

Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

Member of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

September 2009

Calendar

***BIRDING CLASS ... Tuesday, Sept. 1, 6:45 PM before the meeting.

***Tuesday, Sept. 1, 7:30 pm: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Monday, Sept. 7, 6:30 pm: VAS Board Meeting at the home of Randy Hopfer, 6709 NE 232nd Ave., Vancouver 360-573-6000

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:

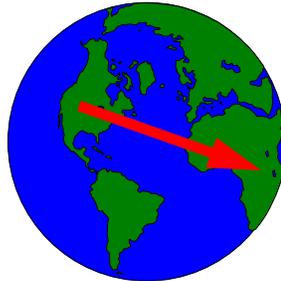
East Africa

by John Silliman



Long time Vancouver Audubon member John Silliman will be sharing his brilliant photographs of birds as well as the wildlife of Eastern Africa. John will be narrating the so-journ of his eleventh and

most recent trip in 2008 that took him through Botswana, Tanzania, and Zambia. Africa is a large continent and each region brings new experiences and new photographs of the animals that inhabit it. Put on your safari hat and join in for this adventure.



FIELD TRIP

Tillamook Area



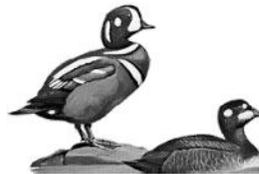
Leader: Arden Hagen, 360-892-8872

When: September 13, SUNDAY

Time: 8:00 AM

Meet at: Inn at the Quay, west side parking area

What: We will be looking for shorebirds, passerines and seabirds. This is a good time of the year for the shore. Plan on an all day trip.



If you thought you missed this program... Good News!! Due to technical problems it was rescheduled.

The 22nd Annual 2009

Columbia Flyway Wildfowl Show

September 12th and 13th

Water Resources Education Center

4600 SE Columbia Way
Vancouver, WA

www.columbiaflywayshow.com

For info call: 360-892-6738

The VAS judging team awards the coveted Audubon Award each year to the most realistic bird carving

VAS News

VAS BOARD MEETING was held on July 26th at the home of Dory Brookings. A quorum was present.

Treasurer's Report. Income for June/July was \$2,242.70. Included were \$623.60 from the yard sale, \$319.55 for Audubon Adventures, \$620 from the two fund raising trips and \$562.90 from Birdathon. Expenses were \$663.84. Cash and investments were \$22,008.90. As of 30 June the Community Foundation fund was up about \$5,000 to \$199,278.81.

Field Trips. Arden will lead the Tillamook trip on 13 September and one to the Brownsmeade area in November. Wilson will lead a trip in October.

Conservation. WDFW is proposing to ban lead sinkers in lakes used by Common Loons. A motion was MSP to support this action.

Old Business. Some of the items from the yard sale will be brought to the next two meetings for sale.

New Business. Birdfest is coming up and Bob Rowe is looking for workers both in the field and for the booth.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Ellifrit

We had a Yard Sale for the Birds!

A few months ago, I received a phone call from a local bird supply store that wishes to remain anonymous. Was our group interested in receiving their old stock to use as a fundraiser? I sent out an inquiry to our board and everyone agreed that it was a terrific idea.



I drove to the warehouse and looked over the inventory of overstock and slightly damaged items. There were bird feeders, bird baths, wind chimes and much more. The store suggested we hold a yard sale and price the items to sell quickly.

After several trips back and forth from the warehouse to our temporary storage space, we were ready to begin pricing. The board held a work party to sort, repair, and price all of the items for the sale. Next we placed advertisements in a few local papers and made our signs. We were ready.

A special thanks to our donor & to our volunteers!

Our big day arrived on a warm Saturday in July and so did the customers. Almost all of the items sold by noon and at the end of the day our receipts showed a profit of just over \$600!

Thank you to all involved especially our anonymous benefactor. We are honored to have been chosen for this gift.

VAS President, Eric Bjorkman

VAS Upcoming Programs:

Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement

(October)

Show & Tell by Members & Guests (Nov.)

Naturally Beautiful Backyard

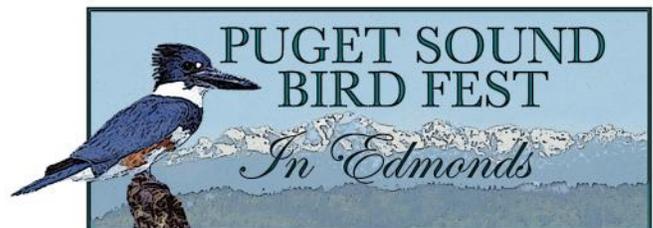
Group (December)



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Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds

September 11-13, 2009

www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org



Parks: Habitat or Ball Fields?

Vancouver Audubon was contacted by a neighbor of the proposed ball field complex out 78th near St. Johns. The neighbors were upset for a number of reasons, but the issue of concern to Audubon was the needed loss of a considerable number of trees to accommodate the ball fields. There is a nesting pair of Red-tailed Hawks as well as other species of birds in the little forest. Further, there is a forested wetland within the woods.

Audubon decided to get involved because what happens in this park has implications other parks in the county. So I went to the public meeting the parks department held on the proposed Hazel Dell ball fields. The place was packed and the crowd appeared to be about evenly divided between unhappy neighbors and baseball fans (including Little League kids). Most everyone was polite, however, and nobody came to blows.

The comments at the meeting went back and forth between the neighbors and the baseball folks. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife was there, commenting on the Red-tailed Hawks. The spokesman asked the county to consider reducing the size of the project to avoid impact to the hawks. I expressed concern about the loss of tree canopy – and the fact that it was the parks department that would be cutting the trees down. I suggested that the county do a study to determine the loss of tree canopy, similar to what Vancouver did.

What is proposed is a complex of five ball fields: one full-size, two intermediate size fields and two tee-ball fields. A road would be put through the site and a

neighborhood park (swings, climbing sets, picnic tables and the like) would be located across the road from the ball fields. The neighborhood park development would be in future years because money is available only for the ball fields. The site is next to Kings Way Christian School and the parks department would partner with the school in which the school could

use the ball fields at times and the public could use the school sports fields at times.

The county looked at two other sites. Because of the cost of land, the county considered only county property. The other two sites were WSU's agriculture field station on 78th and a park near the fairgrounds. The agriculture field station was ruled out because that will be devoted to demonstration agricultural projects (a good use) and the fairgrounds site, apparently, had too many environmental problems and it would be too expensive to mitigate for them.

About four-fifths, maybe more, of the site is now forest with a small forested wetland in the corner. To accommo-

date all those ball fields, more than half the forest will have to be cut down. The wetland would be protected with an 80-foot buffer. Six acres of the remaining forest would be the future neighborhood park, further reducing the number of trees. Until there is funding for the neighborhood park, the county proposes to put in nature trails and educational signs. The forested area remaining, including the wetland, looks to be close to the same size as the neighborhood park – not very large.

This ball field complex is a difficult issue for Vancouver Audubon. We would like to save all the forest. The nearby subdivision is practically devoid of trees. But we can't oppose children's need for ball fields, we can't be against kids. (Never mind that children also need nature. Organized sports are a big deal for kids.) The only way that the ball fields and the forest can be accommodated together is if there were fewer ball fields.

This issue – ball fields vs. trees – illustrates an important issue in this county. We do not have enough park land to serve the population the county seems determined to bring here. We don't have enough parks for the people here now. The Clark County standard is six acres per 1000 people. The national standard is 10 acres per 1000 people. There is a tremendous demand for sports fields for kid's organized sports. Small children need places to play. People want everything from skate boarding parks to dog parks. We want more natural areas and wildlife habitat. The county allowed growth without adequate consideration of the services we all need, including parks. Because of the high cost of land, fixing this problem will be difficult.

Global Warming and Cap and Trade

The cap and trade energy bill passed the House of Representatives this summer. It is a bad bill that absolutely had to pass. It is important that this country go on record as doing *something* about global warming, even if it is too little too late. There are some good things in the bill. At least, Obama will have something to take with him to the global warming summit in December. So, the environmental community celebrated. The bill will have a harder time in the Senate and will likely be weakened more. Although, maybe not.

Our congressman, Brian Baird, was an uncertain vote last June. He insisted that there be an amendment to allow biomass from federal forests be included as carbon offsets. This would include biomass from mature forests. Such an amendment was included in the bill and Baird voted for it. I have asked the Audubon National Office to find out how bad the forest biomass amendment is. Baird should be congratulated for voting for it, if just to encourage him to continue to support our issues.

Gretchen Starke



May 4-16, Susan and I visited southeast Arizona for a warm but enjoyable birding trip. We were joined by Barry and Kim Woodruff for the last nine days and saw many of the specialties of the region. Among the better birds seen were **SHORT-TAILED HAWK, WHITE-EARED HUMMINGBIRD, VIOLET-CROWNED HUMMINGBIRD, LUCIFER HUMMINGBIRD, SINALOA WREN, FLAME-COLORED TANAGER** and **RUFIOUS-CAPPED WARBLER**. Our most exciting find was the nest of the Rufous-capped Warbler, which was only the second nest ever found in the United States. As this was Barry's first birding visit to Arizona he was able to pick up 84 new species for his sightings list.

June 20, A singing male **INDIGO BUNTING** was found by Stuart Johnston along Bergen Road east of Home Valley in Skamania County. This is only the second record of this species for that county.

June 21, I made an early morning trip to see the **INDIGO BUNTING** near Home Valley where I was soon joined by Ken Knittle and Marv Breece in a short but successful hunt for this rarity.

July 2, Bob Flores checked the Ridgefield NWR, River "S" Unit for early southbound shorebirds and found **2 DUNLIN, 48 LEAST SANDPIPER, 3 LESSER** and **6 GREATER YELLOWLEGS**. Sandpipers are among the earliest migrant species we can see in this area.

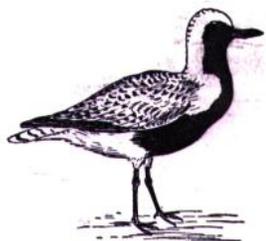
July 10, Tyler Hicks and Sidra Blake birded on Silver Star Mountain where they located **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** and a **ROCK WREN** calling and singing on Pyramid Rock where they are annual. Both of these species are more common east of the Cascades.



Calliope Hummingbird

July 11, Sidra Blake and Tyler Hicks checked the River "S" Unit of Ridgefield NWR and spotted a **SOLITARY SANDPIPER** and **SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER** among the more common species such as **GREATER YELLOWLEGS, LESSER YELLOWLEGS, LEAST SANDPIPER** and **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER**.

July 13, The Ridgefield River "S" Unit provided Jim Danzenbaker with a sighting of a **SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER** and he heard a **BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** as it flew over. A **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** was calling from the brush line to the East of Rest Lake where they have been a nester the last few years.



Black-bellied Plover

July 23, Jim Danzenbaker checked the River "S" Unit where he saw both **SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER** and **SEMIPALMATED PLOVER** and a **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER**. There were also at least **5 BANK SWALLOWS** flying over the

wetlands. Though these swallows are scarce west of the Cascades, they have begun nesting in some of the volcanic ash cliffs along the Cowlitz and Toutle Rivers.

July 23, Susan and I spent three days birding in Gray's Harbor County including a pelagic birding trip for me. Not only did we escape some of this summer's extreme heat we did see a female **KING EIDER** and a **RUFIOUS-NECKED STINT** in Ocean Shores.

July 31, A immature **RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** was seen at the Ridgefield NWR River "S" Unit by George Neavoll of Portland. Scott Carpenter also of Portland visited the River "S" Unit of Ridgefield NWR and saw a **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** among the many **WESTERN** and **LEAST SANDPIPERS**.



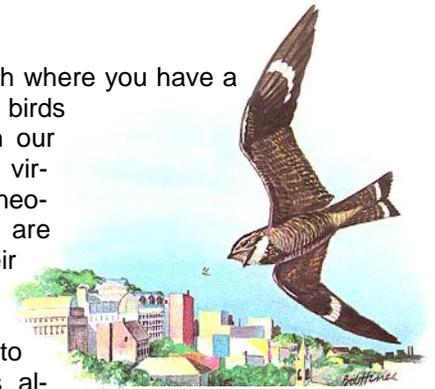
Red-shouldered hawk

Aug. 2, A male **NORTHERN GOSHAWK** was at Bob Flores' Ridgefield home where he also had a male **LAZULI BUNTING** at their feeder.

Al Larrabee found a **EURASIAN COLLARED DOVE** on the east side of I-5 in Ridgefield, the population of these recent arrivals is growing rapidly and they soon will be a common sighting.

He also reported having a **COMMON NIGHTHAWK** over his home in that area. These were once a common bird on the west side of the Cascades but now are seldom seen here.

September is a month where you have a rapid change in the birds that can be found in our area. The warblers, vireos and other neotropical migrants are moving south to their wintering grounds while the winter species begin filtering into the region. There is always the chance of finding a



Common Nighthawk

bird in these flocks that is unusual or rare in Clark County that is traveling with the more expected species. Most of the early arriving waterfowl will still be in "eclipse" plumage where the males and females are almost identical in appearance and the males won't begin to regain their coloration until mid-October. Shorebirds will continue to be seen through early fall and this is one of the better periods to find out of place birds. If you find any unusual birds please contact me or Arden and Sherry Hagen as soon as possible and continue sending me your sighting reports for this column.

Wilson Cady gorgebirds@juno.com

The Backyard & Beyond...

Arden & I led two 3-day Fund Raisers in June for VAS. The first trip was to Richland, WA. We had great weather and great birds on the way including very cooperative Canyon & Rock Wrens and an Ash-throated Flycatcher along the riparian zone. In the sage brush country, we got great views of both Sage Sparrow and Sage Thrasher. The main goal was the **Hanford Reach Boat Trip** on Saturday that ended up being a 5 hour tour. The boat captain knew the history of the area inside and out along with all the birds and animals that use the Reach. He knew we were birders and made sure that we saw them all. First we went by Gull Island where we got great views of little fuzz balls that were the young gulls fresh out of the nest begging for food. We saw nesting Bank & Cliff Swallows and a young Great Horned Owl being mobbed by Ravens along a cliff face. Other birds of note were pelicans, herons, egrets, etc. Earlier that day we had birded around the Richland area mostly along the rivers. After some morning birding on



Sunday, we all returned home to Vancouver.

The second trip was to the **Sisters, OR area**. We were mainly after **woodpeckers** since this is a great woodpecker haven. We saw 10 species of woodpeckers: Black-backed, Lewis's, White-headed, Three-toed, Downy, Hairy & Northern Flicker along with 3 members of the Sapsucker (woodpecker) family: Red-breasted, Red-napped & William's. We saw evidence of the Pileated but did not see one. Everyone but Arden and I were adding lifers to their lists. What excited me was the Northern Goshawk nest that was reported and easy to find. This is not an easy bird to see unless you know where they nest or hang out. We watched the parents and the 2 young ones still in the nest. We felt lucky to find that many woodpeckers, many still nesting, since the Woodpecker Festival had been held 2 weeks before. We weren't sure exactly how many we would find but many of the birds were still nesting and other birders are great about sharing or posting their finds with other birders. On Sunday, we birded our way through the burn areas again and the mountains before heading home.

Sherry Hagen, Happy Birding ☺

OUR CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE Sponsor ... AUDUBON ADVENTURES

It is that time of year again for 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:

"Action for Planet Earth"

Water
Energy
Habitats
Pennies for the Planet.

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 2009-10 school year.

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_____ 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

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



September 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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