. of Wildlife and BPA's future plan to breach dikes at
Shillapoo for juvenile salmon habitat. Basically WWA
feels breaching dikes on the North Shillapoo Wildlife Area
will create a sterile "carp farm" through the introduction of
Columbia River tidal waters. The board agreed that VAS
has always supported breaching dikes and returning rivers
to their natural course. We will not oppose the plan to
breach dike.

Respectfully submitted, Tammy Bjorkman

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

New Members: Michele Antolin • James Bruno • Michele Busboom • Carole Campbell, •Amy Carpenter • Jakob Gross, •Michael Hightower • Patti & Brad Hunter • Beth Kerr-Bryant • The McMackin Family • Lyn Page • Samuel Peden • D. Stanton • Carleen Stephens • Gail Wayper

Transfers: Deb Kaiser, • Charlotte Morton • Edie Udelhofen • Margaret Zegar

WA Big Year VAS Fund Raiser Competition

*Vancouver Audubon President Eric Bjorkman and his wife Tammy are involved in a year-long fundraising competition with fellow board members Arden and Sherry Hagen. Both couples are conducting a 'Big Year' in Washington State. Throughout 2012, Eric & Sherry will keep a journal of the adventures of **Team Bjorkman** and **Team Hagen** respectively & contribute articles to Columbia Flyway each month sharing the high-lights and low-lights of their quest.*

October 2012 Big Year Birding

Our Year in a Nutshell: Team Bjorkman (346)

It's late Wednesday morning and Tammy & I are driving back home from the Tri-Cities. We are content.

We've just seen a very late in the season White-faced Ibis at the confluence of the Yakima and Columbia Rivers. The ibis is bird number 347 for the year.

This journey begins the day before when I return home after a relaxing game of golf. Tammy tells me the news when I walked through the door. An ibis is being seen in the Tri-Cities. We need this bird so now comes the tricky part of doing a big year.

How can we see the bird and keep the obligations we're already committed to? Tonight is the monthly Vancouver Audubon general meeting Jim Danzenbaker is presenting on South Georgia Island and we've been looking forward to his presentation for months. Also, I'm scheduled to play in a county golf tournament on Wednesday afternoon.

Is it possible to do everything on our agenda and see the bird? The only way we can travel to the Tri-Cities and keep our commitments is for us to leave after the meeting, drive 200+ miles, sleep in our car, wake up early, and hopefully see the bird before we had to leave at 8:30 am. More time in the damn car. Blech! Bad news indeed.

We strategize and come up with a plan. Emails are sent requesting more information on the location of the bird; then we load the car with everything we will need for an overnight trip. Next we attend the meeting, listen to Jim's entertaining presentation, then hurry home to pick up the



dogs before heading east. We arrive at the delta at 1:00 am, find a quiet spot to park, set the alarm for 6:00 am, and try to catch some zzzz's before the sun comes up. The next

morning we find the gravel road and drive to the end. I scope the mud flats and luck is with us because within minutes I locate the bird. Tammy gets a good look

and we are happy to note that it is only 7:30 am. We still have time to grab some breakfast at Subway before heading back to Vancouver.

This is our year in a nutshell and it has been a blast.

We're driving back from the Tri-cities area and its late morning, content for now.

We smile knowing that we're both hungry for the next surprise.

VAS President, Eric Bjorkman

"Team Hagen Report on page 5"



The Most Dangerous Issue Global Climate Change

I was shocked to hear E.J. Dionne, one columnist I have generally respected, say on the radio that he thought global warming was a dead issue. This was in response to a passing mention that President Obama made in his acceptance speech at the Democratic convention.

A few weeks earlier, I had read an article by Bill McKibben that had appeared in the August issue of *Rolling Stone* magazine. In it he pointed out some disturbing facts about the CO₂ in the atmosphere, in the fossil fuels being burned now, and in the fossil fuels still in the ground, but carried on the books of the fossil fuel industry. And, he pointed out that nobody is doing anything meaningful about it. (I mean, requiring cars and light trucks to get 54.5 average mpg by 2025 is great, except it's too little too late.) The device he used in his article was three numbers -- numbers that should be a warning to the world.

The first number is 2° Celsius. That is the number that that the temperature of the world must not exceed, the number the nations of the world agreed to at the Copenhagen climate conference. Unfortunately, that temperature was derived politically. As McKibben said, "political reality bested scientifically derived data." Considering that the world has warmed an average of just under .08° C and considering that the effects of the changes in climate are happening a lot faster than scientists had previously predicted, many think that 2° is too high. We recently learned that the Arctic sea ice has shrunk to its lowest point since measurements began. Last spring it rained in Saudi Arabia. When the temperature was 109° F. But the 2° C goal it is. That leaves us, the world, a cushion of 1.2° C. Will we stay below that goal?

McKibben's second number is 565 gigatons. That is the number of gigatons of carbon that climate scientists estimate we humans can put in the atmosphere and have the world atmosphere still remain below 2° C. Each new calculation and model run appears to be confirming that number. So what is the world doing? In the US, we have "drill, baby, drill," criticisms of the president for pausing, **pausing**, on a decision on the Keystone Pipeline, for briefly stopping additional drilling (now resumed) in the Gulf of Mexico, and for not immediately approving destructive oil and gas exploration on public lands. China is building coal plants right and left and we in the Pacific Northwest are asked to enable China in this folly by acquiescing to the passage of coal trains through our communities. Studies show that the world's production of carbon will continue to increase about 3% a year, and "... at that rate, we will blow through the 565 gigaton allowance in 16 years ..." Let's see, that's 2030, five years after the year cars and trucks in America are supposed to get an average of 54.5 mpg.

The last number is, as McKibben said, the scariest of all. That number was derived by the Carbon Tracker Institute from London, which is a "team of ... financial analysts and environmentalists ..." They check out all the proven reserves of coal, oil, and gas held by fossil fuel companies or countries (in the case of countries that hold such reserves). The Carbon Tracker Institute calculated the amount of carbon contained in those reserves. That number is 2,795 gigatons. Check that against the 565 gigatons of carbon that climate scientists say might be safe. Folks, we have a problem.

McKibben uses the examples of Exxon-Mobile and Russia's Lukoil. Each company has 40 gigatons of carbon in their reserves -- and they intend to send it all into the atmosphere. Two companies, by themselves, plan on taking away about 14% of our safety margin. The really scary part of this, is that Exxon-Mobile has the 40 gigaton-filled fossil fuel reserves on their balance sheets. It is reflected in the price of their shares on Wall Street. It is the source of their wealth. Russia is in a similar position with her company, Lukoil. These are just two fossil fuel companies.

Considering that economics trumps just about every other consideration in our political system -- political-economical "reality," human-made constructs, is favored over actual, physical, chemical, biological, real-world reality, what are we to do?

McKibben correctly points out that individual actions, such as changing light bulbs, will not make a dent in the problem. To be environmentally friendly, we avoid paper in favor of electronics, but electronic servers suck up electricity like a small child scarfing down cookies. We like our comfort and conveniences. We drive our SUVs to our local farm stores. We turn off lights and buy a flat screen TV. Nations have been equally schizophrenic. In the same speech that Obama mentioned the need to do something about global warming, he promoted the myth of clean coal. McKibben cites Secretary of State Clinton traveling to Norway. She rode a research vessel to see the global warming damage to the arctic. She also was there to make sure we get our share of the 90 billion barrels (37 gigatons of carbon) of oil that will be made available by the ice melting in the arctic.

McKibben suggested we need activism -- and an enemy. We have an enemy -- the fossil-fuel companies. He personalized it by naming the CEO of Exxon-Mobile, Rex Tillerson. He also suggested a mechanism, a remedy, to deal with the crisis. We need to make carbon more and more expensive. We need a carbon tax. To get there, we need to put continuous pressure on our governments and on the fossil-fuel companies. We need to educate our fellow citizens. And we need to reach across national boundaries. We haven't much time.

Gretchen Starke 



Sept. 14. Susan and I spotted a very dark-colored **MERLIN** chasing birds on our property east of Washougal. This was during a heavy movement of 36 different migrant species, we saw seven types of warblers and all four of the normal Washington State hummingbirds from our deck.

Sept 16. Two **BARRED OWLS** were found near Tahklahk Lake, in northern Skamania County, by Ken Knittle and Michael Willison. This area on Mt. Adams is near the Cascade Creek Forest Fire, which will continue to burn until the winter rains begin. Next year this should be a good area to check for American Three-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers.

Jim Danzenbaker conducted a "Big Sit" on the deck of his Battle Ground home and came up with 51 species which included the following highlights: **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE**, five species of raptors including one immature **NORTHERN HARRIER**, **RED-BREASTED SAP-SUCKER**, **PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER**, **WILLOW FLYCATCHER**, **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH**, **WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH**, **GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET**, **BAND-TAILED PIGEON**, **EVENING GROSBEAK**, **RED CROSSBILL** and **AMERICAN PIPIT**.

At Doetsch Pond, on the east side of Skamania Landing, I found my first Skamania County **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK**.

Sept. 18. Randy Hill found a **SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** on Rest Lake, along the auto-tour route of the River S Unit of the Ridgefield NWR. This is an Eurasian species that was reported from several Northwest locations this year.

Les Carlson, George Mayfield and I ran another Skamania County Big Day, finding a total of 80 species for the day. Our best birds were: **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK**, **MERLIN**, **SANDHILL CRANE**, **COMMON TERN**, **FORSTER'S TERN**, (first county record) **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** and **BLACK SWIFT**.

Sept.19. In Camas, Rob Conway spotted a **FERRUGINOUS HAWK** along the Columbia River, this may have been the same bird seen by Randy Hill, on Sept. 10, at the Ridgefield NWR.

Sept. 20 Les Carlson, Lyn Topinka and Tom Love all reported seeing the Ridgefield Refuge **SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER**. Les also had a **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** in the flock of shorebirds.

Sept. 22. A **BOBOLINK** was found by Eric and Tammy Bjorkman at Bottle Beach, in Gray's Harbor County, far from their breeding areas in eastern Washington.

Sept. 23. Steve Kohl had nice afternoon of raptor birding at the River "S" Unit of the Ridgefield NWR with **RED-**

TAILED HAWKS and **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK**, **NORTHERN HARRIERS**, **AMERICAN KESTREL**, **PEREGRINE FALCON**, and **BALD EAGLE** all with the backdrop of many calling and feeding **SANDHILL CRANES**.

Sept. 24. The first **PALM WARBLER** ever reported from Skamania County, was caught and banded at the St. Cloud Recreation Area by the research team of Cathy Flick, Joy Markgraf and Stuart Johnston. Over the years they have caught American Redstart, Ovenbird and Northern Waterthrush here, highlighting this spot's potential for out of place migrants.

Sept. 25. a flock of **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE** were seen by Jim Danzenbaker as they flew over his Battle Ground home. These Arctic nesting geese are one of the first waterfowl to arrive here each fall.

Sept. 28. Randy Hill reported that there were **5 SNOW GEESE** that flew over Ridgefield NWR. Also present there were a calling **VARIED THRUSH** and a **MERLIN**. Both Snow and White-fronted Geese winter further south of here in the Klamath Basin and Sacramento River Valley and many of the larger flocks are only seen flying over here.

Sept. 30, The team of Cathy Flick, Stuart Johnston and Joy Markgraf caught and banded their first-ever **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** for the St. Cloud Recreation Area.

Oct. 1. **75 GREAT EGRETS** were seen by Les Carlson flying into the Steigerwald Lake NWR. These birds are roosting on small islands in the lake during the evenings to avoid predators.

Oct. 2. Two small flocks of **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE** flew over our home giving me my first of the year sightings of these Arctic nesters.

Oct. 4. During the fire at the Steigerwald Lake NWR, I saw a **SHORT-EARED OWL** flying with the blaze in the background. A **COUGAR** and a **BOBCAT** were also seen escaping the fire. Within a week there were new sprouts of grass coming up through the ashes.

Oct. 10. Les Carlson, George Mayfield, Bob Rowe and I did the monthly Skamania County Big Day coming up with 76 species for the day. We had no rarities but did see **GREAT EGRETS** at Franz Lake NWR and 2 **RED-NECKED GREBES** at Beacon Rock.

Oct. 12. When Jim Danzenbaker visited the Ridgefield NWR River "S" Unit he was surprised to find one very bright immature **SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** and an immature **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** among the **KILLDEER**, **7 PECTORAL SANDPIPERS**, and **2 LONG-BILLED DOW-**

("Afield" Continued on next page)

ITCHERS.

Les Carlson picked up his lifer **SNOWY PLOVER** when he went to Grayland State Park in Gray's Harbor County to see the second **WILSON'S PLOVER** ever found in this state.

It looks like it may be a good year for White-throated Sparrows in the Pacific Northwest, with multiple birds already being reported from single locations in eastern Washington and Idaho. Watch for these birds at your feeders and note whether the stripes on the crown and above the eye is white or tan in color.

Waterfowl should now be back in good numbers and this year the population is doing well and large numbers can be expected. The Vancouver Lake Lowlands and the Ridgefield NWR are excellent areas to see a large variety of geese and ducks from the roadways. The trails along the Columbia River upstream from the I-5 bridge are a great place to view the river for loons, grebes and scoters during the winter. Just look for the large rafts of Greater and Lesser Scaup and look through them for the odd duck.

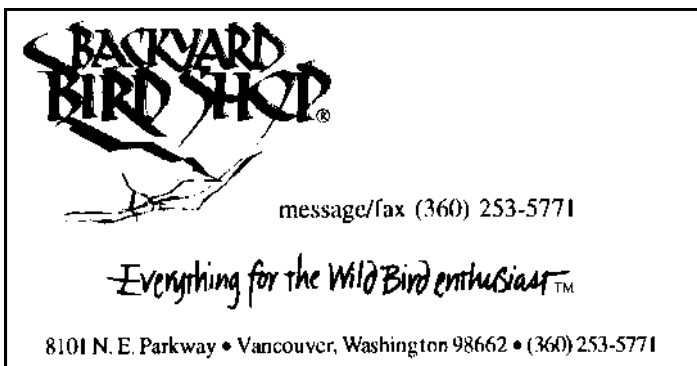
The 2012 Clark County Cumulative Year List was at 227 species reported to me from the county this year. In Skamania County there have been 190 species seen. To see the complete list go to: <http://www.wabirder.com/bartel.html> If you have seen any bird this year in Clark or Skamania County that has not been checked off please let me know. Some species that used to be fairly common are missing this year, California Quail is an example.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

CBC Date

for the Washington side of the
Sauvie Island Bird Count
is Sunday, December 30, 2012

Contact info is: Tammy Bjorkman (360) 213-6489



October 2012 Big Year Birding (cont.)

3 Weeks OFF...sort of: Team Hagen (357)

Arden & I took 3 weeks off from birding Washington for the Big Year Competition and flew to Australia to go birding with our friend Suzie from Indiana. Needless to say we did not add much to our year list for WA. As reported at the meeting we had added one more species, the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper before we left in mid September. Now that we are home but not yet fully rested, it is time to get started again. We need the fall and early winter rarities or birds we might have missed earlier this year. What might those birds be? We have a chance to break the all time Washington record but there are others out there doing Big Years too. So only time will tell.

As for Australia, WE LOVED IT THERE. We birded only in Queensland and really only small areas dotted here and there. And of the ~770 or so species in the whole "big" country we saw around 350 in 3 weeks. Of those just over 300 were lifers so we felt we did pretty good.

We started in northern Queensland in the BUSH. There were forest fires everywhere as we flew north to our spot. We found out later that it is a tradition for the Aboriginal people to set fires for travel and hunting but even though that is not necessary anymore they still set fires. Luckily the trees are fire resistant and don't burn down as it clears out the brush below. We drove south as we birded for several days to Cairns, then flew to Brisbane, birded south of there then drove west to the Outback.

We saw so many beautiful birds that it made my head spin and the "shutter button" finger on my right hand almost sore from use. The tiny Fairywrens that are such beautiful colors of blue, white, black, etc. and the size of our Bushtits were a favorite of Arden and I. Two were on our "Target List" for the trip, the Lovely and the White-winged. We weren't disappointed.

Unlike the tropics where you see members of the parrot family fly over as you hear them squawking and usually only get a glimpse, in Australia we really got to see them. The beautiful Sulphur-crested, Palm, Pink & Red-tailed Black Cockatoos along with the "pink & white" Galah and 2 of the Corellas mesmerized us. Of course there were lots of brown birds but some with colorful markings.

Birding in the Bush and in the Outback was my kind of landscape for birding. Dry areas are more open and the birds are usually closer to the ground and easier to see when the trees are not so thick as they are in a rain forest. Heat without the humidity is a plus in my book too.

We both can't wait to go back and bird the southern area [New South Wales] sometime.

Sherry Hagen, Newsletter & Web Editor

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.*



November 2012

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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