



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Volume 44, Number 10

December 2019

Program

Hidden Lives of Owls

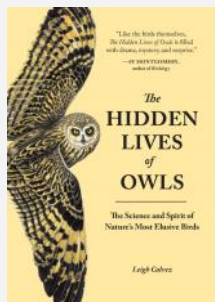
Leigh Calvez

Tuesday, December 3rd
Social 6:30pm, Program 7pm



Please join us on Tuesday for a presentation of *The Hidden Lives of Owls*! Naturalist Leigh Calvez pursues eleven different owl species—including the Barred, Flam-mulated, Northern Saw-Whet, Northern Pygmy, Northern Spotted, Burrowing, Snowy, and Great Gray. Leigh makes the science entertaining and accessible through the stories of the people who study these birds in the wild and her own avian adventures in the field.

Leigh Calvez is the author of the New York Times bestselling book *The Hidden Lives of Owls: The Science and Spirit of Nature's Most Elusive Birds*. Leigh studied humpback whales in Massachusetts and on Maui, along with spinner dolphins on the Big Island of Hawaii. Her interest in the natural world led her to nature writing. Leigh's work has been published in *American Nature Writing: 2003* by Fulcrum Books and in an anthology for Sierra Club Books entitled *Between Species: Celebrating the Dolphin-Human Bond*. She has also written articles and essays that have been published in the *Smithsonian Magazine*, *High Country News*, *Ecologist*, *Ocean Realm*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Seattle Times*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, and *Bainbridge Island Magazine*. Leigh's second book, *The Breath of a Whale*, was also published by Sasquatch books in February 2019.



West Park Community Room at 610 Esther St.

****The west side lot has been closed for construction purposes. A south lot was opened and is accessible from the Esther Street entrance. Of course, street parking is free after 6pm.**

VAS Field Trips

Ridgefield & Sauvie Island Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, December 15th
(backup date: Sunday, December 29th)

Contact: Susan Setterberg (compiler)
smsetterberg@yahoo.com 360-980-0884

Join us for our annual CBC! Volunteers are needed for this long-running citizen science event! The circle encompasses all of Sauvie Island (parking permits required) and some adjacent territory around Scappoose; Vancouver Lake and the lowlands, Salmon Creek area through Ridgefield, all of the Ridgefield NWR and some territory to the Lewis River.

For counting on the WA side of the river, contact Susan at smsetterberg@yahoo.com or 360-980-0884; for counting on the Oregon side of the river, contact Karen Bachman at 971-207-7754, pppahooie@comcast.net.

If you live in the count circle, feeder counters are welcome too!



Monthly Bird Walks

First Day of the Month

These walks are intended for those wanting to enjoy the wildlife along the way and those wanting to learn or improve identification skills by sight and/or sound. These walks will be eBirded.

December 1st

Vancouver Lake County Park

Meet at the [flushing channel parking area](#) on Lower River Road (east side of the road where the road splits) at 8:30am. We will check the water at this location, then walk along the paved trail to the north trail, an improved unpaved trail.

January 1st

Great opportunity to get your first birds of the new year! Location to be determined. Check the website or Facebook for meeting location and time.

For more information, contact Cindy at
nwbirder@gmail.com



Vancouver Audubon Society

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Facebook | [@VancouverAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/VancouverAudubon)

Chartered December 18, 1975

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The Columbia Flyway is published monthly September through June (except January).

Vancouver Audubon Board Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month August through May in various locations (announced in newsletter).

Membership meetings and programs are held on the first Tuesday of the month September through June (except January).

Program meetings are held at the [West Park Community Room at 610 Esther St.](#) (just across the street from the west end of Esther Short Park, or kitty-corner from City Hall). Parking lot can be accessed from Esther Street. There is an entrance at either side of the building.

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



Vancouver Audubon Society Membership & Donation Form

Membership dues support education, speaker programs, newsletter, and conservation projects.

_____ I wish to become a member/renew membership to Vancouver Audubon for \$20/year.

_____ I wish to support Vancouver Audubon with an additional donation of \$_____

_____ I wish only to support Vancouver Audubon with a donations of \$_____

**Membership Renewal
date:
September 1st**

Please include this form and make check payable to and send to:

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

For more information:

George Mayfield 360-360-687-0360 (membership)

VAS will not share your information with any other organization.

VAS is a non-profit organization under US IRS Code Section 501(c)(3).

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____ (req'd for newsletter)

For additional information on membership to National Audubon (Chapter # **Y13**) , got to <http://www.audubon.org/>

Join the December 6th Climate Strike

The September 20, 2019, Climate Strike was the largest day of action for climate justice ever. On December 6, as world leaders gather at the United Nation's annual climate conference, young people across America will join a national Climate Strike to take the momentum from September to our elected officials' doorsteps.

In September, many politicians shared nice words of encouragement. But, our lives depend on elected leaders treating this crisis like the emergency it is. We need more than just kind words--we need clear commitments to action.



Photo from Sunrise Movement SW WA post

The Vancouver Climate Strike will be held at
4 pm on December 6 at the
Vancouver Waterfront, 115 SE Columbia Way.

Bring signs and strike in solidarity with the U.S. Youth Climate Strike Coalition. Our local strike is organized by [Sunrise Movement Southwest Washington](#). This strike will continue the climate justice momentum into 2020, a critical year for electing climate champions who will take action to address this crisis.

Also check out [National Audubon Society's Guide to Climate Action](#) for ideas about what you can do to make a difference. www.audubon.org/climate-action-guide

By Susan Saul

Defend the Roadless Rule

For nearly 20 years, the federal National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Rule has prohibited road-building and logging on nearly 60 million acres of the country's most pristine national forest land, including roadless areas in our local Gifford Pinchot National Forest.

The Roadless Rule currently protects more than half of the nearly 17-million-acre [Tongass National Forest](#) in Alaska. Part of the largest remaining temperate rainforest on Earth, the Tongass hosts the Prince of Wales Spruce Grouse and the Queen Charlotte Goshawk, a subspecies of Northern Goshawk that hunts and breeds exclusively in old-growth forests. These wild areas are in jeopardy: the U.S. Forest Service has proposed to eliminate all roadless areas in Alaska's Tongass National Forest, the largest old-growth temperate rainforest remaining on Earth. This proposal

also sets a precedent that threatens the future of roadless areas on national forests in Washington.



Spruce Grouse (juvenile), Audubon Alaska

The U.S. Forest Service has a public comment period open until December 16 on its draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposal to exempt the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Rule. [Washington Wild has an online form](#) to make it easy to comment.

By Susan Saul

Finding a Snipe

"What's that," someone said, and I whipped around. Just 10 feet off the dike at Wiley Slough sat a plump, melon-sized shorebird, standing on only one foot. It sat sideways, its long bill pointing down the log, its right eye glued on us, a perfect profile. The key field marks -- white buffy eye-stripe, crown stripe, back streaks, buffy chest, and barred sides -- were all visible.

I stuttered for several seconds before "Wilson's Snipe" came out. It was rare to have such a good view, so close. For most of my sightings, this bird had exploded out of a marsh, like a cannonball. It then zig-zagged and disappeared instantly. Their extra-large flight muscles give them that chunky look and also allow them to fly extremely fast, immediately hitting top speeds. People hunt this solitary sandpiper, and successfully shooting one is tough, taking a lot of skill. The word sniper in our lexicon comes from that ability.

Last summer, Wilson's Snipes were displaying around Roger and Tiffany Lakes in the North Cascades. In the mornings and evenings, winnowing drifted through the subalpine landscape. Occasionally, I spotted a bird cruising across the sky, just barely visible in the subdued light. They make that sound with the outer tail feathers. Spreading the rectrices while flying, the resulting airflow vibrates. They modulate the tone by controlling the beating of their wings. That haunting chord is part of their territory defense and an advertisement for females.

They have a sexual call, too, often given on the ground by either sex. Last summer, it had me stymied for the longest



time. I kept searching for the source, never finding the bird, but finally realizing it was a snipe responding to the overhead winnowing.

The eyes on these birds are set way back on the sides of their heads. They have binocular vision out the back. Consequently, their sight is excellent while they have their bill stuck down into the mud. Their eye location is a good strategy for detecting a predator while they feed. The tip of that long bill is full of sense organs and flexible, allowing them to capture prey without having to pull it back out of the mud. Females have slightly longer bills than males.

The bird shifted position, giving us a face-on view of its pectoral muscles and the barring on its chest, but it still kept that right eye zoomed right on us. We backed slowly away, trying not to disturb it.

"Now you can tell your friends you went snipe hunting," I said to the ten people in my birding group. No one laughed; they just glared at me.

Listen:



A long recording of winnowing. A Yellow-rumped Warbler is in it too, and the ground calls of the snipe are in the background. There is also a rail.



This second one is of a bird calling from the ground. It is their song.



By Tom Bancroft

Oct. 20, A **GOLDEN EAGLE** was reported from the Ridgefield NWR--Carty Unit by Pam Spring.

Oct. 21, a juvenile **SURF SCOTER** was found by Cindy McCormack in Skamania County at the Rock Creek Mill Pond in Stevenson. This was part of an influx of all three scoters in the Gorge this fall.

On the same day, in the Columbia River near the Old Apple Tree Park, 2 **BLACK SCOTERS** were spotted by Ken Vanderkamp, the scoter sightings ranged all the way up the Gorge at least to The Dalles. On the same outing he found a **RED-NECKED GREBE** at Marine Park.

Bob Flores identified 2 Aleutian **CAACKLING GEESE** on the Fruit Valley sewage lagoon, these birds are the rarest form of the arctic nesting Cackling Geese. These ponds can be easily viewed from the dike on the south side of the ponds, for some reason these rich waters attract a lot of interesting birds including Ruddy Ducks and even a Long-tailed Duck one winter.

Oct. 23, a late to migrate **TURKEY VULTURE** was spotted over the WSU Vancouver Campus by Jim Johnson.

Oct. 25, When Susan and I checked, the **SURF SCOTER**, 2 **RUDDY DUCKS** and 3 **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE** were still at Rock Creek in Stevenson. These arctic nesting geese are hanging out with domestic geese at the fair-ground park and allow you a very close approach for photos. On the mudflats at the now drained lake at Skamania Landing there were hundreds of **AMERICAN WIGEON** with 1 male **EURASIAN WIGEON** among them. At Franz Lake NWR we counted 8 **TRUMPETER SWANS** and 32 **TUN-DRA SWANS** just below the roadside viewing platform, the swan numbers will increase and they will be there until rising water makes it diffi-

cult to reach the tubers of the Wapato that grow there.

Oct. 28, a **RED-NECKED GREBE** was spotted at Marine Park by Randy Hill who also found a **PACIFIC LOON** at Tomahawk Bar which is across from Hayden Island.

Oct. 21, While working in our woods I flushed a **RUFFED GROUSE** and heard a **NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL**.



Ruffed Grouse, photo by Bud McCormack

Nov. 1, another **RED-NECKED GREBE** was found by Jim Danzenbaker in the Columbia River, this one was at Frenchman's Park.

In the Vancouver Lowlands at the end of Lower River Road, Randy Hill found a **BLACK SWAN**, this species is from Australia but there are a breeding pair at a condo-

minium on the Vancouver waterfront where the young birds are not pinioned and are allowed to escape.

2 **EARED GREBES**, 16 **AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS** were reported by Les Carlson, Randy Hill, Jim Danzenbaker and Robert Vanderkamp from Vancouver Lake.

A wintering **COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** was found by Jim Johnson along the Burnt Bridge Creek - Steward Glen Trail.

Nov. 2, a **RED-BREASTED MERGANSER** was spotted by Ken and Robert Vanderkamp along the Vancouver--Columbia River Boardwalk.

Nov. 3, 2 **MOUNTAIN CHICKADEES** were in Randy Hill's yard on 162nd St., they are a scarce visitor to the lower elevations west of the Cascades.

Nov. 5, Bob Flores found the Vancouver Lake Flushing Channel running strong and the birds have moved to the channel inlet to feed on small fish mostly they were **DOUBLE-CRESTED COR-**

(Continued on page 6)

(Afield continued from page 5)

MORANTS, COMMON MERGANSERS and gulls but he did pick out 2 **RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS**, 1 **CLARK'S GREBE** and in the distance 63 **AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS**.

Nov. 8, the 2 **EARED GREBES** and 2 **RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS** were confirmed to be still at Vancouver lake by Cindy McCormack.

Nov. 9, juvenile **MUTE SWAN** was reported by Ann Marie Wood from the Ridgefield NWR River 'S' Unit, and another one also seen minutes later at the Carty Unit by Robert Vanderkamp. In Washington all Mute Swans are considered to be escapees.

William Brooks and Peter Wimberger found an adult **ROSS'S GOOSE** along Lower River Road in a big flock of **SNOW, CACKLING** and **CANADA GEESE** just before the entrance to Frenchman's Bar Park.

Nov. 13, Bob Rowe spotted a **SHARP-SHINNED HAWK** at Behren's Woods, just above Highway 14 and Bella Vista Road.

Nov. 14, A Red **FOX SPARROW** was at Les Carlson's Hazel Dell area feeders for the third year in a row. This subspecies breeds east of the Rocky Mountains from the Yukon to the east coast. There are four subspecies of Fox Sparrows and they are being studied to see if they should be split into separate species. All four subspecies have been seen in our area.

Nov. 17, A **MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE** was with the Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees at our feeders east of Washougal, this was the first one in eleven years and only our fifth in 45 years.

Nov. 19, At the Old Apple Tree Park along the Vancouver waterfront Jim Danzenbaker saw the continuing **RED-NECKED GREBE** and a **RED-THROATED LOON**.

Nov. 20, Despite it being so late in the fall, Cindy McCormack managed to find an amazing four species of warblers at Vancouver Lake, **COM-**



American White Pelicans, photo by Bud McCormack

MON YEL-LOWTHROAT, YEL-LOW-RUMPED WARBLER, TOWNSEND'S WARBLER and a **WILSON'S WARBLER**.

In exciting news, the Washington Bird

Records Committee accepted a **RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** seen October 24-25, 2017, by Bob Flores at his Ridgefield home, as the state's first record of this east coast species. Checking out each bird that comes to your feeders can turn up some great birds, it makes me wonder how many rare birds show up at feeders where no one identifies them.

A neighbor alerted me to a **GIANT WOOD-RAIL** that I saw and reported February 25-28, 2016, in Washougal, it was not accepted by the Bird Records Committee as this South American species is non-migratory and sold in the pet trade. This bird about twenty inches high and unlike our rails it lives in the woods along creeks and marshes, I'm not sure why anyone would want one as a pet, they are louder than a Peacock.



Giant Wood-Rail

The wintering ducks were just beginning to arrive in early November, but soon there will be rafts of scaup on the Columbia River, that like the flocks of geese, can hold a few surprises. These flocks are gathered over sand and gravel bars feeding on freshwater clams and mussels which is what the scoters, which are usually on saltwater are feeding on too.

As of November 20th, the list of birds reported so far in 2019 stood at 234 in Clark County and 193 in Skamania County, to see the list and those for all 39 counties go to <http://wabirder.com/bartel.html> to see the Washington County Year-list Project. Please let me know if there are any Clark or Skamania County sightings that need added or changed.

By Wilson Cady

Annual Budget Review and Proposal

Below is the proposed budget for 2020 with comparisons to 2019 budget and 2018 actual numbers. At the December 3rd membership meeting, we will vote on the adoption of this budget. Comments and questions will be welcome at the meeting or contact Treasurer Joan @ jdurgin1@hotmail.com or President Arden @ iambaker-man@comcast.net with any questions before the Dec 3rd.

Vancouver Audubon Budget

	2018	2019	2020
	Actual	Budget	Proposed Budget
Operating Fund			
Revenue			
Bank Interest	\$ 9	\$ 10	\$ 10
Refreshment Fund	38	25	25
Memberships	1,430	2,000	1,600
Donations	1,225	1,500	1,500
Doris Troxel Trust (Use on education)	686	400	600
Audubon Adventures	50		300
Fundraising:			
Birding Trip		1,150	
Backyard Bird Shop	522	450	600
National Audubon Society	1,786	1,785	1,785
Store and yard sales	95	100	
Community Foundation	7,806	7,500	7,000
Refunds	230		
Total Revenue	\$ 13,877	\$ 14,920	\$ 13,420
Expenses			
Administration:			
Postage		25	275
Printing			200
Software	94	50	50
PO Box Rental	102	110	125
Wa State Non-profit filing fee	10	10	10
Refreshments for mtgs	58	80	100
Conservation:			
Conferences/Comm mtgs	85	500	750
Donations:			
Audubon Washington	2,000	2,000	2,000
PDX Wildlife Care Center		250	250
Intertwine Alliance		250	250
Dues/Memberships:			
Columbia Land Trust	100	100	100
Wa Environmental Council	100	100	100
Friends of the Columbia Gorge		100	100
Nature Conservancy	100	100	100
Columbia Springs	100	100	100
Newsletter:			
Printing	1,170	1,300	
Postage	745	800	
Bulk mail permit	225	235	
Outreach:			
Audubon Adventures			600
Home and Garden Show			100
Friends of the Gorge	5,000		
Grants	2,000	7,500	7,000
Programs:			
Speaker travel	200	700	1,000
Website	107	110	110
Rent	399	400	
Misc	100	100	100
Total Expenses	12,695	14,920	13,420
Net Income	\$ 1,182	\$ -	\$ -

NWR Updates

Ridgefield NWR "S" Unit

Public access improvement: River "S" Bridge Replacement

Additional Closure on River "S" through December

The River 'S' Unit/AutoTour of the Refuge will be closed to ALL PUBLIC ACCESS Sunday - Friday, through December 2019 due to the inability to provide safe access across the Lake River bridge. A professional flagger will be provided to assist with crossing on Saturdays only.

Ridgefield NWR Carty Unit

Carty Unit/Refuge Office - Detour on Main Ave

A detour to the Carty Unit is in place through December 2019. To access the Refuge, please follow temporary orange construction detour signs placed in town. Look for signs off of Pioneer directing you north on Reimen Road (just east of 9th Ave).

Check Refuge2020.info to get the most recent information about the many wildlife habitat and public access improvements to be completed or underway by 2020.



Support the education of our future!

Vancouver Audubon gathers donations to purchase education materials for elementary school students through a program called [Audubon Adventures](http://AudubonAdventures.org). Students learn all about birds and their environmental needs!

Each kit costs \$45.95 and provides students with educational magazines and teachers with lesson plans! Please consider donating to Audubon Adventures by sending a check in the mail (P.O. Box 1966, Vancouver, WA 98668-1966) or donating during the general meeting.

The kids and teachers of Clark county are so grateful to you for your support!

By Sam Neuffer

Field Trip Report

Wahkiakum County Field Trip

November 9, 2019

Five of us met at 7:30am to make the trip north and west to Wahkiakum County. We had fairly steady rain on the drive and we unfortunately ran into a major traffic jam, miles south of our exit off of I-5. The terrible accident causing the back-up was right next to our exit, and the drive to the Longview exit took about an hour and quarter longer than usual! Ugh! However, at least in my car, we stayed plenty entertained by Fran's crazy travel stories.

Since it took so long, Joan talked us into a bathroom and coffee stop in Longview (ahhhh!), then we headed on to Julia Butler Hansen National Wildlife Refuge. It was still a little wet with some intermittent light showers, but we still ran into some good birds. A great mixed flock near the main office presented great opportunities to compare Hutton's Vireo and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Golden-crowned Kinglets were plentiful, as were waterfowl and sparrows. Black Phoebees were working the slough and American Goldfinch were still foraging seeds in the weeds along the road.

After we drove and strolled through parts of the refuge, we decided to try for the Barn Owl at the Land Trust barn near Skamokawa, then head towards Altoona and Grays Bay right away since we lost so much time on the road. We dipped on the owls, as they did not appear to be in residence at the two buildings checked. Must have taken the rainy day in one of the other outbuildings.

The water was not high enough to flood the low fields near Rosburg, so there weren't any waterfowl or shorebirds along that area. However, the stop near Pigeon Bluffs before Altoona was quite productive! The hillside above was quite busy with passerines, including several Townsend's Warblers. An immature Bald Eagle was harassing the scaup just off the point, putting on a great show for us! The fog and mist made distant viewing difficult, but we all had good views of Common, Red-throated, and Pacific Loons; Pied-billed, Western, Red-necked and Horned Grebes; Spotted Sandpipers; both Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorants; and amongst the hundreds of scaup, a single Long-tailed Duck! This petite sea duck is one of my favorites, a great treat to have on the river!

We only traveled a little further towards Altoona before heading back to the highway. We wanted to try to get at least a little time on Puget Island before it got dark. We made our way back to Cathlamet and crossed over to Puget Island. We had great views of a Peregrine Falcon perched on a channel marker, plenty of geese, blackbirds and starlings, but not the hoped-for White-breasted Nuthatch, a bird Randy needs for his county list. The heavily overcast skies and fog made dusk seem very early, making viewing more and more difficult. We started the trip back, and I for one, thoroughly enjoyed the company on this trip!

Mammals: Columbia White-tailed Deer, Elk, Douglas' Squirrel, Harbor Seal, California Sea Lion

Trip bird list:

Cackling Goose	Eurasian Collared-Dove	Red-tailed Hawk	European Starling
Canada Goose	Mourning Dove	Belted Kingfisher	Hermit Thrush
Tundra/Trumpeter Swans	Pied-billed Grebe	Downy Woodpecker	American Robin
Wood Duck	Horned Grebe	Northern Flicker	House Sparrow
Northern Shoveler	Red-necked Grebe	American Kestrel	House Finch
Gadwall	Western Grebe	Peregrine Falcon	Pine Siskin
American Wigeon	Spotted Sandpiper	Black Phoebe	American Goldfinch
Mallard	Mew Gull	Hutton's Vireo	Fox Sparrow
Northern Pintail	Ring-billed Gull	Steller's Jay	Dark-eyed Junco
Green-winged Teal	Western x Glaucous-winged	California Scrub-Jay	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Canvasback	Gull	American Crow	Song Sparrow
Ring-necked Duck	Gull spp.	Common Raven	Spotted Towhee
Lesser Scaup	Red-throated Loon	Black-capped Chickadee	Red-winged Blackbird
Greater Scaup	Pacific Loon	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	Brewer's Blackbird
Surf Scoter	Common Loon	Bushtit	Townsend's Warbler
Long-tailed Duck	Pelagic Cormorant	Golden-crowned Kinglet	
Bufflehead	Double-crested Cormorant	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	
Common Goldeneye	Great Blue Heron	Red-breasted Nuthatch	
Common Merganser	Great Egret	Brown Creeper	
Red-breasted Merganser	Northern Harrier	Pacific Wren	
Hooded Merganser	Accipiter spp.	Marsh Wren	
Ruddy Duck	Bald Eagle	Bewick's Wren	

*By Cindy McCormack
& Randy Hill*

Audubon's Christmas Bird Count

What is the Christmas Bird Count?

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a long-standing program of the National Audubon Society, with over 100 years of community science involvement. It is an early-winter bird census, where thousands of volunteers across the U.S., Canada, and many countries in the Western Hemisphere go out over a 24-hour period on one calendar day to count birds.

How the count started, and how the data is used today

Prior to the turn of the 20th century, hunters engaged in a holiday tradition known as the Christmas "Side Hunt." They would choose sides and go afield with their guns—whoever brought in the biggest pile of feathered (and furred) quarry won.

Conservation was in its beginning stages in that era, and many observers and scientists were becoming concerned about declining bird populations. Beginning on Christmas Day 1900, ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, an early officer in the then-nascent Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday tradition—a "Christmas Bird Census" that would count birds during the holidays rather than hunt them.

So began the Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to the inspiration of Chapman and the enthusiasm of 27 dedicated birders, 25 Christmas Bird Counts were held that day. The locations ranged from Toronto, Ontario to Pacific Grove, California with most counts in or near the population centers of northeastern North America. [Those original 27 Christmas Bird Counters tallied around 90 species on all the counts combined.](#)

From December 14 through January 5 each year, tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas brave snow, wind, or rain, and take part in the effort. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this long-

running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations, and to help guide conservation action.

How the Christmas Bird Count Helps Protect Species and Their Habitat

The data collected by observers over the past century allow Audubon researchers, conservation biologists, wildlife agencies and other interested individuals to study the long

-term health and status of bird populations across North America.

When combined with other surveys such as the Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past 100 years.

The long term perspective is vital for conservationists. It informs strategies to protect birds and their habitat, and helps identify environmental issues with implications for



Bonnie Bingle & Bob Rowe counting birds at Vancouver Lake during for a CBC. Photo by Susan Saul

people as well.

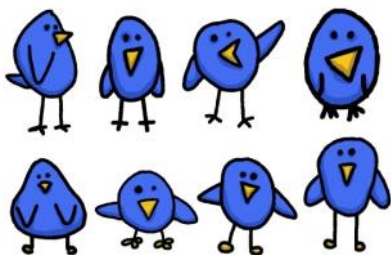
What conservationists have learned through Christmas Bird Count data

[Audubon's 2014 Climate Change Report](#) is a comprehensive, first-of-its kind study that predicts how climate change could affect the ranges of 588 North American birds. Of the 588 North American bird species Audubon studied, more than half are likely to be in trouble. Our models indicate that 314 species will lose more than 50 percent of their current climatic range by 2080.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has included Audubon's climate change work from CBC data as one of 26 indicators of climate change in their [2012 report](#).

In 2009 CBC data were instrumental in the collaborative report by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - [State of the Birds 2009](#).

(CBC, continued on page 10)



Vancouver Audubon is on Facebook!

Follow our page [@VancouverAudubon](#) to get up-to-date announcements, news, and events from Vancouver Audubon! We also added a group page—you can find the group by just selecting the button "Visit Group" under our page banner. Join the group to share your nature photos and experiences, or to even get ID help!



In 2007, CBC data were instrumental in the development of [Audubon's Common Birds in Decline Report](#), which revealed that some of America's most beloved and familiar birds have taken a nosedive over the past forty years.

Audubon's 120th Christmas Bird Count will be conducted Saturday, Dec 14, 2019-Sunday, Jan 5, 2020

Since the Christmas Bird Count began over a century ago, it has relied on the dedication and commitment of volunteers like you. Participate in as many counts as you wish! Contact the area compilers of the areas that interest you.

How does participation work?

There is a specific methodology to the CBC, and all participants must make arrangements to participate in advance with the circle compiler within an established circle, but anyone can participate.

Each count takes place in an established 15-mile wide diameter circle, and is organized by a count compiler. Count volunteers follow specified routes through a designated 15-mile (24-km) diameter circle, counting every bird they see or hear all day. It's not just a species tally—all birds are counted all day, giving an indication of the total number of birds in the circle that day.

If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birder.

If your home is within the boundaries of a CBC circle, then you can stay at home and report the birds that visit your feeder on count day as long as you have made prior arrangement with the count compiler.

Since it is free, how is this program funded?

The Christmas Bird Count relies 100 percent on [donations](#) to provide support to compilers and volunteers on count day, to manage the historic database, and to fund the technology to make historic data available to researchers. The data collected by CBC participants over the past century and more have become one of only two large pools of information informing ornithologists and conservation biologists how the birds of the Americas are faring over time.

[From NAS CBC website](#)

FYI

Washington Ornithological Society keeps a [current list of Washington CBCs](#), their dates, and contact information.

Volunteer Opportunities

VAS Program Chair

Help! We need your talents and ideas as a new volunteer to take over the position as program chair! We hope you would like to take an active part in our group and help plan and organize the wonderful presentations we all enjoy. Please contact Arden or any member of the board if you are interested for more information! Arden Hagen: 360-892-8872 or iambakerman@comcast.net

Ridgefield/Vancouver/Sauvie CBC

December 15th

See page 1 for info. Participate in a citizen science project—the annual Christmas Bird Count!

Contact Susan Setterberg at smsetterberg@yahoo.com or call 360-980-0884.

Field Trip Leaders

Interested in sharing your knowledge and enjoyment of birds, animals, plants or other nature activities?

Contact Arden Hagen: 360-892-8872 or iambakerman@comcast.net

Gone Green with the VAS Newsletter!

VAS has transitioned to an all-digital newsletter format this fall. To continue receiving a VAS newsletter, be sure we have your correct email address. An e-newsletter saves paper, printing and mailing costs. Since our printed edition numbers had fallen so low, the publisher would no longer set the press for them. Digitally, you can enjoy the newsletter in full color and easily follow hyperlinks!

E-mail George at gomayf@comcast.net to have the PDF version of *The Columbia Flyway* sent to you.

PDF version also available on the website:

vancouveraudubon.org

New VAS Flyway Feature

I thought we might try a new regular feature section! Let's make use of those partial or poor photos! If there are identifiable features in the photo, submit your photo for our next challenge!

Uncertain about identification or if photo has enough info? Don't hesitate to send it in for discussion and review.

Of course, if you wish to share your good photos with your fellow VAS members, you are welcome to submit them for publishing.

Send questions, comments, and submissions to Cindy at nwbirder@gmail.com.

Let's start with a fairly simple challenge photo.

Bird ID Challenge

Can you identify this bird?

Identification and complete description will be available in the next newsletter and on the website in January.



Photo: Cindy McCormack

INJURED WILDLIFE: WHAT TO DO?

Injured Wildlife Hotline: 503-292-0304

The nearest wildlife care and rehabilitation center is operated by Portland Audubon. Here are some general guidelines from their [Wildlife Care Center](#):

1. [Prioritize your safety](#)

2. [Safely contain the animal](#)

3. Keep the animal calm and secure until you can take it to the Wildlife Care Center

- **Do not handle the animal** any more than necessary to contain it – this is for your protection as well as for the animal's well being. Wild animals are terrified of humans. They may fight back, try to flee, or freeze. Many people mistake the "freeze" behavior for tolerance or enjoyment of contact, when in reality it is a fear response. Limiting contact will reduce stress on the animal.
- **Keep the animal in a warm, dark, and quiet space.** Keep them away from children and pets.
- **Many animals benefit from a heating pad** set on low under half their enclosure, or a sock filled with dry rice and microwaved for 2-3 minutes.
- **Do not feed the animal.**
- **Be cautious when choosing to leave water.** Many wild animals do not drink standing water, and attempting to help them drink can result in pneumonia. In addition, if an animal spills its water and gets wet, it could get cold and may die. If in doubt, it is better not to leave water.

Bring the animal to the Wildlife Care Center as soon as you can. If you can't bring it to the center during our open hours, or you believe the animal is in critical condition and needs immediate attention after hours, the Wildlife Care Center has a partnership with the [24 hour Emergency Veterinary Hospital Dove Lewis](#). To get in touch with them, call (503) 228-7281.

If you are unable to transport to the care center, try calling Arden 360-635-1828 (c) or 360-892-8872(h). If he is available to transport a bird, you will be asked to donate a gas mileage compensation and a small donation for the Care Center for the care of the bird at the time of pick up.

The Wildlife Care Center admits native wild patients and operates its Injured Wildlife Hotline from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., 365 days a year.



Upcoming Events

November 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
24	25 Board Mtg	26	27	28 Thanksgiving	29	30

December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Bird Walk: Vancouver Lake	2	3 Program: Hidden Lives of Owls	4	5	6 Vancouver Climate Strike	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Christmas Bird Count (CBC)	16 Roadless area comment deadline	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Christmas	26	27	28
29 Back-up date for CBC	30	31 New Year's Eve	Jan. 1 Happy New Year! Bird Walk			

Nov. 25th: Board Meeting hosted by Joan Durgin

Dec. 1st: Bird Walk, Vancouver Lake, 8:30am

Dec. 3rd: Monthly Meeting & Program: Hidden Lives of Owls, Leigh Calvez, 6:30 pm Social, 7pm Program, *Westpark Community Center, 610 Esther St., Vancouver*

Dec. 15th: Ridgefield/Vancouver Annual Christmas Bird Count

Dec. 29th: Back-up date for Christmas Bird Count

Jan. 1st: Monthly Bird Walk

Jan. 28th: Board Meeting

Contents

Monthly Program	1
Field Trips	1
VAS Board & Chairs	2
Membership/Donation form	2
Conservation	3
Wilson Cady's Afield	5
Ridgefield Updates	7
Field Trip Report	8
Volunteer Opportunities	10
Injured Wildlife	11

**A big THANK YOU to Vancouver's Backyard Bird
Shop for their donations and support!**



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