

# Columbia Flyway

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



Volume 48 Number 9

December 2023

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



## From the VAS Board

by Tom Tinsley, Vice-President

Season greetings from the Vancouver Audubon Society Board (VAS). I hope you and your family have a safe, healthy and happy holiday season. For many, the holiday season is an opportunity to gather with family, relatives, and friends. To exchange gifts, reconnect, reminisce, create a few new memories, perhaps indulge in too much good food and.....**Go Birding!** What better way to walk off a couple of holiday meals or better time to introduce a family member or friend to your hobby and/or passion? Take a bird walk. Depending on where you live, southwest Washington and the Portland area offer many great places to take a bird walk. You know them. Take a family member, relative, or friend to one of your favorite birding spots. A walk along the Columbia River or Salmon Creek, a local municipal or County park, or perhaps to one of our nearby National Wildlife Refuges. While on your bird walk share with them some of the neat, user-friendly apps you use like eBird, Merlin Bird ID, Sibley Birds, Audubon, iBird Pro, or whatever your birding app preferences are. Along with binoculars, if you have a spotting scope, bring it. I don't know how many times over the years while out birding I've been approached by a complete stranger, adult or child who says, "What are you looking at?" I usually say, "here want to take a look?" Many times, but not always, what follows is a gasp of amazement, of astonishment or "oh my god" (OMG)! When seen up close most people can't believe and are fascinated by the beauty that birds possess. Who knows, you may have just introduced birding to a future avid birder. And of course, at some point during your incredible bird walk, let them know you are a Vancouver Audubon Society supporter. We are always looking for new members to share our passion for birds with.



Wild Turkeys Steve Green/Audubon Photography Awards

Good News! The Vancouver Audubon Society has a new Community Outreach program chair, Becky Boley! Becky has been an avid birder and outdoor enthusiast in the Pacific Northwest for many years. Please join the VAS board in welcoming Becky to our team. We hope you have an opportunity to meet her when you attend an upcoming field trip and/or community outreach event.

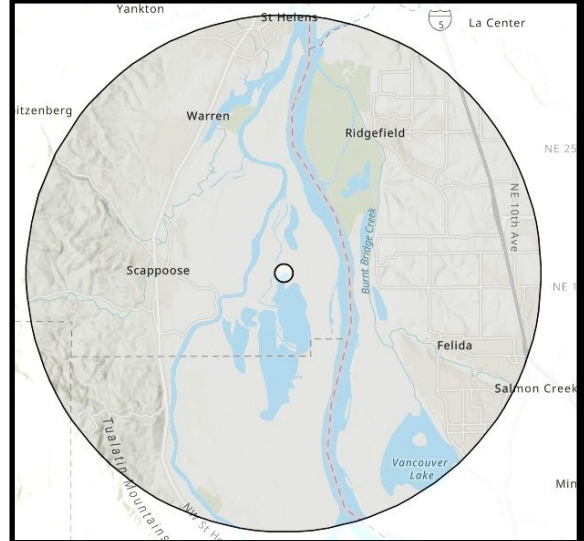
**Reminders:** December's monthly meeting this year is our second annual Fotofest. Our first Fotofest was held in October of 2022 and some incredible pictures were shared by members. Organized by our program chair Don Rose, Fotofest is about and for you our members. We want to see all those incredible photos you took over the last year. Whether your photos were taken in your backyard, on a fieldtrip with Vancouver Audubon, on a cruise, or in some far away country, we want to see them. It's not too late to be included in this year's program. More info on Page 4.

December also means it is time for the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC)! The oldest continuous running citizen science project (survey) of its kind. If you haven't participated before, we highly recommend taking part. No experience necessary and everyone is welcome. Non-birders and birders with less experience can join a team led by a more seasoned birder. Your participation level is up to you. All day, or maybe just a few hours in the morning or afternoon. Just make sure your seasoned bird leader is aware of your commitment for planning purposes. Please refer to Page 2 for more information.

# 2023 Christmas Bird Count

It is not too late to contact your team members and sign up for the 2023-24 Christmas Bird Count (CBC). This year's Sauvie Island/RidgefieldNWR/ Vancouver Lake Bottoms count will be Sunday, December 31 st . A great way to get those last minute additions to your annual bird list for 2023.

All you need to do now is put the count day on your calendar and contact me at [smsetterberg@yahoo.com](mailto:smsetterberg@yahoo.com). What I need to know is who is part of your team, everyone's email address, and if you want to repeat count in the area you have counted before or have some special request (time constraints, drive only, etc.). As always, feeder counters are welcome if you don't wish to go out in the elements that day and you have a feeder to watch within the circle boundaries. Count areas expand and contract with the number of teams/counters we have so I can be flexible with assignments. If you are new to the CBC and want to give it a try, I can find a team for you. Most of the teams on the Washington side of the circle have VAS members on them so it is easy to work with someone you might have seen on one of the VAS trips. If you like getting up early and want to count on Sauvie Island this year, there are plenty of teams happy to take on another counter over there.



Need more information on the history and procedures for the CBC? Go to the Audubon website at: <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>. If you want to look at previous years' results, we are designated as the ORSI circle for Oregon Sauvie Island, which is the official name. Get your name on the list for this year's count early. Again, contact Susan at [smsetterberg@yahoo.com](mailto:smsetterberg@yahoo.com). Early response is greatly appreciated. Details for team assignments and reporting requirements will be mailed out about the first week in December.

Clark County Parks and Recreation annual passes go on sale on December 1 and are good from the time you buy them until 12/31/2024. This pass covers parking at popular birding spots such as Frenchman's Bar, Lewisville, Salmon Creek (Klineline) and Vancouver Lake. Learn more at [clark.wa.gov/public-works/parking-fees](http://clark.wa.gov/public-works/parking-fees).

## Young Birders' Club

If you have any questions, comments, or ideas for our club, please feel free to share them with [youngbirders@vancouveraudubon.org](mailto:youngbirders@vancouveraudubon.org). For additional information, updates, and a comprehensive calendar, visit our website at [www.vancouveraudubon.org/young-birders-club/](http://www.vancouveraudubon.org/young-birders-club/). As always, tell your friends about us, and happy birding!

Jackson and Katie, YBC Leads



**Vancouver Audubon Society is a non-profit organization  
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Facebook | [@Vancouver Audubon](https://www.facebook.com/VancouverAudubon)

Chartered December 18, 1975

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

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

**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.

# Proposed 2023/2024 Budget

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
<b>Revenue</b>			
Amazon Smile	\$6	\$10	
Bank interest	29	100	310
Refreshment donations		25	
Memberships	1,648	1,615	2,200
Donations	1,408	1,500	1,700
Doris Troxel Trust	3,840	500	2800
Backyard Bird Shop	200	200	200
Nat'l Audubon Society	1,786	1,785	1,785
Bequest	87,139		
In memory of	467		
GiveMore24/Give Big	1,230		1,030
Community Foundation Drawdown	10,000	5,300	10,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$107,753</b>	<b>\$11,035</b>	<b>\$20,025</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Supplies	862	100	1,350
Membership software			300
PO Box fee	198	210	225
Non-profit filing fee	30	40	30
Refreshments		60	50
Mtg. room rental	50	400	500
Audubon Washington	2,000	3,000	3,000
PDX Wildlife Care Center	500	1,000	1,000
Young Birders Club		250	
Insurance	1,624	1,675	1,700
Community Journalism	10,000	2,000	5,000
Give More 24 fee	100		100
Columbia Land Trust		200	400
WA Environmental Council	100	200	0
Friends of Columbia Gorge	100	200	200
Nature Conservancy	100	200	0
Columbia Springs	100	200	200
Postage	36	30	25
Grants	87,100		5,000
Speaker travel		250	250
Volunteer travel	793	300	400
Website	219	120	120
Zoom fee	596	600	175
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$104,508</b>	<b>\$11,035</b>	<b>\$19,825</b>

This is Vancouver Audubon Society's proposed budget for the 2024 year, compared with this year (2023) and 2022. We are required to share the annual budget with members. If you have questions, email: [treasurer@vancouveraudubon.org](mailto:treasurer@vancouveraudubon.org). **We will ask for a vote to approve the budget at our December meeting.**

## Annual Dues Going Up in 2024

The Vancouver Audubon Society Board voted at its meeting in September to raise annual rates to \$30 per year beginning on January 1, 2024. The Board hopes to use the money to increase outreach to the community and to schools, among other plans. The \$30 fee will cover an individual or members of a family in a single household. The fee will be due annually 12 months after the initial date of your membership. Annual renewal date will be tracked in our membership database.



White-breasted Nuthatch  
Fotofest 2022 Photo by Shelbe Hill



# VAS Programs

The next meeting is December 5 and is IN PERSON.

**NOTE: THE MEETING IS IN A NEW LOCATION. THE LOCATION IS THE WEST PARK COMMUNITY ROOM AT 610 ESTHER STREET IN VANCOUVER NEXT TO WHERE THE SATURDAY MARKET IS HELD. THIS IS THE LOCATION WHERE MEETINGS WERE HELD PRE-PANDEMIC.**

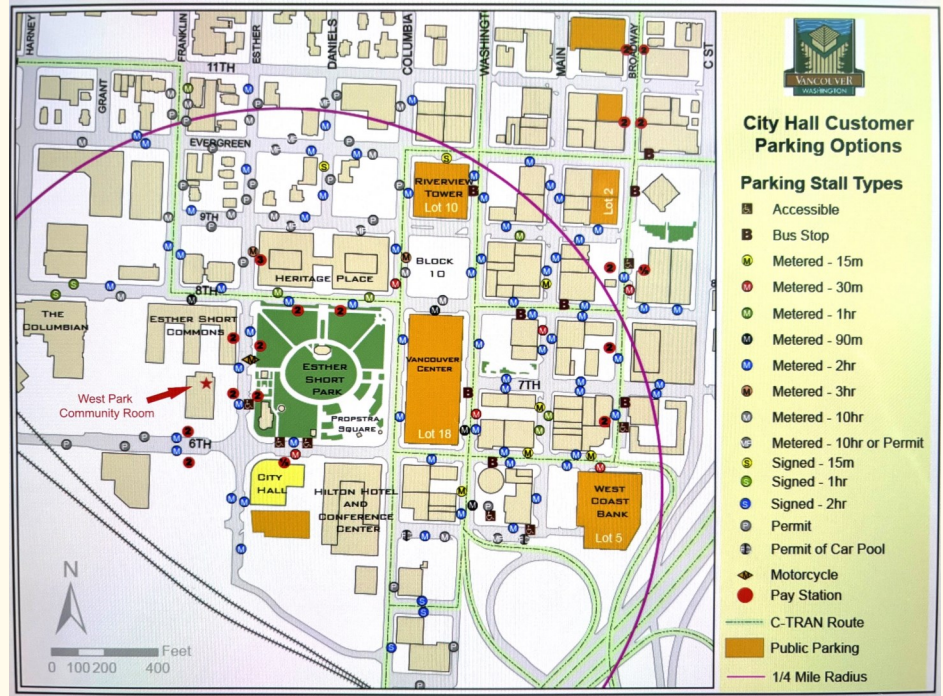
**6:30 pm – 7:00 pm** - Social time to share bird sightings, stories, and upcoming events

**7:00 pm – 8:15 pm** - Program

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

**Contact Don Rose for more information** [meetings@vancouveraudubon.org](mailto:meetings@vancouveraudubon.org).

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



Metered parking ends at 6:00 pm downtown. Parking should be easy to find.

## December 5, 2023—IN PERSON FOTOFEST 2023

This will be a show of member-only photographs from the current year, concentrating mostly on birds, but could be landscapes or other wildlife. If you haven't already, members should submit your favorite pictures taken in 2023 (Jan. 1 to present) from anywhere you have been in the world (including your backyard). Please submit your photos to [meetings@vancouveraudubon.org](mailto:meetings@vancouveraudubon.org) to be included. I will collect the photos into a slideshow to be presented at this live meeting, and each photographer will present their pictures with a few words about the shot/story/location behind them. If you don't want to present your own photos, provide me the information and I will gladly give the rundown. Number of photos per person will depend on the total number submitted and the number of participants. Photos will be used in future newsletters with credit to the photographer.

**No Meeting in January. Have a great holiday season.**

*Snow Geese at Crane's Landing November 2, 2023*





## Draft Barred Owl Management Strategy Available for Public Comment

by Susan Saul

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking public comment on a draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and draft Barred Owl Management Strategy that address the threat of the non-native and invasive barred owl to native northern and California spotted owls.

Northern spotted owl populations are declining rapidly due to competition with barred owls, along with past and ongoing habitat loss. Based on a recent analysis, northern spotted owl populations on study areas throughout the range declined by 35 to more than 80 percent over the past two decades.

A former northern spotted owl monitor in the Packwood, Washington, area reports that the last time he did an inventory, he had “close to 300 barred owl pairs here in my area. The last northern spotted owl pair I was tracking disappeared two years ago. There could be some single spotted owls still roaming around, maybe even a pair deeply hidden somewhere, but there is no reproduction for replacement.”

The long-term survival and recovery of the northern spotted owl, which is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, depends on reducing the negative impacts of barred owls. Barred owls are generalist predators and opportunistic hunters, eating almost any species they encounter, including small mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, earthworms, snails, slugs, insects, and crayfish. They have invaded western forests from their historical range in eastern North America, threatening the long-term survival of spotted owls and impacting a variety of native wildlife species that either prey for or compete with barred owls for the same food resources.

The draft Barred Owl Management Strategy recommends actions to reduce barred owl populations in certain areas of the northern spotted owl’s range and focuses on limiting barred owl expansion into the range of the California spotted owl. While the strategy would be voluntary, the Service strongly believes widespread implementation of the barred owl management is necessary for the conservation of spotted owls, and intends to coordinate closely with Tribes, federal, state, and private partners on its implementation.

The documents are available on the Barred Owl Management website: [www.fws.gov/project/barred-owl-management](http://www.fws.gov/project/barred-owl-management)

The Service will host an informational virtual public meeting to present information on the DEIS, give an overview of the Barred Owl Management Strategy, and answer questions. The meeting will be held from 6-8 p.m. on Dec. 4. A link and access instructions to the virtual meetings will be posted at [www.fws.gov/office/oregon-fish-and-wildlife](http://www.fws.gov/office/oregon-fish-and-wildlife) at least one week before the public meeting date.

A 60-day public comment period started with the notice of availability published November 17 in the Federal Register. During this time, public comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement and Barred Owl Management Strategy may be submitted online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FWS-R1-ES-2022-0074. Comments can also be submitted in writing to Public Comments Processing; Attn: Docket No. FWS-R1-ES-2022-0074; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters, MS: PRB/3W; 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803. Comments are due by January 16, 2024.

## AUDUBON WASHINGTON’S ADVOCACY DAYS: BE THE VOICE FOR BIRDS AND CONSERVATION

You are invited to be the voice for birds and conservation during Audubon Washington’s Advocacy Days from December 4-8. We will meet with our state legislators to advocate for birds, habitats and legislative policies. Together we will champion local conservation issues, highlight Audubon Washington’s policy agenda, and recognize the important work done by Vancouver Audubon.

No need to travel to Olympia. This is a low-cost, high-impact way to take action in support of birds and the environment. We will meet with our local legislators over Zoom. Audubon Washington will set up the meetings, which usually last 15-30 minutes. [Sign up now!](#) Your voice makes a difference!

# VAS Bird Walks & Field Trips

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

**Wednesday, December 1**

## First-of-Month Bird Walk—Marine Park/Columbia River frontage

Bird Walks are meant to be a casual, local morning of birding. They are a great time to enjoy birds with others, find new areas to visit, work on bird identification by sight and sound, or to practice your [eBird](#) app with help when needed. These walks are usually easy to join or depart at any time during the morning, no commitment to participate in the entire walk if you have limited time.

**Meeting time:** 8:00am **Leader:** Cindy McCormack

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

**Meeting Location:** Meet at the [parking lot just west of the Water Resources Center](#), 4600 SE Columbia Way.

We will plan on checking the Water Resources Education Center grounds before crossing to the park and walking along the paved pathway to the Tidewater Cove Marina. On our return, we can check near the Marine Park boat launch, especially gravel bar for odd gulls and any additional waterfowl.



*Ring-billed Gull*

*Harrison Martin/Audubon Photography Awards*

## FIELD TRIP REPORT - WAHIAKUM COUNTY

**November 12, 2023**

With a less than ideal weather forecast, the planned two-day Wahkiakum and Pacific County field trip was reduced to a single day for five of us in two vehicles. A straight shot to the Elochoman Slough Marina in Cathlamet was our first birding stop at 08:30 (and first morning restroom stop), which resulted in a hefty 30 species that included Surf Scoters, a Red-throated Loon, and several other waterbirds on the Columbia River and around the marina. A nice start! The next stop included a walk around the office and shop at Julia Butler Hansen National Wildlife Refuge and a drive along Steamboat Slough Road to the reconnected marsh wetland that was covered with waterfowl. 14 species were encountered along the road that contributed to the 50 species total. Cindy tracked a calling Swamp Sparrow before we left the marsh, but it wasn't showing itself.

With a weather deadline in place, we headed straight to Rosburg and the drive to the Pigeon Bluff/Altoona area of Grays Bay, arriving a little after 11:30 am with darkening skies. From here the view of the Astoria bridge and beyond is almost as impressive as the potential for coastal or saltwater birds. Indeed, the Pelagic Cormorants outnumbered Double-crested. There were more than 1000 scaup, plus loons, grebes, and several forest songbirds. By 12:30, the forecasted precipitation was starting to make things uncomfortable, and we started back to the east where we mostly stayed ahead of the storm. The drive along Brooks Slough Road was quite productive with 43 species, with the east end near the deer pullout providing views of Dusky Canada Geese. We were able to read the codes on 14 neck collars! As the weather pushed us back to Cathlamet we did a quick drive around parts of Puget Island. By then it was approaching 4:00 pm and between raindrops and heavy clouds we were losing light. But a stop to listen for meadowlarks (none heard) did produce a Merlin that dove on a Peregrine Falcon while a couple of American Kestrels watched from a safe distance. A nice ending to a day that shined more than the sun did. Follow this link for the eBird trip report: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/171552> Click on "5 Checklists" to view individual checklist details.



# Additional Field Trip Opportunities

By Randy Hill

**Christmas Bird Counts:** The Audubon Society held a winter bird survey in 1900 now known as the Christmas Bird Count. One event grew into one of the largest coordinated bird counts in the world. Check out some history: <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count/history-christmas-bird-count>.

Vancouver Audubon Society sponsors the Ridgefield-Sauvie CBC every year. This year's count is on New Year's Eve. It is one of more than a dozen within a two-hour drive of Vancouver. There is a lot of area to cover in a 15-mile diameter count circle! As field trips coordinator, I see this as a prime opportunity to get out birding with a purpose. Whether you are an accomplished birder or a novice, participation has a role for anyone wishing to improve birding skills while collecting data on bird species and numbers. CBCs have taken me to new areas that have become regular visits in seasons other than winter, and I learned by accompanying another birder that knew the areas to find the most or best species. If you've never participated but want to give it a try, start with something close. VAS has coordination responsibility for the Washington side of Ridgefield-Sauvie and the Washington side of the Columbia River for the Portland CBC.

There are several other lower Columbia River CBCs that one could participate in. I have put together a table of several CBC circles along the Columbia River or I-5 corridors below. I typically participate in five or six counts every year, and often cover an area by myself or with one other birder. I am scheduled to participate in Wahkiakum, Cowlitz and Lewis, and told the sector coordinator for Portland CBC that I would recruit a team for the Washington side since this year it is the same day as Cowlitz-Columbia. I typically coordinate and compile the Washington side of the Portland CBC and send in results, but since it is the same day as the Cowlitz-Columbia CBC which needs more help, I'll be looking for a replacement to head up the Portland CBC team (it typically doesn't take more than a half day). I could take another person with me on the Cowlitz and Lewis CBCs but need early starts and all day out for both. If you are interested in any of these, you can contact the email listed in the table below.

Woodland Bottoms is not part of a CBC circle, so I'll lead one in December that will be advertised on short notice on the website. It will follow a route similar to the last one with hope that some of our missing raptors and waterfowl will be there.

Date	CBC name	Center Coordinates	Compiler/contact	Contact email
12/16/2023	Camas Prairie-Trout Lake	45.983715, -121.416802	Jim White	<a href="mailto:jwhite.mars@gmail.com">jwhite.mars@gmail.com</a>
12/16/2023	Leadbetter Point (Willapa)	46.560496, -123.989417	Robert Sudar	<a href="mailto:fallcreek734@gmail.com">fallcreek734@gmail.com</a>
12/16/2023	Tualatin River NWR	45.317000, -122.830000	Curt Mykut	<a href="mailto:richard_mykut@fws.gov">richard_mykut@fws.gov</a>
12/17/2023	Lyle	45.683335, -121.233306	John Bishop	<a href="mailto:bishopj@wsu.edu">bishopj@wsu.edu</a>
12/17/2023	Gresham	45.466941, -122.397659	Corey D Plank	<a href="mailto:corey.plank@comcast.net">corey.plank@comcast.net</a>
12/17/2023	Columbia Estuary	46.219200, -123.946100	Mike Patterson	<a href="mailto:mpatters@pacifier.com">mpatters@pacifier.com</a>
12/23/2023	Lewis County	46.680007, -122.922596	Allison Anholt/Randy Hill	<a href="mailto:allison.anholt@gmail.com">allison.anholt@gmail.com</a>
12/28/2023	Wahkiakum	46.191667, -123.466667	Andrew Emlen	<a href="mailto:emlenandrew@gmail.com">emlenandrew@gmail.com</a>
12/30/2023	Cowlitz-Columbia	46.109176, -122.978721	Becky Kent/Randy Hill	<a href="mailto:beckykt@comcast.net">beckykt@comcast.net</a>
12/30/2023	Portland	45.516700, -122.700000	Brodie Cass Talbott/Randy Hill	<a href="mailto:bcasstalbott@audubonportland.org">bcasstalbott@audubonportland.org</a>
12/31/2023	Ridgefield-Sauvie	45.756166, -122.800839	Susan Setterberg	<a href="mailto:smsetterberg@yahoo.com">smsetterberg@yahoo.com</a>

**Carty Unit trail bird walks** take place at Ridgefield NWR: 12/2/2023 (Ron Escano); 12/9/2023 and 1/16/2024 (Robert Vanderkamp). Check out <https://ridgefieldfriends.org/news/naturalist-led-walks/>.

**Raptor Routes:** I am again looking for recorder/navigator/second spotter for my Ridgefield Raptor Route (including this month's optional count). Last season I used 8 or 9 different recorders for my two routes, including Becky Boley who ended up taking over the BP-BG route. Dates are a combination of available schedule and weather, so it is often looking at windows within a few days. Contact me if you are interested.

# Who Am I?

By Don Rose

The American Ornithological Society (AOS) is the organization responsible for naming of birds. On November 1, 2023, the AOS Council announced three commitments concerning changing English bird names named directly after people (eponymous):

- The AOS commits to changing all English-language names of birds within its geographic jurisdiction that are eponyms, along with other names deemed offensive and exclusionary, focusing first on those species that occur primarily within the U.S. or Canada.
- The AOS commits to establishing a new committee to oversee the assignment of all English common names for species within the AOS's jurisdiction; this committee will broaden participation by including a diverse representation of individuals with expertise in the social sciences, communications, ornithology, and taxonomy.
- The AOS commits to actively involving the public in the process of selecting new English bird names.

AOS Executive Director and CEO Judith Scarl, Ph.D., said: "As scientists, we work to eliminate bias in science. But there has been historic bias in how birds are named, and who might have a bird named in their honor. Exclusionary naming conventions developed in the 1800s, clouded by racism and misogyny, don't work for us today, and the time has come for us to transform this process and redirect the focus to the birds, where it belongs."

The American Ornithological Society plans to pilot a renaming program next year, starting with around 10 birds. Eventually, the program will expand to address all namesake birds in the United States and Canada, and then move on to avian species in Central and South America, which is the extent of the society's naming jurisdiction. More than 100 avian species across the Americas will be given new names.

This announcement inspired Cindy McCormack and Susan Saul to muse about what might happen to Lewis' Woodpecker and Clark's Nutcracker.

American Nutcracker? Whitebark Nutcracker? Pine Nutcracker? Mountain or Montane Nutcracker?

Silver-collared Woodpecker? Red-faced Woodpecker? Flycatching Woodpecker? Red-and-Green Woodpecker?

The possibilities are endless. All I know is, we will all have to relearn the names once again.

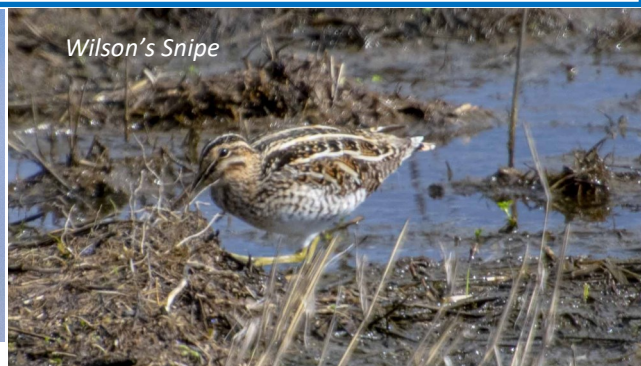


*Townsend's Warbler* Carl Ebeling/  
Audubon Photography Awards



*Townsend's Solitaire*

*Photos above and to  
the right by Don Rose*



*Wilson's Snipe*



*Cooper's Hawk*

## Who Will

I

## Become?





*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)

For any unusual birds in this report, I use the following rarity codes which are used on the state checklist as well as on each of the 39 county checklists available at:

www.wabirder.com

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

**Oct. 16**, at the Bingen Pond in Klickitat County, CJ FLICK found a very late **WESTERN Tanager** that Stewart Fletcher was able to photograph, it was an immature bird by the buff-colored median coverts, (one of the wing bars).

**Oct. 17**, Samuel Holman had good views of a **CLARK'S GREBE** (4) from the Hewet Lake and pullout near the Major Creek outlet in Klickitat County. They have an overall lighter coloring on their sides and back with a narrower strip of black on the back of the neck than the more common Western Grebes. You can often spot them by their lighter color before you can pick out the bright yellow-orange bill and the black cap ending above the eyes. He also had a late **HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER** at the mouth of Major Creek in the oaks and Ponderosa Pines. At the Bingen Pond he found a juvenile **COMMON YEL-LOWTHROAT** in the marsh by the pump station and a juvenile/female **BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER** around the beaver pond.

**Oct. 17**, Clark County's first record of a **HEERMANN'S GULL** (5) was reported from Marine Park by John Bishop, Jim Danzenbaker, Robert Flores and Cindy McCormack. These small dark gulls are long and slender and have dark legs, this one was a first-year bird with a two-toned pink bill with about a third of the bill black tipped. These are a salt-water species that nest in California and follow the Brown

Pelicans northward every summer as they are a kleptoparasite, stealing food from the pelicans. I was surprised that one hadn't been reported here before as they have been on both the Skamania and Klickitat County lists for about ten years.

**Oct. 18**, Robert Vanderkamp birded Frenchman's Bar Regional Park, and posted this on eBird, "Standing on the beach a very dark gull flew about 20 feet above the river and about 40 feet in front of me. It's plumage was uniformly very dark brown, almost black, from head to tail including wings and body. It appeared to be about the size of a Ring-billed. As difficult as it was to believe, it had to be a first winter **HEERMANN'S GULL**. No other gull would fit. This bird probably was the same Heerman's that was seen and photographed at Marine Park the day before. The gull headed down river (north) and disappeared. We hiked to the north end of the park but could not relocate it. A very surprising find!"

**Oct. 18**, Cheryl Stewart followed up on the report of the **CLARK'S GREBE** at the Hewet Lake and pullout and said that it was with a large group of **WESTERN GREBES** and the narrow neck stripe, and the lighter coloring makes it noticeable.

**Oct. 18**, Cindy McCormack heard the "Tinkle" call, as well as 2-note call of a **HORNED LARK** (4) in the Vancouver Lake lowlands but did not see it.

**Oct. 20**, Don Rose was on the North Trail at Vancouver Lake Park when he heard a **PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER** call several times.

**Oct. 20**, Brian Pendleton and Darchelle Worley were birding at Trout Creek Flats, in Skamania County when a juvenile **NORTHERN GOSHAWK** (3) flew up from the road ahead of them and then perched in nearby tree.

**Oct. 21**, Harold Erland spotted a **GRASSHOPPER SPARROW** (3) at the Rock Creek Park in eastern Klickitat County describing it as a "Small to medium sparrow with white stripe down center of head with brown stripes outside that. Large bill. Brown, tan and light striped upper parts with beige under parts and white eyering".

**Oct. 21**, 4 **TREE SWALLOWS** were reported flying over a lake on the Ridgefield NWR-Carty Unit, by Sam Willis. This is a very late date for this species of swallow to still be here.

**Oct. 22**, the first report of **TUNDRA SWANS** this fall in Skamania County were of 10 birds seen at Ashes Lake near Stevenson by Cherie Kearney and Steven Clark.



Tundra Swans at Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge

Gary Grossman/Audubon Photography Awards

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(Afield, continued from page 10)

**Oct. 22**, David P Anderson found a dead **FLAMMULATED OWL** (4) at a residence on the east side of the Trout Lake Natural Area. The cause of death was unknown and most likely this bird was in migration.

**Oct. 23**, Cindy McCormack saw a **LAPLAND LONGSPUR** (5) flying over a field in the Vancouver Lake lowlands, it was last seen flying towards Frenchman's Bar Park, these birds use some barren habitats including the sandy beaches along the coast.

**Oct. 25**, Jacob Owings was surprised to find a very late **BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK** in the oak trees above the "boardwalk" section of the Klickitat-Balfour Trail next to the Klickitat River.

**Oct. 27**, 5 lingering **TURKEY VULTURES** flying together catching thermals to circle and rise higher into the air were seen by Cindy McCormack in the Vancouver Lake lowlands, she also found a **LAPLAND LONGSPUR** hanging with a large flock of American Pipits feeding in recently disced agricultural fields, it may have been the same individual she had seen there four days earlier. She said that she heard what she assumed was the same individual repeatedly throughout the morning.

**Oct. 28**, Marc Harvey reported seeing a female **RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER** (3) on Alder Springs Road north of Lyle. This is the expected species on the east side of the Cascades while we have the Red-breasted Sapsucker in western Washington, they both were thought to be just color variations of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker until they were split into three separate species in 1983.

**Oct. 28**, Samuel Holman had a single calling **COMMON REDPOLL** (5) fly over him three times while he was birding at a spring near Hoctorville in Klickitat County.

**Oct. 29**, a juvenile **PARASITIC JAEGER** (5) was spotted from Cliffs Park in Klickitat County flying across the Columbia River to the Oregon side of the by Aaron and Gloria Beerman. They drove to both sides of river for different views and to add it to both their Washington and Oregon checklists.

**Oct. 30**, Samuel Holman visited Klickitat County's Cliffs Park for the continuing **PARASITIC JAEGER** and an **ARCTIC TERN** (5). On Rogers Road he found an **AMERICAN TREE SPARROW** (4), his first record of this small sparrow in Klickitat County during October. These sparrows nest in Alaska and far northern Canada but although their

wintering range extends about halfway down across most of the United States they are scarce west of the Cascade Mountains.



*Lapland Longspur*

*Skyler Kardell/Audubon Photography Awards*

**Oct. 30**, a very late **TURKEY VULTURE** was spotted in the Vancouver Lake lowlands by Cindy McCormack while she was conducting a survey at Crane's Landing.

**Oct. 30**, Tim Brennan heard a **CANYON WREN** (3) calling from the cliffs across Highway 14 from the Spring Creek Fish Hatchery in Skamania County. This is the hillside at Underwood that was burnt last year by what was called The Tunnel Fire.

**Oct. 31**, Cheryl Stewart went to Cliffs Park, Klickitat County to see the continuing, **PARASITIC JAEGER** and **ARCTIC TERN** and spotted what she thought might have been a second Parasitic Tern that was marked differently than the first one.

**Nov. 1**, along the Conboy Lake NWR-BZ Glenwood Hwy, in Klickitat County, Samuel Holman spotted a hybrid **BLACK-CAPPED X MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE** in a location where he has found them previously. On the same section of road, he had a **COMMON REDPOLL** feeding in birches with **PINE SISKINS** and **AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES**. At the Conboy NWR-Visitor Center Headquarters he encountered 4 more **COMMON REDPOLLS** in with a Siskin flock that flew over.

**Nov. 4**, at Marine Park, Jim Danzenbaker found 8 **RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS** (3), all of them were female types with wispy crests, very thin dull reddish bills and no strong demarcation on the neck. They were initially seen from the peninsula walkway at The Cove and last seen near

(Continued on page 12)



*Red-breasted Merganser female*

*W. Jean David Parlier/Audubon Photography Awards*

the shoreline east of the private docks east of Wintler Park. This is the largest number of these saltwater ducks reported in the county at one time.

**Nov. 5,** John Davis heard a **CANYON WREN** calling from the cliffs above the hatchery houses at the Spring Creek Fish Hatchery in Skamania County.

**Nov. 5.** Samuel Holman and Chase Birdsmore checked the Goldendale sewage ponds (which have restricted access) and found **GREATER YELLOWLEGS**, 6 **LEAST SANDPIPER** and a **PECTORAL SANDPIPER** (4) all of which are very late records for Klickitat County.

**Nov. 5,** after seeing reports of **COMMON REDPOLL** in Klickitat County, Cheryl Stewart has been examining the flocks of goldfinches and **PINE SISKINS** using the birch trees in their yard in Centerville and spotted one bird with a dark pink cap and black chin in a tiny flock of four goldfinch and one junco.

**Nov. 5,** on the Old Evergreen Highway at the Columbia Springs Environmental Learning Center, Alicia Soine saw one **TURKEY VULTURE** fly very low overhead. A very few of these birds have wintered in the Willamette Valley but even fewer in our area.

**Nov. 8,** a Eurasian subspecies of a **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** was seen foraging in a flock of American Green-winged Teals at the Ridgefield NWR-River 'S' Unit by John and Sally Works. This subspecies of teal was once considered to be a separate species called a Common Teal and has a horizontal stripe above the wing but lacks the vertical stripe in front of the wing like on the American Green-winged Teal.

**Nov. 10,** at least 8 **WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS** (3) were found by Ken Pitts and Stella Walk while they were birding the Carty Unit of the Ridgefield NWR. They said that that was a conservative count, as there may have been over 10, this is a new high-count number for Clark County.

**Nov. 12,** at the Steigerwald Lake NWR, Rebecca Hart and Steve Manns found and photographed a male **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** (4).

The incursion of nuthatches and other birds from east of the Cascades into our area continued through the month of October and Pine Siskins and some of the other erratic finches and other birds are being reported. The erratic species include Evening Grosbeak, Pine Grosbeak, both Red Crossbill and White-winged Crossbill, Common and Hoary Redpolls and both Waxwings are species that don't have a set migration route but winter where the seed and fruit crops are good. Watch for these species at your feeders and look through any flocks of Pine Siskins for the similar sized Common Redpoll with its red cap and black throat, we have had them in Vancouver during past incursions. Trees that hold their fruit into the

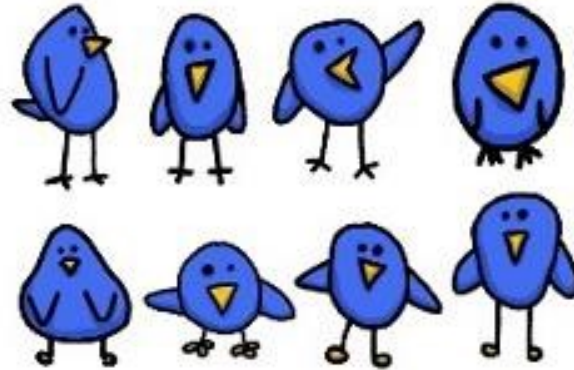
winter like hawthorns, crabapples and Mountain Ash are the spots to check for Bohemian Waxwing and Pine Grosbeaks and birch and alder trees for Pine Siskins and Redpolls. By December most of the migrant species should be on their wintering grounds and moving around only to feed and often roosting in the same locations, this is why the annual Christmas Bird Count makes for a fairly reliable way to monitor bird populations both regionally and nationally. This will be the 48<sup>th</sup> year that VAS has participated on the Sauvie Island CBC, which includes the Vancouver Lake lowlands and the Ridgefield NWR. If you haven't been on one before I would recommend joining in one as this is a family friendly outing.

Please continue to send me your sightings or enter them into eBird for use in this column and the year list project of compiling all the species seen in each county by anyone this year. I would also appreciate any photos of any Code 3 and higher birds for use in this column. As of November 15<sup>th</sup>, the 2023 Washington County Cumulative Year List Project has tallied **235** species seen in Clark County for the year and in Skamania County the list is now at **197**. These lists of all the birds reported in each county are updated every two months and can be seen at [Washington Birder \(wabirder.com\)](http://WashingtonBirder.com)



Mountain Bluebird J Arthur Anderson/Audubon Photography Awards



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
November 2023						
					Dec 1 Bird Walk— Marine Park	2
3	4	5 Program— Fotofest 2023	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 YBC Zoom Meeting—6 pm	14	15	16 CBC-Camas Prairie/ Trout Lake
17 CBC-Lyle, Gresham, Co- lumbia Estuary	18	19	20	21	22	23 CBC-Lewis County
24	25	26	27	28 CBC- Wahkiakum	29	30 CBC-Portland, Cowlitz- Columbia
31 CBC-Ridgefield- Sauvie Island						
<div>Dec 1 (Friday): First-of-Month-Bird Walk, Marine Park</div> <div>Dec 5 (Tuesday): Monthly Program—FOTOFEST 2023</div> <div>Dec 16-30— Various CBC Opportunities</div> <div>Dec 13 (Wed): Young Birders Meeting</div> <div>Dec 31 (Sunday): Ridgefield CBC</div>						

[backyardbirdshop.com](http://backyardbirdshop.com)

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