



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

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May 2021

World Migratory Bird Day

Join the global celebration of birds and nature on May 8, 2021!

“Sing, Fly, Soar – Like a Bird!” is the theme of this year’s World Migratory Bird Day, an annual global campaign dedicated to raising awareness of migratory birds and the need for international cooperation to conserve them.

This year the campaign will focus on the phenomena of “bird song” and “bird flight” as a way to inspire and connect people of all ages around the world in their shared desire to celebrate migratory birds and to unite in a common, global effort to protect birds and the habitats they need to survive.



The 2021 World Migratory Bird Day theme is an invitation to people everywhere to connect and re-connect with nature by actively listening to - and watching birds - wherever they are. At the same time the theme appeals to people around the world to use their own voices and creativity to express their shared appreciation of birds and nature.

Birds can be found everywhere: in cities and in the countryside; in parks and backyards, in forests and mountains, and in wetlands and along the shores. They connect all these habitats and they connect us, reminding us of our own connection to the planet, the environment, wildlife and each other. Through their seasonal movements, migratory birds are also regularly reminding us of nature’s cycles.

As global ambassadors of nature, migratory birds not only connect different places across the planet, they also re-

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Washington Legislature Passes Historic Climate Bills

By Susan Saul

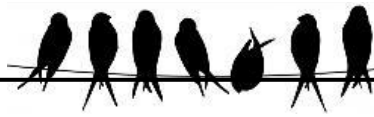
The Washington Legislature closed its 2021 session with bold action for our climate, our health, our communities, birds and our future by sending the Climate Commitment Act and the Clean Fuels Standard to Governor Inslee’s desk for signature.

Both bills propel us to the leading edge of tackling climate change head-on and doing so in a way that addresses the devastating impacts of air pollution in our overburdened communities--alongside directing deep investments to build a more resilient and healthier Washington. These two bills are part of our work for cleaner air, real growth in our clean energy economy, and a more equitable and just Washington.

The Climate Commitment Act is the most comprehensive carbon pricing system in the nation, taking critical lessons from California’s program. This includes addressing persistent air pollution in frontline communities, using the Environmental Justice Council from the HEAL Act to review and be in a leadership position to adapt the program, and integrating key priorities to uphold tribal sovereignty. The program also generates significant resources to invest in carbon emission reduction priorities across the economy, including transportation, natural climate solutions, and our built environment.

The Clean Fuel Standard syncs Washington State up with the rest of the West Coast by lowering the carbon content of transportation fuels to 20% below the 2017 levels by 2038. Functionally, this will reduce millions of tons of climate emissions, clear the air of dangerous pollutants from diesel and gasoline, and result in millions of dollars of targeted investments for a cleaner transportation system powered by local renewable fuels.

Together, these bills represent transformational environmental progress and are the result of more than a decade of advocacy and community building work.



From the VAS Board

By Cindy McCormack

Happy, happy Spring!

I hope you all are getting out to enjoy the arrival of our migratory breeding birds! It's an absolute wonder to realize how far many of them have come to raise their families (hopefully successfully).

I highly recommend taking some time in the very early morning, or just before sunset, and head to Ridgefield's "S" unit, Shillapoo Wildlife Area, or similar area, and just sit and enjoy the sights, sounds, and scents of a wetland in the spring.

One of most enjoyable aspects of migration is finding and hearing your firsts of the season (or even more exciting, a rarity for our area!). It's such a pleasure to welcome them back!

We were hoping to be able to share these kind of experiences as a group before the season began, and I know many of us have been getting the question "When will field trips start again?" quite often. We have been hesitant about any formal group activities until the vaccine becomes more accessible (now it is), the state's and region's restriction level allows for it, and when we can get some structured guidelines in place. Field trip

protocols and scheduling will be a topic of discussion at the upcoming board meeting. We should have an update at the May meeting and in the June newsletter.

VAS President Sam Neuffer attended (virtually) the April 19th city council meeting to accept and thank the mayor for signing the Bird-Friendly Week Proclamation. This has been a great start in moving towards increasing awareness in the role habitat and birds have in making the city a better place to live. Susan Saul did a fabulous job in preparing for and writing the proclamation for submission. Bravo, Susan!

We hope to keep moving forward, encourage native plantings and invasive plant removal, promote reduced carbon emissions and increased green space, and to advocate for bird-friendly building practices.

We would like to encourage you help make a healthier urban landscape by signing up for a walkthrough and progress towards a [Backyard Habitat Certification](#).

May's program should be a great introduction to the work COASST volunteers do and the valuable data they collect. We hope you can join us!



Vancouver Audubon Society

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Vancouver Audubon Board Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month August through May.

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

Program meetings are usually 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.

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

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



Programs

Upcoming Vancouver Audubon Programs

During pandemic restrictions, we will be presenting virtual meeting using Zoom, which allows Vancouver Audubon Chapter members to participate in meetings and educational presentations through their home computer, laptop, or even your smart phone. We will ask attendees to register in advance. VAS members will receive an invitation to the webinar through a link in their email, but invitations can be sent out on request.

Starting at 6:30pm, the first 30 minutes of this meeting will be a social time when members will be able to interact through live audio and video. During the presentation starting at 7:00, no audio or video will be allowed for attendees. Written questions submitted through Chat or Q & A can be answered at the end of the program.

The following programs are currently scheduled, all start at 7:00 pm (social time at 6:30pm). We hope you will join us!

Contact Don Rose for more information or to get a Zoom invitation: meetings@vancouveraudubon.org



Lobed toes of a grebe
Photo by C. McCormack

May 4 – COASTAL OBSERVATION AND SEABIRD SURVEY TEAM ([COASST](#))

Dr. Julia Parish, Executive Director for COASST (Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team), will talk about the importance of citizen science, how the COASST program has fared during the COVID quarantine, and how volunteers can be involved in the future.

The Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team is a 20 year old citizen science project housed at the University of Washington and focused on the beach environment of the northeast Pacific. Since our beginning, over 4,000 participants on more than 450 beaches spanning four states have contributed directly to monitoring their local marine resources and ecosystem health.

June 1 – Jeff Fleischer, Coordinator for the Raptor Survey Program. Jeff has been coordinating the Raptor Survey Program for 17 years and has high quality slides and data for 31 different raptors in the west. He will discuss the density and distribution of the primary species in the project, including where different species “hang out” in the project area each winter.

Remember, we don't have regularly scheduled programs or newsletters for July and August. Any special events will be announced via email, through the website, and on Facebook.

Join the meeting early! At 6:30pm we would love to see and hear from you! We can use the first half hour to chat, hear about your sightings and/or look at photos!



Field Trip Update

As the vaccine rollout progresses and when COVID restrictions are lifted, the board will be discussing the possibility of resuming field trips and bird walks. We hope this will be an option in the near future!

Be sure to watch the newsletter, website, or the VAS Facebook page for updates!

Native Plants Help Create Bird-friendly Communities



Red-flowering Currant

Looking beyond Vancouver's Bird-friendly Week, we all have a role to play in creating Bird-friendly Communities year round. Creating Bird-Friendly Communities is our commitment to the sustainability of our urban, suburban, and rural places. We can restore and reconnect these places. We can reestablish the ecological functions of our cities and towns. We can provide an essential, safe habitat for birds. With simple acts, everyone can help make their community bird-friendly.

What does a Bird-friendly Community look like? By simply choosing native plants for our yards and public spaces, we can restore vital habitat for birds in our communities and help them adapt and survive in the face of climate change. Growing bird-friendly plants will attract and protect the birds you love while making your space beautiful, easy to care for, and better for the environment.

Vancouver Audubon is celebrating a bipartisan resolution in the U.S. Senate that declares April 2021 as the first National Native Plant Month. Introduced by Senators Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio), the resolution passed by unanimous consent on March 25 and recognizes "the benefits of native plants to the environment and economy of the United States."

Many VAS members already participate in Columbia Land Trust's Backyard Habitat Certification Program. The

program staff currently work with sites smaller than one acre in urban and suburban Clark County. The five elements of backyard habitat are to plant native plants (from the [Portland Plant List](#)), remove noxious weeds, reduce the use of pesticides, implement stormwater management such as the [Downspout Disconnect Program](#), and practice wildlife stewardship. If you are interested in Backyard Habitat Certification, enrollment information is [here](#). A technician will do a walk-through of your yard with you, help you plan, and provide resources and discounts for plants and materials. Together, we make our communities a healthier place for ourselves and for birds – one yard at a time.

Beyond our own yards, we need to advocate for the use and conservation of native plants on our public lands, whether in city parks or open spaces. Most urban parks and green spaces are dominated by non-native species or lack an understory of native shrubs and flowers under the native Douglas-fir trees. Non-native plants and incomplete habitats create food and nesting "deserts" where birds can't find appropriate food sources or nesting sites.

Maintaining appropriately planted green space is an important part of "30 x 30," an international effort to

maintain biodiversity and create resilience against climate change. VAS is advocating for more use of native plants as part of the City of Vancouver's Connected Carbon-Rich Natural Systems Strategy in the Vancouver Climate Roadmap currently being developed. This strategy



A bird-friendly yard will have varying structure, native and food-producing plants.

envisioned that "parks, trails and green spaces will store carbon and connect neighborhoods, enabling more residents to walk, bike, and spend time in nature as part of their daily commute or routine."

Proclamation

WHEREAS, birds are an important part of the City of Vancouver's natural heritage, providing important aesthetic, economic and ecological contributions that make Vancouver a special place; and

WHEREAS, North American bird populations have declined by an estimated 3 billion birds since 1970; and

WHEREAS, climate significantly impacts Vancouver's native birds and their habitats, requiring action to protect them from climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Vancouver strives to create a healthy and safe environment for birds, and planting native plants is critical for supporting the presence of birds in our city; and

WHEREAS, the City of Vancouver seeks to educate and foster awareness of the need to make our city a bird-friendly community; and

WHEREAS, the 51st Earth Day, with the theme of "Restore Our Earth," will be observed on April 22, 2021;

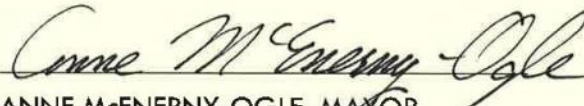
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Anne McEnerny-Ogle, Mayor of Vancouver, do hereby proclaim April 19-25, 2021 as:

"Bird-Friendly Week 2021"

in Vancouver and I encourage all people in our city to join me in recognizing climate change as a challenge that needs solutions, enjoying and celebrating our avian diversity by learning more about our native birds and their habitats, and choosing small ways to make our community more bird friendly.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the seal of the City of Vancouver to be affixed this 19th day of April, 2021.


ANNE McENERNY-OGLE, MAYOR

connect people to nature and to themselves like no other animals on the planet.

In fact, billions of migratory birds have continued to sing, fly and soar between their breeding and non-breeding sites. During the pandemic, which slowed down many activities by limiting our movements, people across the world have been listening to and watching birds like never before. For many people around the world, bird song has also been a source of comfort and joy during the pandemic, connecting people to each other and to nature as they remain in place.

Scientists around the world have also been studying the impact the pandemic is having on birds and other wildlife, looking at how “the anthropause” – the so-called global shutdown in human activity resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic – has effected birds and other wildlife around the world. At the same time, scientists have also been looking at the positive health benefits of birds and nature on humans.

Clearly, the pandemic has been an unprecedented challenge for humankind. At the same time, it has also brought a whole new level of awareness and appreciation of birds and the importance of nature for our own well-



being.

World Migratory Bird Day 2021 is therefore not only a celebration of birds, it is also an important moment to reflect on our own global

relationship with nature and to highlight our collective desire to do more to protect birds and nature in a post-pandemic world.

World Migratory Bird Day is organized by a collaborative partnership among two UN treaties -the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) -and the non-profit organization, Environment for the Americas (EFTA). The 2021 campaign is also actively being supported by the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) Secretariat and a growing number of other dedicated organisations.

Celebrated across the world on two peak days each year – on the second Saturday in May and second Saturday in October – World Migratory Bird Day is the only international awareness-raising and education program that celebrates the migration of bird species along all the major flyways of the world.

To learn more: www.worldmigratorybirdday.org



Global Big Day—8 May 2021

By Team eBird

Be a part of birding's biggest team! [Global Big Day](http://GlobalBigDay.org) is an annual celebration of the birds around you.

No matter where you are, join us virtually on 8 May, help celebrate [World Migratory Bird Day](http://WorldMigratoryBirdDay.org), and share the birds you find with eBird.

Participating is easy—you can even be part of Global Big Day from home. If you can spare 5 or 10 minutes, report your bird observations to eBird online or with our [free eBird Mobile app](http://free.ebird.org). If you have more time, submit checklists of birds throughout the day. You never know what you might spot. Your observations help us better understand global bird populations through products like these [animated abundance maps](http://animated.abundance.maps) brought to you by eBird Science.

Last year, Global Big Day brought more birders together

virtually than ever before. More than 50,000 people from 175 countries submitted a staggering 120,000 checklists with eBird, setting [a new world record](http://a.newworldrecord.org) for a single day of birding. Will you help us surpass last year's records? However you choose to participate, please continue to [put safety first](http://put.safety.first) and follow your local guidelines.

How to participate

- **Get an eBird account**
- **Watch birds on May 8th**
- **Enter what you see and hear in eBird**
- **Watch the sightings roll in:** During the day, follow on our [Global Big Day page](http://GlobalBigDay.page).
- **Share what you're seeing on social media with #globalbigday!**

On May 8th, we hope you'll be a part of our global birding team. Have fun, enjoy the birds you find, stay safe, and share your sightings on eBird. Because in our world, every bird counts.

Abundance Codes used in this column:

(1) Common, (2) Uncommon, (3) Harder to find, usually seen annually, (4) Rare, 5+ records, (5) Fewer than 5 records

These codes vary for each county, to see all 39 WA county checklists go to wabirder.com and click on Checklists.

March 19, Susan Setterberg was counting geese as a volunteer on the Ridgefield Refuge when she spotted a flock of 25 **DUNLIN** flying around opposite the Kiwa Trail gate and two **TURKEY VULTURES**.

March 20, Jim Danzenbaker visited the north end of Woodland Bottoms (exit Dike Access Road from I-5 at Woodland and head west and then north at the intersection), to do some Spring raptor migration watching and in less than two hours he saw: 63 **TURKEY VULTURES** (including one flock of 53!), 7 **BALD EAGLES**, 1 **SHARP-SHINNED HAWK**, 8 **RED-TAILED HAWK** and a **PEREGRINE FALCON**. Later he went to visit the sandbar in the Columbia River that is visible from Dike Road that was being used by gulls attracted to the smelt run in the Lewis River and was surprised to find two **GLAUCOUS GULLS** (Code 4) there.

March 21, Jim Danzenbaker visited Woodland Bottoms, Cowlitz County for the 4th consecutive day with the hopes of seeing some raptor migration at the north end of the Bottoms. He was surprised by what he saw although he says he shouldn't have been. There's been a smelt run along the Lewis River on the south end of Woodland which had attracted 150+ **BALD EAGLES**. They had to leave at some point and that may have been the day, from 11:19-1:00, Jim saw 91 Bald Eagles (30 adult, 58 immature, and 3 unknown) circling up and out of the Bottoms heading north.

March 21, A **GLAUCOUS GULL** was found by Robert Flores on the rooftop of a pizza shop in Woodland, another person reported spotting 2 **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS** among the swarm of gulls attracted by the smelt run.

March 21, the wintering **SWAMP SPARROW** (Code 3) on the

Ridgefield NWR--River 'S' Unit was reported by Ken Pitts.



Dunlin, photo by Mick Thompson

March 24, Nikki Perkins also spotted the Ridgefield NWR River 'S' Unit **SWAMP SPARROW**.

March 25, the continuing Fort Vancouver **ACORN WOODPECKERS** (Code 5) were heard by Cindy McCormack and seen by Colton Veltkamp at Building 405 on Fort Vancouver Way and 5th Street.

March 25, a **LESSER YELLOWLEGS** at the Ridgefield NWR--River 'S' Unit was identified by Ken Pitts by taking video of it, and playing it on his computer, and analyzing its bill length as just barely longer than its head.

March 26, Robert Vanderkamp and Ken Vanderkamp reported that a **CLARK'S GREBE** (CODE 3) continued to be seen on Vancouver Lake from the Shillapoo Wildlife Area on LaFrambois Rd.

March 26, the three long-staying **ACORN WOODPECKERS** at the Fort Vancouver NHS by were reported by Maxine Reid.

March 26, while snowshoeing from Marble Mt. Sno-Park on Mount St. Helens, Glenn and Mary Ann Teague heard a pair of **BARRED OWLS** answering each other close to the trailhead. Glenn and Mary Ann have been on Larch Mt. in Oregon a few times this month, and each time they have heard a Barred Owl, or a pair of them, there too.



Barred Owl, photo by Cindy McCormack

March 27, a **CANADA JAY** (Code 3) was found by John Bishop at the Rock Creek Campground Clark near Larch Mountain,

March 27, Jacob Mathison and Isaac Denzer encountered a **GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH** (Code 4) on Mt St Helens while

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(Afield, continued from page 7)

on the Worm Flows Climbing Route, above the tree line and near the seismic station, in Skamania County.

April 1, Tina Johnson and Gregory Johnson picked out a **LESSER YELLOWLEGS** at the Ridgefield NWR River 'S' Unit by the bill being about length of head and thinner than on the Greater Yellowlegs.

April 1, Cindy McCormack, Les Carlson and I were birding at the Beacon Rock SP Marina, in Skamania County when I saw 5 **AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS** (Code 4) flying just above the tree tops heading down the river. At Strawberry Island Cindy spotted a **SAY'S PHOEBE** (Code 3) flycatching along a grassy hillside. Although those were the only two unusual birds that we saw that day we did see many newly arrived migrants and had a total of 69 species for the day.

April 2, while birding from the Vancouver Waterfront Renaissance Trail, Cindy McCormack saw a **RED-NECKED GREBE** (Code 3) in the Columbia River.

April 3, A **CLARK'S GREBE** was seen well by Cindy McCormack and Jim Danzenbaker on Vancouver Lake. These large black and white grebes look similar to Western Grebe but they have an orangish-yellow bill, unlike the Western's greenish bill, and a Clark's eye is surrounded by white, while a Western's eye is in the black feathering.

April 3, Ken Vanderkamp was on the Ridgefield NWR Carty Unit when he found a **CHIPPING SPARROW**, (Code 3) identified by the reddish cap, black eyeline, white eyebrow line and plain breast.

April 4, Les Carlson's Hazel Dell yard attracted 2 **WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS** (Code 3) and 8 **GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROWS**.

April 4, a **CLARK'S GREBE** was found at the Vancouver Lake Rowing Club Access by Randy Hill, it was with **WESTERN GREBES** for a direct comparison.

April 4, John Bishop heard a singing **CHIPPING SPARROW** in Brush Prairie, then verified it by the reddish-brown cap, black eyeline with bright white contrasting supercilium, lower face



Blue-winged Teal, digiscope by C.McCormack

darker gray, except for a bright white throat, the underparts were a plain light gray.

April 4, the first Skamania County **NASHVILLE WARBLER** of the year was found at the Spring Creek Fish Hatchery by John Willis.

April 9, Robin Rose was watching a **YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER** in the lower branches of trees on the river side of the Washougal dike trail on the Steigerwald Lake NWR when they spotted a small warbler, close to size of Yellow-rumped, but boldly marked in black and white and recognized it as a **BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER** from recent photo posted on the Audubon Afield Facebook site.

April 10, Skamania County's first **BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER** of 2021 was in John Davis's yard in Stevenson.

April 11, Ruth Meyer reported seeing a male **BLUE-WINGED TEAL** on the Ridgefield NWR River 'S' Unit,

April 11, Christopher Brown set the goal for the day of finding a **BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER** and came across one at Biddle Lake during the final hour of daylight.

April 12, a male **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** (Code 3), with its red wine-colored striped throat, was seen by Jim Danzenbaker in his Battle Ground yard.



Calliope Hummingbird, photo by Bud McCormack

April 14, Steven Reisinger saw the Vancouver Lake **CLARK'S GREBE** from his home on Vancouver Lake, an unusual yard bird.

April 14, we had 16 **STELLER'S JAYS** fly in to our feeders in a single silent flock that fed for only a few minutes before leaving together continuing to head towards the Northwest. We have noted south-bound migrant flocks of jays in the Fall in past years, but never in the Spring-time. An unusual visitor to our feeders was a Slate-colored **FOX SPARROW**, identified by the gray head, neck and back, luckily, I was able to get a couple of photos before



Fox Sparrow, photo by Wilson Cady

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it disappeared.

April 15, a male **BLUE-WINGED TEAL** was seen at Shillapoo Lake and a **CLARK'S GREBE** at the Vancouver Lake Park Bridge trail access by Cindy McCormack, Les Carlson and Jim Danzenbaker.

April 15, John Bishop saw a **LONG-BILLED CURLEW** (Code 5) over the White Salmon River mouth in Skamania County that had been found earlier on the Hood River spit by Andrew Solomon. After being flushed to different parts of the spit several times by dogs, it flew off and they watched fly northeastward eventually losing sight as it flew too high and eastward. Though angle was difficult, it seemed clear to them that they last saw it in Skamania County, overland west of the White Salmon as it rode a thermal upwards. This was the first report of these large shorebirds from Skamania County in the 45 years that I have been compiling this column.

April 15, an **ACORN WOODPECKER** was seen in flight by Jeff Compton on the Ridgefield NWR Unit, which is a new location for this rare in Washington woodpecker.

April 16, 3 **BLACK-NECKED STILTS** (Code 4) were found by Robin Rose at Shillapoo Lake in the Vancouver Lake lowlands. These tall and slender shorebirds with long reddish-orange legs, black backs and head with white underparts and tail are very rare in western Washington making them a real treat to see in Clark County.

April 16, a single, quite tame **GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH** was observed at close range on the snowfield and exposed gravel pumice at the 6850' elevation by Peter Dunwiddie at the Mt. St. Helens National Volcanic Monument on the Climbers Bivouac Trailhead. These finches are seldom reported from Skamania County as very few birders ever make it to their high elevation habitat and they seldom come down to the lower parts of the county.

April 16, John Bishop found a flock of 4 **NASHVILLE WARBLERS** with their bright yellow underparts including throat, dark blue-gray head with a white eye ring and an olive green back at the St. Cloud Wayside on Highway 14 in Skamania County.

April 16, we also had two male **NASHVILLE WARBLERS** at our place.

April 17, while searching for the Black-necked Stilts seen the day before at Shillapoo Lake without success, Randy Hill and Jim Danzenbaker did find a good assortment of other shorebirds including 7 **BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS**, an unusually high number of for this county. Other shorebirds present were 10 **GREATER YELLOWLEGS**, 1 **LESSER YELLOWLEGS**, 75 **LEAST SANDPIPER**, 1 **WILSON'S SNIPE** and a **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER**. The Baird's which appeared to be a 2020 hatch year bird transitioning to adult plumage was about 30 feet away from where one showed up on April 4, 2018, they are very rare here in the Spring.

April 17, our first 2 **EVENING GROSBEAKS** for 2021 came to our feeders along with the largest number of **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS** that we have seen here in 45 years. There were up to 32 of these birds under our feeders at a time all day long and we don't have any idea if they were the same individuals or if they were different birds moving through during the day. While in smaller numbers, there were more of these birds here than is normal for the next several days.

April 19, at our place in Skamania County east of Washougal, we had a quick visit to our Red-flowering Currants by a male **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** (Code 3). Another new for the year bird for our property were 5 **BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS**.

April 20, the first **HERMIT THRUSH** of the year for me was in our bird bath.

Since the last newsletter, 17 species of birds have been added to the Clark County list for the 2021 County Cumulative

Year List Project, raising it to 177 for the year. In Skamania County, 25 birds were added to that year list, bringing that list total to 136. This list of birds seen in a county by anyone is updated every two months and can be seen at [Washington Birder \(wabirder.com\)](http://WashingtonBirder.com)

Shorebird migration is peaking now and the insect- and fruit-eating migrants will be arriving now that the vegetation has greened up and the insects are hatching out and are providing food for them. Watch for flycatchers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, vireos and warblers to arrive. Please either send your sighting reports to me, post them on the Vancouver Audubon Afield Facebook site, or enter them into eBird for use in this column.

By Wilson Cady



Black-necked Stilt, photo by Mick Thompson

Bird ID Challenge

By Cindy McCormack

Let's make use of those partial or poor photos or just birds that can be a challenge to ID! 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](mailto:Cindy@nwbirder@gmail.com) at nwbirder@gmail.com.

Can you identify the bird in this picture?

Identification and discussion will be in the next newsletter.



April's Bird ID Challenge Answer

What do we have here? It appears to be some sort of black bird (not to be confused with a blackbird!) on some barkless tree trunks. Since there is no bark apparent on either of these trunks, as well as beetle galleries and excavated holes, we can safely assume these are snags.

If you look closely, you can see a toe/claw of the bird's foot as well, so the bird is perched on the side of the snag. Note the tail, see how it is bent towards the trunk? The bird was using it as a prop.

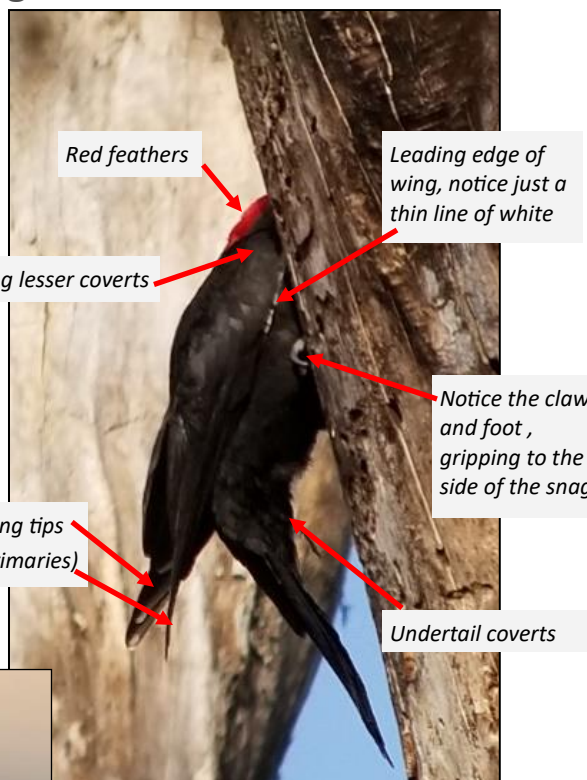
Okay, so we have a bird perched along a vertical surface of a dead snag with a tail prop. That's a really big clue.

Otherwise, what do we have? We can't see a head or bill. All we see is a black body, black wings, black tail, black undertail. And...a tiny bit of bright red. Is it on the back? At the bend of the wing? Hmmm, difficult to assess with this picture.

One might try to make this into a Red-winged Blackbird, but the red feathering of that species would be a large patch in the lesser wing coverts with a yellowish border. If you look carefully, you can see the leading edge of the wing, and the red is not in the correct



*April's quiz bird
Photo by Cindy McCormack*



*Red-winged Blackbird, photo by
Mick Thompson
Note the position of the red and
yellow in the wing, as well as the
posture and proportions of this bird.*

location, not to mention lacking the yellowish border. Red-winged Blackbirds also do not typically perch in this position. The proportions of the bird overall don't fit with a blackbird.

The wing's leading edge also has a thin, white line, suggesting that we may have some white under the wing. What bird family do we know

(Continued on page 11)

has a habit of perching on the sides of dead trees?

Woodpeckers! If you recall some of the discussion in the December newsletter's quiz, there is only one woodpecker in our area with a black body, tail and undertail coverts. The Pileated Woodpecker.

These large woodpeckers are often described as crow-sized, quite a bit larger than any other of our woodpeckers! Because of their size and large, chisel-shaped bill, they are adept at excavating, using it to create nest and roost cavities and to find food. Pileated Woodpeckers play a crucial role in many forest ecosystems, their cavities are used by many other birds and mammals, particularly the larger secondary cavity users, like some owls, Wood Ducks, and forest mammals like Pine Marten. Pileated Woodpeckers may also be important in helping control some forest beetle populations



Pileated Woodpecker, digiscoped photos by Cindy McCormack

since their diet consists primarily of carpenter ants and beetle larvae extracted from downed woody material and standing trees and snags.

This Pileated Woodpecker was excavating a cavity, with his head mostly in the hole he was working on in the quiz photo, with a bit of his red crest lying on his back. Once the hole was big enough, he entered completely and excavated from the inside, tossing out wood chips regularly.



Pileated Woodpecker disappearing into excavated cavity

PURPLE MARTIN SIGHTINGS AND BAND NUMBERS NEEDED!



Purple Martins, photo by Randy Hill

It's that time of year again! Purple Martins have arrived for the season and we are looking for reports of banded birds!

We have several banded birds returning every year and need

your help in getting the numbers recorded. Even if you cannot read the band, a reported location is helpful!

Birders will need a spotting scope to read the bands, photographers might be able to get photos of the bands good enough to read.

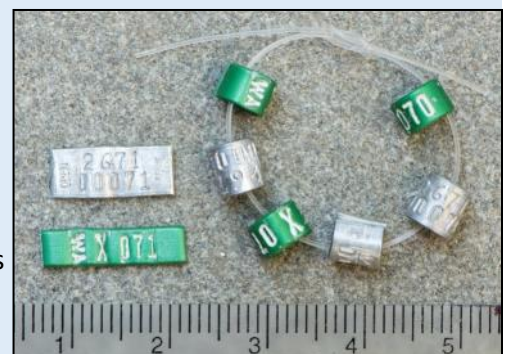
Every banded martin will have an aluminum band on one leg and a color band on another. The color band (green if banded in Washington) will have a single letter followed

by three numbers. The aluminum band will have 9 digits; 4 on the top row, 5 on the bottom row.

Any information on the banded birds would be appreciated!

Information needed:

- Location of bird
- Which leg has the color band
- Band numbers
- Sex/age of bird if possible



Aluminum and color bands, with example of flattened bands for demonstration.

Any questions? Birds to report?

Please contact Cindy at nwbirder@gmail.com

NWR Updates

Refuge Information current as of publication. Check the alerts on the [website](#) for current information.

Mask requirement:

While entering or remaining upon a National Wildlife Refuge, all visitors over the age of 2 yrs* must wear masks, except when actively eating or drinking, in the following locations:

1. All common areas and shared workspaces in buildings owned, rented, or leased by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including, but not limited to, visitor centers, administrative offices, and gift shops.
2. The following outdoor areas, when others are present and physical distancing (staying at least 6 feet apart) cannot reasonably be maintained: Outdoor areas adjacent to visitor centers or administrative office entry areas; parking lots or pull-off viewing areas when outside of an enclosed motor vehicle; trailheads, trails, rest areas, fishing piers, boat ramps, and close proximity hunting areas.

Masks must cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly around the nose and chin with no large gaps around the sides of the face. Masks with ventilation valves and face shields do not meet the mask requirement.

Ridgefield NWR

Entrance fee program has been reinstated.

Automatic Gate times for all units: dawn to dusk, times posted at the entrance and on website

Restrooms now open and cleaned weekly. Supplies may run low.

"S" Unit

Auto Tour Route: Open Daily

From May 1 to September 30, large concentrations of wintering waterfowl have left the region. During this period, foot traffic is allowed on the Auto Tour Route.

Kiwa Trail: Reopens May 1st.

Carty Unit

****New Construction ****

The construction of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge's Multi-Purpose building is well underway! The main entrance looks a bit messy however you can still access the trail from the lower parking lot.

Spur trail from Main Street Bridge Closed During Construction

The pedestrian trail from Main Avenue to the trail head at the Carty Unit will remain closed during the duration of the construction. Visitors can still drive in or walk in from the sidewalk through the main entrance gate.

Port entrance: Lookout open year-round. Trail to Plankhouse opens May 1st.

Steigerwald Lake NWR

Closed to All Public Access for Restoration

[Video update of the Steigerwald project link](#)

To ensure the safety of visitors and our crews, the Refuge's trails are closed to all public access at this time. This closure includes the Refuge's parking lot, restrooms, and access to both the Refuge's interior trails and the Columbia River Dike Trail (the levee trail) that parallels the Columbia River.

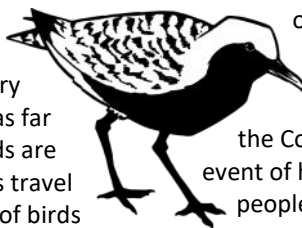
The Refuge Trails and Dike Trail east of Captain William Clark Park, will be closed to all public access until the Spring of 2022. Please respect this closure while habitat and public use opportunities are enhanced. For more info, visit <https://www.refuge2020.info/steigerwald-reconnection-project>.

Grays Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival

Celebrating the natural world and the spring shorebird migration!

Each spring, hundreds of thousands of shorebirds stop to rest and feed along the Washington Coast and in the Grays Harbor estuary during their migration northward. Coming from as far south as Argentina, these Arctic-bound shorebirds are among the world's greatest migrants. Some birds travel over 15,000 miles round trip! The concentration of birds during spring migration offers people a great chance to view a number of shorebird species. With luck you will also see the birds fly together in beautiful formations while trying to escape a Peregrine Falcon.

Shorebird is the name given to the group of birds that are usually found along the shoreline. They include plovers, turnstones, sandpipers, dowitchers, and others. Some shorebirds can be found in Grays Harbor County all year; others



only during their migration.

The shorebird spectacle happens every year at Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge and in other parts of the County. People from around the world come to view this event of hemispheric importance. The Festival works to bring people together for this incredible natural phenomenon.

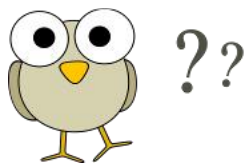
Although the virtual [Grays Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival](#) runs April 24-30, the shorebirds are in the area for a longer period of time. Any time from Early April through Late May, you should be able to see shorebirds eating and resting throughout Grays Harbor. *Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge is open Sunrise to Sunset, 7 Days a week*, and we invite you to enjoy our year-round trail.

When is the best time to get out on the trail? [viewing times](#)

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. 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 360-892-8872. 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.

Lights Out!

Every year, billions of birds migrate north in the spring and south in the fall, the majority of them flying at night, navigating with the night sky. However, as they pass over big cities on their way, they can become disoriented by bright artificial lights and skyglow, often causing them to collide with buildings or windows. While lights can throw birds off their migration paths, bird fatalities are more directly caused by the amount of energy the birds waste flying around and calling out in confusion. The exhaustion can then leave them vulnerable to other urban threats.

Audubon's Lights Out program is a national effort to reduce this problem. Here are ways to contribute to the Lights Out solution:

- Turn off exterior decorative lighting
- Extinguish pot and flood-lights
- Substitute strobe lighting wherever possible
- Reduce atrium lighting wherever possible
- Turn off interior lighting especially on higher stories
- Substitute task and area lighting for workers staying late or pull window coverings
- Down-shield exterior lighting to eliminate horizontal glare and all light directed upward
- Install automatic motion sensors and controls wherever possible
- When converting to new lighting assess quality and quantity of light needed, avoiding over-lighting with newer, brighter technology

Vancouver Audubon Society Support & Donation Form

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

**Renewal date:
September 1st**

_____ I wish to become a supporter of Vancouver Audubon for \$20/year or \$_____

Please include this form and make check payable to and send to: Vancouver Audubon, P.O. Box 1966, Vancouver, WA 98668-1966 **-OR- join/renew/donate online at vancouveraudubon.org**

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), go to <http://www.audubon.org/>

April 2021

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

May 2021

						1
2	3	4 Program	5	6	7	8 World Migratory Bird Day
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24/31	25 Board Mtg	26	27	28	29

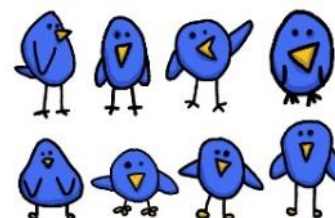
APR 27 (TUE): VAS Board Meeting, 6:30pm, Zoom Mtg.

MAY 4 (TUE): VAS Program, COASST

MAY 8 (SAT): World Migratory Bird Day

MAY 25 (TUE): VAS Board Meeting via Zoom, 6:30pm

JUN 1 (TUE): Program



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Open for curb-side pick-up! Visit

backyardbirdshop.com



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