

# Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

October 2009

## Calendar

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

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

\*\*\*Monday, Oct. 5, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting at the home of Bob & Geri Rowe  
2010 SE 140th Ave. Vancouver 360-254-8699

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:

### Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement

Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group (LCFEG) is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating sustained habitat restoration & community-supported salmon recovery strategies within our watersheds. Our activities emphasize intensive habitat restoration projects, education, & outreach. Our projects include (but are not limited to):

- ◆ Stream restoration
- ◆ Riparian planting
- ◆ Nutrient Enhancement

LCFEG's success depends on our partnerships with public & private groups & our fellow community members. We work hard to restore and conserve salmon habitat through cooperation with local landowners, conservation groups, tribes, government agencies, and others. Guest Presenters: Tammy Weisman, Operations Director, Vicki Jenkins, Office Manager, Jeffrey Stixrud, Crew Supervisor

## The Columbia Flyway Renewal Notice



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

If you have **NOT** paid already, you will see an "Unpaid" notice on the lower right hand corner of your mailing address. If you want to continue receiving the flyway then see the coupon on the back page of this publication for mailing in your \$10 renewal.



## ANNUAL FALL POTLUCK

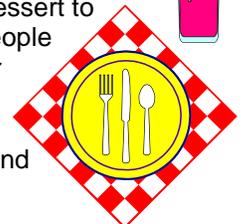


**When:** October 6, 2009

**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.



# VAS News

VAS BOARD MEETING was held on August 31st at the home of Bonnie Bingle. A quorum was present.

Treasurer's Report. Income for August was \$1,031.89 with \$992.70 being for Audubon Adventures. Expenses were \$356.60. Cash and Investments were \$22,684.19. The Community Foundation fund was \$199,278.81 as of 30 June.

Fieldtrips. The November trip is on the 7<sup>th</sup> and will be to Brownsmead and Astoria.

Conservation. Gretchen and Bonnie attended the meeting on the ball fields on 78<sup>th</sup> Street.

Old Business. Bob Rowe talked about Birdfest. Hunting doesn't start until the next weekend so the refuge has scheduled bus trips every hour on the River S Unit Saturday. No cars would be allowed. The board objected to this. The blind would be impossibly crowded. They also wanted guides on every bus.

New Business. There was a discussion about fund raising. Birdathon will be dropped as too few people were involved and/or donated. November membership dues and donations have also dropped. Suggestions for fundraising included a silent auction and fees for birding trips.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Ellifrit

## FIELD TRIP

### Steigerwald Lake NWR

**Leader:** Wilson Cady, 360-834-5947

**When:** October 4, SUNDAY

**Time:** 8:00 AM

**Meet at:** Steigerwald Lake NWR Parking Lot on Highway 14 at milepost 18



We will walk the 2 mile long trail on the refuge that Vancouver Audubon lead the fight to establish. We will then check other spots in the area surrounding the refuge, plan for the weather and bring a lunch.



## VAS Upcoming Programs:

**Show & Tell** by VAS Members (Nov.)

**Naturally Beautiful Backyard**

**Group** by Columbia Springs (Dec.)

\*\*\*\*\*GET READY\*\*\*\*\*

**November: 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.



**If you need help getting your photos ready to show to the group, please call Randy Hopfer at : 360-573-6000**

  
**BirdFest**  
FRIENDS OF RIDGEFIELD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

**October 10-11**  
**Saturday & Sunday**

For information call (360) 887-9495,  
e-mail [birdfest@hotmail.com](mailto:birdfest@hotmail.com)  
website at [www.ridgefieldfriends.org](http://www.ridgefieldfriends.org)

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ronald Berkheiser • B.G. Br Library • Elizabeth Burnside • Judy Chamberlain • Alice Chandler • Priscilla Chou • Pat Clay • Three Cmmnty • Helen Cox • Maxine Culp • Patti Daggett • Paul Doane • Barbara Donald • Debra Dougal • Jean Dougherty • June Dunn • Mary Edwards • Emma Elsner • Diane Ferguson • Jill Ferrier • Gannon • Kendra Gault • J Gift • Scott Gix • Mary Graham • Jeniphir Grant • Shirley Guindon • Mary Harkness • Jowanna Harmanstever • Terry Harris • Carol Hartman • Lily Helmer • Peggy Henrich • Brad Hoke • Don Honeyman • Cindy Johnson • Dennis Johnson • Heidi Kennedy • Lenore Kennedy • Joyce Kilpatrick • Jenny Kincaid • Harry & Gay Leslie • Brian Levy • Camas Library • Judy Lipski • Markita Ludahl • Ardis Lyons • Beth Malychewski • Danette McKee • Laura Norris • Judith Ost • Joseph Ozura • Katherine Pierce • Madeleine Pierik • Judy Puhl • Carol Purdy • Jan Quann • Kenneth Quick • Ft Vanc Reg Lib • Heather Rose • Marylu Roszko • Judy Russell • Jeannie Sanchez • Deb Schucka • Clare Schulze • Norma Silliman • Harriett Sprouse • Margee Starr • Clayton Summer • Anne Sundberg • Thomsen • Roseann Thomsen • Suzanne & Tim Crawford • Stanislav Tzonev • Gladys Wade • Gerlad Walsh • Belle Weninger • Jerry West • Virginia Wilson • Cathy Winters • Anne Woldrich • Sabrina Worthy • Norma Wray • Stephanie Yarne

**Transfer members are:**

Joan Blake, James Kintrea, Todd Snider, James Walloch



## The Perennial Fall Story: Tim Eyman Has Done it Again Initiative 1033

Initiative 1033 is among Eyman's worse initiatives. What it would do is freeze state and local government spending at the level it is this fiscal year, basically forever. Spending could increase only as the federal cost of living index and state population increased. Never mind that costs of government services (costs such as asphalt and employee health care) may increase faster than the cost of living for an individual. Never mind that the need for government services is not necessarily correlated with the increase in population. For example, a higher proportion of children in the population means a greater need for schools. Keep in mind that government services are services, not products, and, as such, are employee intensive. For example, the reason that environmental regulations are sometimes poorly enforced is because the agencies are perennially starved for money to hire the people to do the enforcing.

The recession this year increases the disastrous effect of I-1033. Right now government spending at the state level and here in Clark County is way down. As we are a sales tax state, lack of spending by people has reduced government revenue. Because the legislature was determined to avoid any meaningful tax increase, they had to sharply cut budgets for all agencies. Resource management agencies started at a disadvantage for they shared in a small percentage of the total state budget. Nevertheless, these agencies had to undergo further budget cuts and losses of employees. For example, for the biennial budget for fiscal years 2009-2011, the number of full time equivalents (FTEs, that is the number of employees working a full time eight hour day) for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife working on habitat protection was reduced by 20. That means fewer habitat biologists to review developer plans. In Clark County, budgets have been sharply reduced for planning and development. This is also because the recession has meant fewer houses being built and subdivisions planned, so there have been fewer fees collected and less need for review of developer plans.

Under I-1033 this fiscal year would not be just a temporary decrease in government services caused by the recession. It would become the norm. Over time, the level of government services compared to the need would continue to ratchet down. Every new recession, every new decrease in government services would set a new baseline. Washington would become Alabama Northwest. We could forget about getting more and better parks or increased protection of our wildlife resources or better enforcement of anti-pollution laws. The money to do those things would not be there.

This scheme to starve government services has been tried in Colorado. It turned out to be such a disaster that the voters put it on hold. We need to make sure that this

does not happen here. Please tell your friends and family to vote no on I-1033. A local organization will be working to defeat I-1033. I may be asking for help. Please do what you can. For more information, go to the following sites: <http://www.no1033.org/> and <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/initiatives/text/i1033.pdf>

## Shorelines Management Updates

Back in about 1971, the voters approved the Shorelines Management Act (SMA). I remember it well. It was considered progressive for the time. Under the SMA, the state designated shorelines of the state, defined as shores along streams with greater flow than 20 cubic feet per second, lakes larger than 20 acres, and all marine shores. Included in the jurisdiction of SMA are shorelands, which are uplands 200 feet back from the water, associated wetlands and river deltas, and some or all of the 100 year floodplains. In Clark County, shorelines of the state include Salmon Creek and Burnt Bridge Creek. The SMA also defined shorelines of statewide significance. These are defined as lakes larger than 1000 acres and streams with a greater flow than 1000 cubic feet per second west of the mountains and 200 feet per cubic second east of the mountains. In deciding the management of shorelines of statewide significance, the interests of the people of the state should be considered over local interests. In Clark County shorelines of statewide significance are: the Lewis River and the East Fork, Washougal River, the Columbia River, and Vancouver Lake and the lakes within the Vancouver Lake lowlands. Waters on federal land are not included as the state does not have jurisdiction over federal lands.

Under SMA, each jurisdiction designated their shorelines into five environments: natural, conservancy, rural, community, and urban/industrial. In 1974, Clark County and the cities had completed their shorelines master programs that determine permitted uses along each shoreline. And they haven't touched them since. Recently the legislature noted that hardly any jurisdiction in Washington had updated their shorelines master programs since the early 1970s. As a result of legislative direction, Clark County and the cities are now getting ready to update their master programs. Vancouver and Clark County will work together on the update. First on the agenda is to do a baseline survey. That is expected to take about a year. The whole process of updating the master programs will take at least two years.

There is much that needs to be fixed. The maps are out of date. The designated environments have more in common with adjacent zoning than with ecological considerations. There is no consideration of cumulative effects (where have we heard that before). We can hope that the updates of the master programs will take into consideration the needs of wildlife and of other environmental concerns.

*Gretchen Starke*



► **Aug. 7.** Bob Flores's nemesis bird is finally behind him with the sighting of a WHITE-TAILED PTARMIGAN on Mt. Rainier. He will now have to find a new bird to avoid him while I still try for a ptarmigan. Steven Clark reports that they now have EUROPEAN COLLARED-DOVE as a visitor to their feeders in Washougal.

► **Aug. 8.** Roger Windemuth reported an immature BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON at the Ridgefield NWR. As far as I know the first sighting this season of an annual late summer visitor at the refuge.

► **Aug. 9.** Jeff Hayes found the BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON and 2 RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS at the River "S" Unit of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. Susan and I visited Bird Creek Meadows on Mt. Adams. Our best birds were WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL, GRAY Jay and CLARK'S NUTCRAKER. We had hoped for interesting woodpeckers in the large swath of forest that burnt there last year but saw none.

► **Aug. 11.** A bird that was photographed at the Ridgefield NWR may have been either a WHIMBREL or a LONG-BILLED CURLEW. From the backlit photos I tend to feel it was a Whimbrel, but either would be a great bird for Clark County. Eric Bjorkman, Barry Woodruff and I checked out the high mountain lake area in Skamania County northwest of Mt. Adams. A single COMMON LOON was on Horsehoe Lake. There were migrant birds throughout the forests with ORANGE-CROWNED, YELLOW-RUMPED, TOWNSENDS, HERMIT, NASHVILLE and WILSON'S WARBLERS in mixed flocks. We estimated that we saw about 50 Nashville Warblers during the outing. Finches were well represented with EVENING GROSBEAKS, PINE GROSBEAK, RED CROSSBILLS, WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL, PINE SISKIN and PURPLE FINCHES. Our best sighting was of a MARTEN that ran across the road in front of us and then responded to our pishing giving us great views of this seldom seen mammal.

► **Aug. 14.** While banding birds at the St. Cloud Recreation Area, in Skamania County, Cathy Flick and Stuart Johnston heard a calling SOLITARY SANDPIPER.

► **Aug. 16.** Bob Flores counted the shorebirds at the Ridgefield NWR and came up with 66 LEAST SANDPIPER, 60 WESTERN SANDPIPERS, 1 BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, 1 RED-NECKED PHALAROPE, 1 DUNLIN, 1 SEMIPALMATED PLOVER, 1 SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER and 4 LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER.

► **Aug. 21.** Jim Danzenbaker counted a total of 800 AMERICAN CROWS leaving a roost near Battleground which usually holds about 45 crows during 10 months of the year and had swelled to a previous high of 225 birds. Jim A RED-NECKED GREBE in breeding plumage was found at the Vancouver Lake flushing channel by Danzenbaker and Bob Flores. As a bonus they also had 10 BLACK-THROATED GRAY, 6 YELLOW, 1 WILSON'S and 4 ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS in the willows there.

► **August 22.** While walking the trail at Steigerwald Lake NWR, Carol and Kevin Healy

spotted Lonesome George, the MUTE SWAN, in his usual pond, but then saw spotted another swan at the pond, closer to the Columbia River. A check a few days later by Brian Bell and me proved that they were correct in identifying it as an extremely early TUNDRA SWAN.

► **Aug. 22.** Bill Clemons and his mother Olive, birded the River "S" Unit at Ridgefield NWR with Carol Ledford and located a COMMON RAVEN flying over Long Lake. Ravens are uncommon in the Clark County lowlands anytime of the year.

► **Aug. 23.** Jim Danzenbaker car camped on Silver Star Mountain (near the Skamania/Clark County line due East of Battle Ground) in hopes of hearing some nocturnal migrants. He didn't hear much until about 5 AM when the SWAINSON'S THRUSHES became evident with about 125 heard calling while flying overhead. There was a calling NORTHERN PYGMY OWL shortly after that.

► **Aug. 24.** John Plank had a great view of a RED-SHOULDERED HAWK at Ridgefield River "S" and a GREEN HERON near the Kiwa Trail.

5 BLACK SWIFTS were flying over our home on Mt. Pleasant in Skamania County. These swifts nest under high altitude waterfalls and fly as far as 300 miles a day gathering food for their nestlings.

► **Aug. 25.** There were an estimated 75 SWAINSON'S THRUSHES flying over Jim Danzenbaker's Battle Ground yard that he counted by their early morning calls. The variety of migrant birds in his yard certainly was notable with; Warbling Vireo, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Cedar Waxwing, Black-headed Grosbeak, Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch.

► **Aug. 26.** Jim Danzenbaker checked the Auto Tour Route at the Ridgefield NWR, and found 25 PECTORAL SANDPIPER on Rest Lake along with 5 SEMIPALMATED PLOVER, 1 BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, 45 WESTERN SANDPIPER, 45 LEAST SANDPIPER 45, 15 KILLDEER, 2 GREATER YELLOWLEGS, 3 LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER, and 3 GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE. These are the earliest arriving Arctic breeding geese that often first show up here in late August. I checked out a report from Carl Schilt of an unidentified shorebird he had in a pond at his property near Beacon Rock State Park. The bird turned out to be a SOLITARY SANDPIPER, a new species for me in Skamania County, and one of the few records for the county.

► **Aug. 29.** Bob Flores found 7 PECTORAL, 15 LEAST, 65 WESTERN, 4 BAIRD'S SANDPIPERS, 7 LESSER YELLOWLEGS, 3 GREATER YELLOWLEGS and a single SEMIPALMATED PLOVER at the Ridgefield River "S" Unit.

► **Sept. 1.** Jim Danzenbaker made a quick trip to see the shorebirds at Rest Lake at Ridgefield NWR, and found PECTORAL SANDPIPER, BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, WESTERN SANDPIPER, LEAST SANDPIPER, KILLDEER and 18 loafing GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE. Sept. 2, While scouting for a Washington Ornithological Society



# Information



convention field trip to Mt. St. Helens, Ken Knittle found a LAPLAND LONSPUR, east of the Johnston Ridge visitor center. This is the first record for this Arctic tundra nesting species in Skamania County.

► **Sept. 7,** I birded the Steigerwald Lake NWR area with Jim Danzenbaker and we found 4 GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE, 1 MUTE SWAN, the continuing TUNDRA SWAN, a RED-SHOULDERED HAWK and a GREEN HERON. Later in the afternoon I checked many of the same areas with Ken Knittle and saw 9 RED-NECKED PHALAROPES on the Washougal Sewage Lagoons.

► **Sept. 8,** Barry Woodruff and I hiked to the top of Silver Star Mountain finding a few species of interest including a NORTHERN GOSHAWK. When we got to the summit we were in the midst of a flight of VAUX'S SWIFTS which passed by only feet from our heads making a zipping noise as they passed by.

► **Sept. 9,** We had a few migrants at our house in what has been a most unremarkable season including 3 RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRDS, 1 COMMON NIGHTHAWK and 3 BLACK-THROATED WARBLERS.

► **Sept. 10,** I had another chance to visit the Steigerwald Lake NWR, this time with Bob Rowe. We heard the RED-SHOULDERED HAWK, saw a MERLIN being mobbed by 2 AMERICAN KESTRELS. The MUTE SWAN remained on the main pond and the TUNDRA SWAN continued on the sandbars of Reed Island. We counted 7 AMERICAN BITTERNS in Red-tail Lake, the most that I have seen on the refuge at one time. After checking on the continuing TUNDRA SWAN at Steigerwald Lake NWR, Carol and Kevin Healy were walking back from the Columbia River area and saw a BOBCAT in the woods, near the Gibbons Creek Trail.

This summer we have been having increasingly larger flocks of Evening Grosbeaks coming to the wild fruit trees on our property. With the number of Red Crossbill, White-winged Crossbill and Pine Grosbeak sightings in the Northwest already we should expect to see them through the winter here. I have noticed that the conifer trees have a good cone crop this year which should provide plenty of food for these birds. Don and Sue Cannard mentioned that they also have PINE SISKINS coming to their feeders and that they spotted a PILEATED WOODPECKER along the Salmon Creek Trail. Steven Clark was boating on the Columbia River just downstream of Camas when he found five RED-NECKED PHALAROPES on the water.

I invite all of our members to visit the Steigerwald Lake NWR and walk the new 2.2 mile long loop trail. Vancouver Audubon members should take pride in the fact that this beautiful spot was zoned heavy industrial and slated to be part of an industrial park until our chapter took the preservation of this wetland on as our first project when the chapter was formed in 1975.

As of the end of August, the 2009 cumulative year list of birds seen by anyone in Clark County was at: 206 species. For Skamania County the list was at 154 species. You can view the lists for all of the Washington counties on line at: <http://wabirder.com/bartel.html> if you find a species not checked off that you have seen in a county please contact the person listed as that county's

compiler.

Please continue to send your sightings in for this column and contact either Arden and Sherry Hagen or me immediately if you come across anything you consider unusual.

*Wilson Cady*    [gorgebirds@juno.com](mailto:gorgebirds@juno.com)

## The Backyard & Beyond...

### "Fried Starling"

One morning this summer, I was visiting with my brother-in-law in the Spokane valley. While seated at his table & talking, we heard a loud noise like a gun shot & then the lights went out. He immediately replied that the transformer must have blown (again). We looked out the door & sure enough the circuit breaker was dislodged. He grabbed his cell phone to call the "man" in charge. Steve had given Dave his cell number so he was able to call him directly rather than having to go through the hoops by calling the office. I could hear Steve through the phone ask, "Dave, could you go out & look below the pole to see if there is a **DEAD STARLING**". I was laughing to myself... he didn't ask if there was "a" dead bird.... He ask if there was a specific bird, a **starling**. Dave & I walked out to the pole while Steve remained on the phone and sure enough there was a dead starling (a fried, dead starling) below the pole. Our wait for help wasn't long. First, another worker did a drive-by of the pole to confirm the incident. Then a short time later, Steve came. He explained that the transformers are bird proofed to a degree but Starlings have such a long bill that they stick them up in the crevices & small areas that other birds can't reach looking for the bugs that hide there. Obviously, this is what this bird did & it costs him his life. Steve went on to explain that when this **starling** blew Dave's transformer it had a rippling effect. He had his crew working at a substation & in order to ensure their safety, he cut the electrical output so that if one of them accidentally touch a hot wire, they wouldn't die from it. (I believe this is what he was explaining). But when the starling blew Dave's transformer, it also blew things at the substation which cut the electricity to the whole valley including the industrial complex which is huge. He was so thankful that Dave had called him right away. He was lucky Dave wasn't at work, that we were right there & heard it. When the first workman confirmed that the starling had done the deed, this let them know where the source was & they could turn the grid back on before coming to fix Dave's circuit breaker thus getting the rest of the valley back up & running. Had we not been there, the electrical company would have had to use their computer system & spend hours tracking down the source of the outage before they could even turn the grid back on costing companies hours of non-production.

*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.*



**October 2009**

**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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**Flyway Renewal  
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