

# Columbia Flyway

**VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY** *A chapter of the National Audubon Society*



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[vancouveraudubon.org](http://vancouveraudubon.org)



## From the VAS Board

*by Jared Strawderman, Vice President*

It was another busy month for our organization. We participated in one of our first community events since the pandemic started and it was amazing! Jackson, who supports our Young Birder Club, and I set up several tables at the City of Vancouver's Sustainable Communities Fair on Earth Day. We spent the day helping the community build bird houses (over 50 houses!), giving away information from the [Backyard Bird Shop](#) about how to improve your backyard habitat, showing how to use spotting scopes and binoculars, and teaching about bird beak adaptations. Big thanks to Jackson for pre-cutting and drilling the wood to make it easy for folks to put the houses together. It was rejuvenating to be back in the community sharing our passion for birds and we are looking for help to join us at more events. Our next opportunity to help us is at Clark County's [Pollinator Festival](#) June 24th, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m at their Operations Center at 8600 NE 117th Ave, Vancouver, WA. Email [vas@vancouveraudubon.org](mailto:vas@vancouveraudubon.org) to sign up.

Thanks to all that came out to our May Monthly Meeting in person. We listened to a great presentation from Nathan Ulrich of the Columbia Land Trust to learn about the vitally important Klickitat Oaks property they are working to acquire for conservation.

Our conservation chair, Susan, continues to knock it out of the park with our conservation initiatives. As you continue to read about her updates in these newsletters and feel inspired, please consider supporting or getting involved in our Conservation Committee. This is one of many ways you can expand the impact of our organization. VAS is seeking an Outreach Chair and others interested in helping with outreach, and also a new Vice President, as I am beginning to transition off the board before my family moves to Virginia in July. I want to share my experience as Vice President and urge you, existing members and potential new members, to become involved in Vancouver Audubon Society.

For me, I experienced profound benefits of being on a board; learning new skills, making impactful conservation decisions, and utilizing my limited free time for the greater good. First and foremost, serving on the board has been a tremendous opportunity for personal growth and skill development. When I joined the Vancouver Audubon Society, I had a passion for birds and nature conservation, but my knowledge of governance, strategic planning, and financial management was limited. Serving as Vice President pushed me out of my comfort zone and provided me with a crash course in leadership and non-profit management. The newfound abilities I've acquired over the past 2.5 years have undoubtedly shaped my professional and personal life.

Beyond personal growth, being on the board allowed me to actively contribute to the organization's mission of conserving and protecting our local avian species and habitats. The Vancouver Audubon Society, through its various initiatives and programs, plays a vital role in raising awareness, building a community of young birders, and advocating for environmental policies. As Vice President, I had the privilege of participating in critical decision-making processes.



Jared Strawderman at Steigerwald NWR

## *From the VAS Board*

es that shaped the direction of the organization. Whether it was developing a program for young birders, allocating resources, or supporting conservation projects, I could tangibly see the impact of our collective efforts. It was immensely gratifying to know that I was making a difference and leaving a lasting legacy for future generations to enjoy.

Furthermore, serving on the board allowed me to make effective use of my free time by channeling it towards a cause I deeply care about. In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to get caught up in the daily grind and neglect our passions and hobbies. However, being on the board gave me the opportunity to dedicate my spare time to something meaningful. Instead of mindlessly scrolling through social media or watching endless hours of television, I was engaged in meaningful discussions, attending workshops and conferences, and actively contributing to the betterment of our environment.

As I prepare to step down from my position as Vice President, I do so with a heavy heart but also with a profound sense of gratitude. The Vancouver Audubon Society board has been a remarkable platform for personal and professional growth. I leave with a newfound skill set, a deep sense of accomplishment, and a stronger connection to my community and the natural world around me. To anyone contemplating joining a board or becoming involved in a cause they are passionate about, I wholeheartedly encourage you to take that leap. Embrace the chance to learn, to make a difference, and to channel your free time into something meaningful. Whether it's conserving the environment, supporting education, or advocating for social justice, your involvement can be a catalyst for positive change. The journey may not always be easy, but the rewards far outweigh the challenges. To learn more about opportunities to join our board, reach out to [vas@vancouveraudubon.org](mailto:vas@vancouveraudubon.org).



*Male Northern Harrier—Fotofest 2022 by Steve Bredthauer*



*Green Heron—Fotofest 2022 by Ken Pitts*



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PO Box 1966 | Vancouver, WA 98668-1966

Website | [vancouveraudubon.org](http://vancouveraudubon.org)

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

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

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***THE COLUMBIA FLYWAY*** is the monthly newsletter of the Vancouver Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Publication deadline is the 20th of the preceding month unless otherwise posted.

# VAS Programs

## Upcoming Programs

**6:30 pm – 7:00 pm** - Social time to share bird sightings, stories, and upcoming events

**Contact Don Rose for more information at**  
**meetings@vancouveraudubon.org**

**7:00 pm – 8:15 pm** - Program

*Please send all topic, speaker, and program suggestions and requests to Don Rose*

Programs are held the first Tuesday of the month except Jan, July, & August. All are welcome, we hope you will join us!

### June 6, 2023—ZOOM Kim Adelson, “Who are You Calling a Birdbrain?”

For hundreds of years, birds have been considered stupid and incapable of advanced thought or learning. This is why the phrase “bird brain” became commonly used to denote persons of below average intelligence. But... do birds really deserve this bad rap? Are they truly less intelligent than mammals? THEY ARE NOT! In fact, recent research has consistently demonstrated that some birds have remarkably strong cognitive skills, comparable to monkeys and even apes. Some can form abstract concepts; some display prodigious memories; some make and use tools; and some can make complex inferences. Watch this presentation and you will discover the surprisingly strong mental abilities exhibited by a wide variety of birds.



Kim Adelson has been studying animal intelligence her entire adult life. She earned a master's degree in evolutionary biology and a Ph.D. in psychology; her master's thesis concerned how animals learn through play behavior and her Ph.D. was on abstract thinking in apes. Now retired, she is the Acting President and Education Chair of the Black Hills Audubon Society.

### September 5, 2023—TBD

### October 3, 2023—ZOOM Rebecca Heisman, “Flight Paths: Untold Stories from the History of Bird Migration Research”

Rebecca's first book, [FLIGHT PATHS](#), tells the epic scientific story of *how* we know what we know about bird migration. She has worked with many organizations, including the Audubon Society, the American Bird Conservancy, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Wilson Ornithological Society, and the American Ornithological Society.

Check out our [YouTube channel](#) for previous recordings of programs.

Gorge Refuge Stewards are hosting a **Steigerwald Lake NWR Youth photo contest**, ages 10-18. **The deadline is the end of May**, so get out to the refuge and get some pictures taken or submit photos taken during the past year in Steigerwald by 05/30 to this website:

[www.refugestewards.org/youthphotocontest](http://www.refugestewards.org/youthphotocontest)

### Backyard Birdshop is Matching Donations for Birdathon in May.

On behalf of all birds and wildlife, during the month of May all Backyard Birdshop shops will collect and match Birdathon contributions up to \$2000 to support local Audubon Chapters. Donations made and matched at the Vancouver shop will support Vancouver Audubon Society. Support local Birdathon groups before 5/31!



## Legislature funds \$120 million for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program—Klickitat Oaks to receive \$4.3 million

Story and Photos  
By Susan Saul

The 2023 Washington Legislature appropriated a record amount of funding – \$120 million – for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). This is a \$20 million increase over the last biennium budget.

Governor Inslee and the Senate had proposed a funding level at \$120 million, while the House proposed a level at \$100 million. In a show of bipartisanship, the House and Senate agreed on the higher funding level, setting a precedent that conserving native habitat and providing outdoor recreation are crucial for Washington's success.

WWRP funding is allocated through a nationally recognized, impartial ranking process, ensuring that funds are used fairly and for the best projects from throughout the state.

This funding level will allow 107 WWRP projects across the state to proceed, including \$4.3 million for Klickitat Oaks Phase 1 in Klickitat County. Vancouver Audubon has supported Columbia Land Trust's 50 percent match for this project with a donation of \$87,000 from the gift from the estate of Mary Ann Goodrich (see February 2023 Columbia



*The Klickitat Oaks property contains many large, old Oregon white oak trees.*

Flyway).

Oregon white oak woodlands and pine-oak forests support more than 200 species, including Lewis's woodpeckers and the state-threatened western gray squirrel. If not purchased, this former commercial timber land likely would be subdivided into 20-acre home sites and the connectivity value with surrounding state-owned conserved lands would be lost.

The Vancouver Audubon board visited the Klickitat Oaks project site on April 27, 2023 with Nate Ulrich, East Cascades Conservation Lead for the Columbia Land Trust. During a 1.5-

hour visit, the board members recorded 24 bird species, including 10 gray flycatchers and 5 mountain chickadees with multiple singing birds indicating probable breeding, 18 chipping sparrows exhibiting territorial defense, and red-breasted nuthatches visiting probable nest sites.

Klickitat Oaks is currently being held by The Conservation Fund until the Columbia Land Trust can assemble the funding needed to purchase the property and conserve it in perpetuity.



*VAS Field Trips Chair Randy Hill checked a cavity for residents.*



*VAS President Cindy McCormack and Treasurer Joan Durgin walked with Nate Ulrich on the property.*

## ***Legislature Invests \$83 Million to Save Carbon-rich Old Growth Forests***

*Climate Commitment Act Funds Go to Washington State Forests*

*by Susan Saul*

The 2023 Washington Legislature invested a landmark \$83 million in forest conservation and ecologically-sound forest management practices to boost carbon sequestration on state lands. This funding marks the first time that state government will set aside timber strictly for its carbon value, by designating it a high impact “natural climate solution” worthy of funding under the Climate Commitment Act’s Natural Climate Solutions Account. This was the first year for the Legislature to invest the 2021 Climate Commitment Act revenues.

Washington’s older state-owned forests are among the best forests in the world at sequestering and storing carbon. This new funding will permanently conserve 2,000 acres of older, carbon-dense, structurally complex state forests across Western Washington and buy younger replacement forests to provide revenue to rural, timber-dependent communities.

Some of the replacement timber lands purchased by the fund will also replace “encumbered” lands that were previously removed from the timber sale schedule due to endangered species requirements.

Conserving old forests that contain large trees and a diversity of tree sizes and species may offer refuge to some species of birds facing threats in a warming climate, scientists have found. The more sensitive a bird species is to rising temperatures during the breeding season, the more likely it is to be positively affected by being near old-growth forest.

The fund will also foster silvicultural practices on state lands that will improve forest health and increase carbon sequestration.

## ***Legislature Approves \$23 Million to WDFW to Conserve Biological Diversity***

*by Susan Saul*

The 2023 Washington Legislature provided \$23 million in dedicated funding to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to support a backlog of work for wildlife and habitats in our state that are of greatest conservation need. Most of the funding for agency operations comes from taxes on hunting and fishing gear, and most of these funds go to manage species that are hunted and fished. The Legislature allocated \$8 million for 2024 and \$15 million for 2025 for WDFW to protect habitat, restore species, conduct research, and do public education and outreach. The funding will be an ongoing, dedicated part of the budget at the \$15 million level in future bienniums so WDFW can plan how best to deploy the funds to conserve biodiversity. This is a big boost for WDFW’s ability to meet the challenges of climate change and increased pressure from development and habitat loss.



Great Egret at Steigerwald NWR

*Jared Strawderman, Fotofest 2022*



# VAS Bird Walks & Field Trips

Please visit the [VAS website](#) for field trip details and requirements.

## Thursday, June 1 First-of-Month Bird Walk

**Leader:** Cindy McCormack  
**Meeting time:** 6:30 a.m.

**Meeting Location:** [Ridgefield NWR—Carty Unit \(28908 NW Main Ave, Ridgefield, WA\) lower parking lot](#)

**Register:** [vas@vancouveraudubon.org](mailto:vas@vancouveraudubon.org)

We will walk the Carty Lake and Oaks-to-Wetlands trail for the wonderful variety of breeding birds that have arrived for the season. For those that wish to join later can text Cindy for current location of the group, please include intended arrival time in your registration email and request contact info if needed.

## Nighthawk Watch—June 20

The “summer solstice” nighthawk watch is scheduled for the evening of June 20, with a back-up date of June 22. This is an evening of socializing and does not require registration. Bring your own chairs, food, and drink as we wait to see and hear Common Nighthawk (and many other species) in a traditional summer location. The location is in the Yacolt Burn State Forest, so you need a Discover Pass.

Directions: From 182nd Ave. go to 139th Street and turn east, following the main road as it changes to Rawson Road, past the fire station and eventually becomes the L-1400 Road when entering the State Forest nearly six miles up. Continue to the intersection with the L-1000 and turn left toward the Larch Mountain Penitentiary. Just beyond the turnoff into the penitentiary the road turns to gravel; continue north about 2 miles past the Yacolt Burn Trailhead and turn left at the L-1300 Road which has a sign indicating Cold Creek Campground. We usually park about 200 yards after that turnoff.

Additional bird walks can be found at Steigerwald and Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuges. More information about the walks can be found on associated websites linked below:

Ridgefield NWR: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/ridgefield/visit-us/activities/ranger-led-programs>

Saturday, June 10

Steigerwald (typically bi-weekly): <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/steigerwald-lake/visit-us/activities/ranger-led-programs>

Saturday, May 27 (and typically every two weeks on Saturday)

With no summer newsletter or in-person meetings, the VAS website will be the only source of information until late August for field trips. Check the [website](#) often for information on field trips.

Alternatively, you can place yourself on an email list for **short-notice field trips**. Randy Hill is soliciting for members who want to be notified when a field trip opportunity arises on short notice. If you want to be on this list, contact Randy Hill at [re\\_hill@q.com](mailto:re_hill@q.com).

## Wenas Audubon Campout June 2-5

You are invited to a celebration of birds, bats, butterflies, botany, and the beauty of spring in eastern Washington. Each year, Audubon chapters and their friends gather for a few days of camping, birding, and exploring the Wenas Wildlife Area near Ellensburg and Yakima, WA. In 2023, the campout will be held the first weekend in June, avoiding the crowds of Memorial Day. The casual and friendly gathering offers a variety of activities, including birding field trips, wildflower walks, field sketching, and evening campfire presentations. Come for the weekend or a single day. There is no charge to attend and no registration is required.

Donations are accepted for organizing costs, including sanitation service.

Information on dispersed camping, activities, and what to expect are on the website, [wenasaudubon.org](http://wenasaudubon.org), or follow the [Wenas Campout group on Facebook](#) for current information.

# Upcoming Events

## Inaugural Pollinator Festival

Date: Saturday, June 24

Time: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Location: Clark Public Utilities Operations Center, 8600 NE 117<sup>th</sup> Ave, Vancouver 98662

Parking: Free parking on site at event

VAS is excited to have a presence at the first-ever Pollinator Festival on June 24 from 10am to 4pm. More than 25 agencies, organizations, universities, artisans and local businesses are participating in this free outdoor festival located at our Operations Center at 8600 NE 117th Ave, Vancouver, WA.

Festival visitors can take a pollinator garden tour with Clark PUD staff and learn how to provide food and habitat for the many varieties of pollinators native to Clark County. Doug Tallamy, professor and best-selling author of *Nature's Best Hope*, will give a presentation on practical, effective, and easy ways to turn your yard into a conservation corridor to provide wildlife habitat. Pick up pollinator-friendly plants and seeds at the festival and bring your inspiration home.

This family-friendly event will include crafts and activities for children. A demo beehive will offer a close-up look at bees. Pop-up Farmers Market, seminars with local experts, food trucks and music will add to the fun. Mark your calendar for this lively community celebration of some of the hardest working organisms in the animal kingdom. Dress for the weather and bring your hat, water bottle and some friends!

# COME SEE US JUNE 24!



Photo  
by  
Don  
Rose



Doug Tallamy, best-selling author, professor and advocate, will be at the Pollinator Festival. Doug's first book, *Bringing Nature Home*, awakened thousands of readers to an urgent situation: wildlife populations are in decline because the native plants they depend on are fast disappearing. His solution? Plant more native plants.

Pollinators at work in my garden. Photo by Don Rose



Jun 1 -4 **Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival**, Sisters, OR. Sponsored by East Cascades Audubon Society. More information and Registration [Here](#).



# Field Trip Reports

by Randy Hill

## May Field Trips

On May 4, four of us met at the CASEE Center in Brush Prairie where NatureScaping's Wildlife Botanical Gardens offers an entry point to some native forest with diverse openings of pastures, old orchard, and other plantings. Leader John Bishop walked from his home about a mile away and arrived about the time some big bolts of lightning were booming to begin our experience. We managed nearly three hours walking the grounds without getting wet, and had a decent representation of the native forest species with a mix of migrants both arriving and leaving. Among five warbler species, both Audubon's and Myrtle Warbler males were in their best attire on their way to breeding grounds. Lots of nesting activity observed with nearly 50 species seen/heard. The second phase of the trip to the nearby Minkler-Laureta Noreen Nature Preserve was a little more challenging. Old growth forest with tall and often closed canopy was darkened by heavy clouds and persistent light to moderate rainfall. The hike was quite pleasant, and while the birding was a little slow John pointed out a nice complement of plants including a rare Trillium.



Yellow-rumped Warbler—  
Michelle Detering/Audubon Photography Awards



Western Tanager —  
Ann Kramer/Audubon Photography Awards

Eight days later (May 12), Cindy McCormack and I had ten birders join us on a route around and through the WSU Vancouver campus. No rain was in the forecast as we hit the field in sunshine and an expectation of a “very warm” day. And that is how it turned out. And it was a bit edgy. We traversed three miles in four hours, covering parking lots with edge plantings, the edges of residential neighborhoods, the edges of the BPA powerlines, the edge of Mill Creek, and edges of several drainages, paved roads, walkways and pastures. One important advantage of edges is viewing opportunities, and sometimes the birds even land and sit in view without obstruction, even long enough to set up a scope and give everyone an opportunity to view. We had great looks at some woodpeckers, Western Tanager, Black-headed and Evening Grosbeak, and other finches. Even quick moving birds like warblers were close enough to the forest edges for continued viewing. As a whole, we didn't detect a fallout of migrants, but the morning views made for a good day.





*American Bittern*  
Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge  
Photo by Jackson Wolfe



# Young Birder's Club



**FREE** for ages 10-18



**2 to 3 meetings monthly,**  
in the field and online



**Learn from bird experts**



**Bird watching walks, art  
programs, research, and  
habitat restoration**



SCAN ME

## Join us at our next meeting!

See our website for schedule

[vancouveraudubon.org/young-birders-club](https://vancouveraudubon.org/young-birders-club)

[youngbirders@vancouveraudubon.org](mailto:youngbirders@vancouveraudubon.org)

## Common Nighthawk

The cryptic plumage of this bird is exceptional! The mix of brown, gray, black, buff, and white plumage in a mix of peckling, barring, spots, and vermiculations create a masterpiece of camouflage! The plumage blends perfectly with the background of its preferred perches.

Note the teeny-tiny bill showing on a large, flattened head with a large eye. If you look very closely at the photo, you can see the gape extending deep into the face from the bill. The mouth is much, much larger than the visible bill, making them very talented at capturing large flying insects. The white patch in the very long primaries help us identify this as a Common Nighthawk. This patch is much more obvious in a flying bird.

It's interesting that they are called nighthawks, since they are most active at dawn and dusk, not at night, and they are not related to the hawks. They belong to the family Caprimulgidae (Caprimulgus = goatsucker due to an old (mistaken) belief they used their very large mouths to suck milk from goats) or nightjars (because of their jarring noises at night).

Common Nighthawks make a distinctive and easily recognizable loud, nasal "peent" call as they fly. Their flight is wonderful—very graceful with periods of continuous flapping and sporadic periods of gliding—somewhat like a cross between a butterfly and a bat on long, narrow wings.

These long-distance migrants travel to South America for the winter, usually leaving in August/September. They often migrate in flocks, often hundreds or thousands of birds together. They are one of our latest spring arrivals, usually returning during the last week of May or first week of June.

They have a spectacular courtship dive that creates a surprisingly loud "boom" produced by air rushing through primaries after a sudden downward flexing of wings during a dive. This booming is also used to startle potential predators approaching their nests. Believe me, it can be quite an effective deterrent!

Common Nighthawks are often observed on the wing, especially at dawn and dusk. Unfortunately, their populations in western Washington seem to be declining. This may be due to a combination of factors, including increased population of urban American Crows (increased nest predation), habitat loss, as well as the indiscriminate use of pesticides leading to lowered insect numbers.

We hope you can join us for the summer solstice (approximately!) evening picnic to observe these wonderful birds! Check out the field trip page for directions.



*Common Nighthawk*

*Photo by Greg Johnson*



Many of the birds in this report are returning migrants and not necessarily rare birds, but if you are curious about the abundance of any species you can find a checklist with rarity codes for each of the 39 counties at Checklists on [www.wabirder.com](http://www.wabirder.com)

[www.wabirder.com](http://www.wabirder.com)

You can also view the status of any bird through the seasons on the eBird bar charts which are helpful for seeing when migrant birds are due to return or leave. Here is the link to Clark County's bar chart.

[Bar Charts - eBird Pacific Northwest](#)



Calliope Hummingbird—Richard D. Pick/  
Audubon Photography Awards

**April 13**, another **SAY'S PHOEBE** was reported from Skamania County. This one was seen by Daniel Farrar at the Cascade Boat Launch on the Stevenson waterfront, flycatching from the dock.

**April 14**, Elaine Barr and Alyssa Jones found a **SAY'S PHOEBE** at Steigerwald Lake NWR, where they have been unusually common this spring.

**April 14**, at Steigerwald Lake NWR, Wendy Shoemaker also found a **SAY'S PHOEBE** foraging from the fence along the dike trail.

**April 15**, Jen Sanford and Jason Durrent identified 67 species of birds at the Steigerwald Lake NWR with the most unusual being a very rare for the county **BREWER'S SPARROW**, a species of dry habitats east of the Cascades.

**April 15**, Douglas McKay found and photographed a **BLACK-NECKED STILT** at the Ridgefield NWR-River 'S' Unit. These tall black and white shorebirds with bright red legs did not nest in Washington until the mid-1970's. They are now a regular breeding species in central Washington.

**April 16**, **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRDS** are also a species that breeds in eastern Washington, but a few are seen each year in our area during migration. Kyle Bowman found and photographed one he observed with many **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRDS** amongst the Japanese Cherry

Trees at the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center in Stevenson.

**April 16**, Marje Pederson found 4 **BLUE-WINGED TEAL** at the Ridgefield NWR-River 'S' Unit, she said there were two females and two males with their purple-grey heads with a bold white crescent moon shape anterior to their eye.

**April 16**, we had an adult male **CASSIN'S FINCH** at our feeders, its bright pinkish coloration, long deeply forked tail, heavy barring on upper back with a sharply peaked head when raising its crest stood out in confrontation with the **HOUSE** and **PURPLE FINCHES** on the feeders.

**April 17**, Jim Danzenbaker spotted a **BLACK-NECKED STILT** at the Steigerwald Lake NWR which he shared with Gregory and Tina Johnson.

**Apr 20**, Ann Swanson was at the Fort Vancouver NHS when she spotted a **White-crowned x Golden-crowned Sparrow (hybrid)** in a mixed flock of **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS** and **GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROWS** at the foot of the land bridge as it crosses the interstate south of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. She went and got a better camera to document the bird and it was still there when she came back.

**April 21**, Ken Pitts also saw and photographed the **NORTHERN SHRIKE** at the Steigerwald

(Continued on page 12)

Lake NWR. He observed this bird with Ken & Robert Vanderkamp who pointed the bird out to him.

**Apr 22**, Jim Danzenbaker and Gregory Johnson found 8 **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRDS**, 3 adult males and 5 female types in a surprising location, on NE 132nd Ave in Brush Prairie.

**Apr 24**, the first of the year (FOY) for Clark County **DUSKY FLYCATCHER** was spotted by Nick Mrvelj at the Marine Park. They are an expected but uncommon migrant through the Gorge to their east of the Cascades breeding grounds although the late Ken Knittle and I found them nesting in clearcuts in Dole Valley.

**April 24**, Susan and I birded our way to Stevenson from our home near Cape Horn stopping at Strawberry Island where we found 6 **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRDS** and a swarm of **YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS** using a wetland at the end of the road.

**Apr 25**, a perched male **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** was found on Strawberry Island in Skamania County by John Davis. There is a level walking trail loop at the downstream end of the island that goes through some great birding areas where anything can be found during migration.

**Apr 25**, Cindy McCormack Jim Danzenbaker Marie Marshall and Ann C. and Gregory Johnson ventured back to NE 132nd Ave. in Brush Prairie and saw at least three female and one male **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRDS** that were continuing there.

**Apr 26**, 2 **REDHEAD**, a male and a female were seen by Ken Vanderkamp, Cindy McCormack, Shawneen Finnegan, Les Carlson and Jim Danzenbaker at Shillapoo Lake in the Vancouver Lake lowlands. This is another of our local nesting species that is more common on the east side of the Cascades but due to the near sea-level passage through the Columbia River Gorge that does show up here annually.

**Apr 27**, Samuel Holman found 2 **BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS** together in bright breeding

plumage on an inter-refuge levee road at the Conboy Lake NWR, Klickitat County.

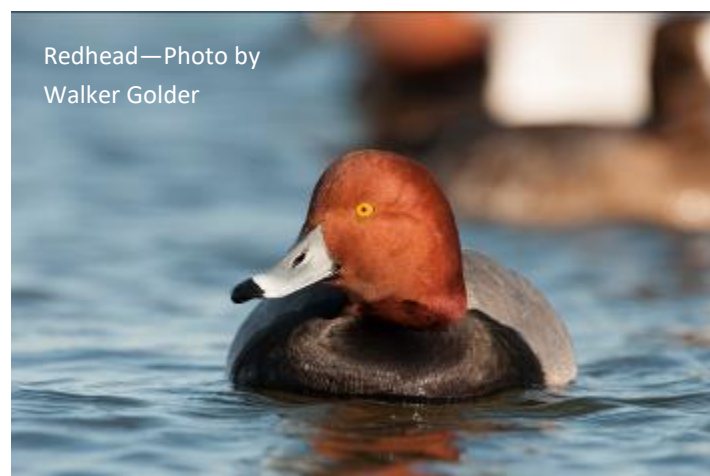
**April 27**, the FOY Clark County **CASSIN'S VIREO** was found at Tenny Park in Hazel Dell by Les Carlson.

**April 27**, Gregory and Tina Johnson also spotted the male **REDHEAD** at Shillapoo Lake.

**April 28**, Over about 4.5 hours while birding in several different locations on Larch Mountain, Jim Danzenbaker had the following highlights: 2 **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRDS**, one adult male and the other one unknown, 1 Western Kingbird, his first Western Kingbird in Clark County in active migration, a minimum of 750 warblers/kinglets of which about 80% were Yellow-rumped warblers, about 8% each for Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Orange-crowned Warbler, with some Townsend's Warblers and 3 Nashville Warblers. Other species seen were a **SOOTY GROUSE** wandering around on the road at the yellow gate below the Thrillium Mountain Bike Trailhead, 1 **TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE**, 4 **WESTERN BLUEBIRDS** and 20 **EVENING GROSBEAKS**.

**April 28**, we also had a male **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** visit our feeders where we get one or two a year.

**Apr 28**, Near Hemlock, on the Wind River, John Davis birded the interesting Whistle Punk Trail, where he found a **LEWIS'S WOODPECKER** perched on the top of a tall old growth Douglas Fir near the parking lot for several minutes.



Redhead—Photo by  
Walker Golder

(Continued on page 13)



**Apr 28**, we had a **DUSKY FLYCATCHER** at our bird bath with a **PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER**. It was slightly larger than the Pacific-slope with a longer tail that it pumped upward, the head lacked any crest and looked very round headed.

**Apr 28**, Jim Danzenbaker was birding along the L-1500 Road in Dole Valley, when he spotted two very small hummingbirds. One was an adult male **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** that perched briefly, and the sun hit the red striped gorget. He was unable to sex the second bird.

**April 29**, L. Haggas reported seeing a pair of **REDHEADS** through their binoculars at close range under good light conditions at the Ridgefield NWR.

**April 29**, I checked Skamania Landing for migrants and found **KILLDEER, LEAST SANDPIPER, WESTERN SANDPIPER, SPOTTED SANDPIPER** and a **SOLITARY SANDPIPER** on the exposed mud there. I think this may be the first time that I have seen five shorebird species in Skamania County in a single day.

**April 30**, an American Avocet wading in the north end of Shillapoo lake was spotted by Fred Howay along with a pair of **EARED GREBES**.

**April 30**, the only really good migration we had at our place came in the late afternoon after Susan and I spotted birds moving in the treetops. We counted 37 **ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS**, 11 **NASHVILLE WARBLERS**, 5 **HERMIT WARBLERS**, 2 **WILSON'S WARBLERS** and 1 **TOWNSEND'S WARBLER** along with about eighty birds that we didn't get a chance to identify as they moved through our woods.

**May 10**, the Skamania County FOY **LAZULI BUNTING** was at our feeders.

**May 13**, 2 **WILSON'S PHALAROPES** were reported by April Brown from Shillapoo Lake.

**May 14**, John Davis walked the Whistle Punk Trail at Hemlock on the Wind River finding Skamania County's FOY **OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** and **WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE**.

**May 14**, the FOY **WILLOW FLYCATCHER** for Clark County was reported from the Ridgefield NWR-River S Unit by Christie Galen.

**May 15**, as I was finishing this column a male **BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD** came to our feeders, a FOY for Skamania County.

Many of the birds in this month's report are of species not considered common west of the Cascades but are seen here in limited numbers each year as they pass through the Columbia River Gorge. The migration is almost complete now with the majority of the migrant species having arrived to their local breeding areas and there are already reports of some newly hatched American Robins and Anna's Hummingbirds. The cool weather in April held the migrant birds back until the end of that month when we had a sudden warm-up and the birds poured north in huge waves. I follow the numbers of nighttime bird migrants on BirdCast which are compiled from the nightly radar images over each county nationwide and on the night of April 28 they reported that 2,815,100 birds passed over Clark County and about 4,529,100 million birds crossed over Skamania County. These reports are generated in both the Spring and Fall migration periods and provide a lot of information: [Migration Dashboard - BirdCast](#)

For the 2023 Cumulative County List Project as of May 15<sup>th</sup> there have been 204 species of birds reported from Clark County and 163 from Skamania County. These lists of all of the birds reported in each county are updated every two months and can be seen at [Washington Birder \(wabirder.com\)](#).

Please continue to send me your sightings over the summer or post them to eBird.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>June 2023</b>						
				June 1	2	3
				Bird Walk	Wenas Campout	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Wenas Campout		Program				
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		Nighthawk Watch				Pollinator Festival
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**June 1 (Thursday):** First-of-Month-Bird Walk, Carty Unit

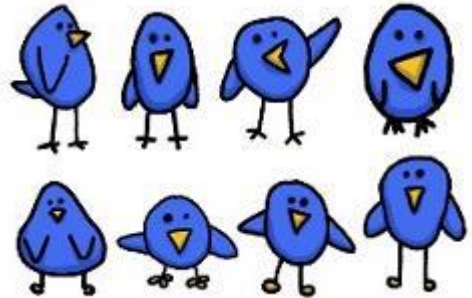
**June 2—5:** Wenas Campout

**June 6 (Tuesday):** Zoom Program—Who are You Calling A Birdbrain?

**June 20 (Tuesday):** Nighthawk Watch

**June 24 (Saturday):** Pollinator Festival

**June 2-5:** Wenas Campout



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