

Echo



Olympia, Washington
Volume 2012, Number 1
January/February 2012

Black Hills Audubon Society **25th Annual Dinner and Auction**

March 3, 2012

On the evening of March 3, 2012, Black Hills Audubon Society will hold its 25th Annual Dinner and Auction. The event will take place at the Olympia Community Center, 220 North Columbia Street, Olympia. The doors open at 5:00 pm for social time and perusal of auction items, and the dinner begins at 5:30 pm. Your invitation should reach you in early February.

The featured speakers at this year's dinner will be Daniel and Ginger Poleschook. The Poleschooks, both nature photographers, will be presenting "Washington's Not-So-Common Loon."

Since 1996, the Poleschooks have been specializing in photographing Common Loons and other water birds while conducting research, observing, and doing conservation work on Common Loons in the Pacific Northwest. Their research on Common Loon mortalities re-

sulted in the restriction of use of lead fishing tackle at Common Loon nesting lakes in Washington. They are members of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's, Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council, which advises the Governor of Washington. We are extremely pleased to have them join us for the evening.

Another important component of the evening will be the presentation of our two major annual awards: the Jack Davis Environmentalist of the Year award and the Dave McNett Environmental Educator of the Year award.

The evening's festivities also include the **Silent Auction**. This event is one of our primary fundraisers. Each year we try to balance items that will produce significant revenues with items that will be affordable and enticing to many of you. Items offered often include books, artwork, experiences, food, jewelry, and gift certificates from local merchants or service providers. If you have an item, service or experience you'd like to donate, please call or e-mail Margery Beeler (360-352-5437; mawampcat@aol.com). Our

Continued on next page

Thursday, January 12 **Birds and Culture of Taiwan**

Patt Brady, Kristin Stewart, & Fred Fiedler recently returned from bird-watching and travel adventures in Taiwan. Taiwan is an easy country to travel. English is spoken widely, yet it also has wonderful treasures of the ancient Chinese culture preserved. The three travelers saw all the endemic Taiwan birds, including 100+ species, mostly new to them.



Thursday, February 9 **Landscaping for Birds and Wildlife**

A panel of local experts in the field of landscaping for wildlife will offer their advice about making our properties friendlier to birds and other wildlife, including pollinators such as bees and butterflies. After the presentation, all are invited to browse the tables for handouts about specific things that will attract birds to their yards as well as take home some native shrubs and trees at a nominal cost. There may also be bird and bat houses for sale.

BHAS Program meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at the First Christian Church meeting hall, 701 Franklin Street, in downtown Olympia. Arrive at 7:00 pm to socialize—programs begin promptly at 7:30.

A Special Place: Nisqually Reach Important Bird Area

By Lindsay Raab

I clearly remember the feel of the crisp morning air chilling my cheeks as we waited for the ferry to take us to Anderson Island. As a Midwesterner, riding the ferry was still new and exciting for me and I looked forward to it every month. We were headed out to do the March 2010 Puget Sound Seabird Survey at the two sites I had established on Anderson Island. I remember feeling truly delighted to be surrounded by strong, smart women, several of them who knew their seabirds as well as they knew the back of their own hands.

We, as citizen scientists, felt privileged as we took advantage of our special permission to enter through a private entrance to Andy's Marine Park. Enchanted by a "fogbow" that had formed over the water, we took several pictures, then trudged onto the beach to set up our scopes. Surrounded by bluffs, tall trees, and water, we heard high-pitched whistling sounds coming from the Pigeon Guillemots rafting on the water. The lagoon behind us was scattered with Mallards, Wigeons and Buffleheads. A Belted Kingfisher noisily scooted by overhead. A Bald Eagle observed the scene from a towering treetop. I remember smiling and thinking to myself, we were truly in a special place.

At that point in my life, I was about halfway through my thesis work and three quarters of the way through my Masters of Environmental Studies degree from The Evergreen State College. My thesis project on seabirds in Nisqually Reach had technically started six months earlier, when my professor, Alison Styring, had asked if I would be interested in meeting with Tahoma Audubon staff and members to discuss a possible research project. At that meeting, Jerry Johannes, Tahoma Audubon member and resident of Anderson Island, hypothesized that the Nisqually Reach should be recognized by Audubon as an Important Bird Area (IBA). The Reach is directly adjacent to the Nisqually Delta IBA, which was designated an IBA in 2001. The Nisqually Reach is located at the very southern end of the Puget

Sound, directly north of the Nisqually Delta. The Nisqually Delta is a stopover point on the Pacific Flyway migration route for thousands of birds.

Don McIvor, then Science Director of Audubon Washington, walked us through the detailed process of nominating a new area to be an IBA. An area

must meet specific criteria in order to be recognized as an IBA. Also, recent data (from within the last five years) must support an IBA nomination. A lot of research needed to be done before we could move forward with this idea.

For the next year, my life revolved around compiling bird and habitat data on the area from a variety of sources. I collected new data by running a trial Christmas Bird Count, and conducting Puget Sound Seabird Surveys

on Anderson Island. After an extensive amount of data collection, my study resulted in evidence for a boundary expansion of the Nisqually Delta IBA. The nomination was approved by National Audubon in July 2010. The new boundaries of the IBA mirror

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Grebes at the Nisqually Reach

Annual Dinner

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preference is for items in excellent condition, especially those with a connection to birds, other wildlife, and the plant, gardening and landscaping world. Please feel welcome to contact Margery with any questions.

Dinner is a potluck event featuring the culinary talents of our members and their guests. Please bring a food item (hors d'oeuvres, main course, salad, vegetables, dessert, etc.) to serve at least six. In order to reduce waste we ask you to bring your own plate and utensils.

Please plan to join us for our 25th Annual Dinner and Auction. We look forward to sharing this special evening with you. If you'd like to volunteer to help set up or clean up, please e-mail Meagan Thorn at meagan.thorn@gmail.com. 🐾

BHAS Calendar

January

Saturday January 7, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. —*Downtown Ducks at Capital Lake.*

Leader: Burt Guttman

Burt Guttman leads fabulous winter water birding trips to downtown Olympia. There are all kinds of ducks, grebes, geese, and the occasional loon or swan on the lake, as well as passerines in the trees and shrubs. This trip begins at Marathon Park at Capital Lake and generally includes Tumwater Historical Park and Percival Cove. Occasionally visits to lower Budd Inlet are included. This trip is especially oriented for beginners, but all interested folks are welcome.

January 12, Thursday, 7:00 pm—*Monthly Program Meeting*

Birds and Culture of Taiwan; First Christian Church meeting hall, 701 Franklin Street, Olympia.

January 19, Thursday, 6:30—9:00 pm, Olympia Community Center.

BHAS is partnering with South Sound Sierra Club Group to bring Captain Charles Moore back to Olympia. Captain Moore's new book, *Plastic Ocean: How a Sea Captain's Chance Discovery Launched a Determined Quest to Save the Oceans*, has just been released, and on this occasion we will feature a presentation by the author and book signing to follow. Visit www.algalita.org for more information about the Algalita Marine Research Foundation.

February

February 9, Thursday, 7:00 pm, *Monthly Program Meeting*

Landscaping for Birds and Wildlife, First Christian Church meeting hall, 701 Franklin Street, Olympia.

February 17-20, Presidents' Day Weekend, *Great Backyard Bird Count*—See the article on page 5 in this *Echo* for details.

March

March 3, Saturday, 5:00 pm, *Black Hills Audubon Society's 25th Annual Dinner and Auction*, Olympia Community Center, 220 North Columbia Street, Olympia.

See the article on page 1 of this *Echo* for more information.

Beginning Birding Class with BHAS

Date: Five Saturday Mornings:
January 14th – February 11th

Time: 9:00AM to 11:00AM

Where: The Education Building at
Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

Cost: \$60.00, which includes two field

trips. Some Scholarships are available.

Contact: Deb Nickerson 754-5397, debranick@gmail.com, or Black Hills Audubon Society, PO Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507-2524.

These classes fill up fast, so register soon.

Bird Banding Camp 2011

When I heard about bird banding camp I was excited and anticipated what it would be like to go, but I never thought I'd actually be able to. I applied for a scholarship with Black Hills Audubon that would pay my full ride and to my delight, I was awarded it, and my dreams of going to bird banding camp came true. I expected to learn a lot, have fun, and enjoy the nature of outdoors, and all my expectations of going were fulfilled to the fullest.

During the five-day camp I learned to enjoy the beauty of life and nature, and the vastness of the world around us. From where we were camped in the Cascade Mountains I could see before me miles upon miles of the awe of nature, all right before my eyes.

Camp life was also extremely fun and exhilarating. The instructors were amazing, patient, and talented teachers. Throughout the week they taught us teens how to handle the birds, band them, sex them, and safely remove them from the nets they were caught in. More than that though, I learned more about the

native bird species of Washington, their behaviors and how to identify them. By the end of the week I knew I had learned a lot and was thankful for the opportunity of being able to go.

There was much more to do and see than the bird banding though. Everyday the camp instructors took us on trips to nearby wilderness areas and lookout points in the mountains. The area was teeming with wildlife and we got to see it all. To add to all this, the people were extremely friendly as well. Connecting with other teenagers who shared a common interest in the birds was uplifting. Another important thing that I have to mention was that all of us were fed very well, and the food was delicious!

Every aspect of bird banding camp was fun, exciting, and a wonderful learning experience for me. I learned of bird species I never knew existed, made friendships with other campers, and enjoyed the vastness and wonder of the state we live in. It was truly the best week of my summer, and I hope to return next year. 🦋

Grace Succo

Nisqually Reach

From page 2

those of the state Aquatic Reserve in the area.

The expanded Nisqually IBA (or, as Audubon has it in their database, two adjacent IBAs in the Nisqually Delta and Reach) ecologically connects the river delta with the near-shore habitat of Anderson Island and other shorelines in the area. The two habitats are ecologically connected in terms of energy cycling and nutrient flow via fish. Hundreds of salmon exit the estuary each year, providing ample food for waterbirds in the area.

The expanded IBA encompasses virtually every habitat represented in the Puget Sound including estuarine, freshwater, marsh, grassland, and riparian habitat types, the deep marine waters of the Nisqually Reach, as well as tidal lands, pocket estuaries, sandy shoreline and high bluffs of Anderson, Ketrion, and Eagle Islands and the south shoreline of McNeil Island.

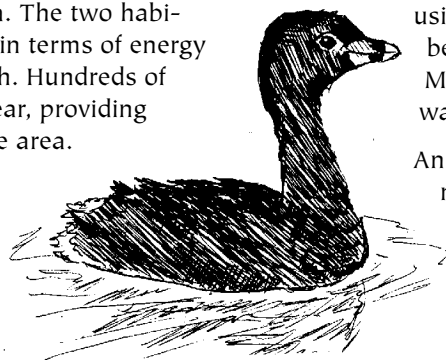
Due to ample food supply and diverse, relatively undisturbed aquatic habitats, the extended IBA supports a higher diversity of bird species, particu-

larly diving ducks, alcids, grebes and loons. The Nisqually Reach is important to several species of conservation concern. The high bluffs in the area provide prime nesting habitat for Pigeon Guillemots. Tidal flats rich with mollusks and several nearby Pacific herring spawning sites provide prime winter and pre-migratory habitat for Surf Scoters. Perhaps most significant, Marbled Murrelets have been documented in parts of the area, theoretically using the Nisqually River as a corridor between potential nesting grounds at Mount Rainer National Park and foraging waters of southern Puget Sound.

An expanded Nisqually IBA, albeit non-regulatory, officially recognizes and further protects important aquatic bird habitats within the Nisqually Reach region. The official recognition of the area supplements the Aquatic Reserve designation, and will hopefully play a role in future development decisions.

The Nisqually Delta and Reach proves to be special to marine animals and humans alike. I feel connected with that special place, and I know many people feel the same way. 🦋

Editor's note: Lindsay was instrumental in expanding the Nisqually IBA. For more information on Audubon's IBA program, visit <http://web4.audubon.org/bird/iba/>



Get involved in your Audubon Chapter!

Become an active part of Black Hills Audubon Society. There is a wide range of opportunities to choose from—select one that suits your style. Contact Deb Nickerson, the chapter's Volunteer Coordinator, if interested in pursuing more of an active role in the chapter (see p.6 for contact info).

On-Going Volunteer Positions:

Web Master—We are in need of some help assisting with or taking over the duties associated with our website. This is a highly skilled position and very important to our chapter. If you have expertise in web work and would like to serve your chapter in this way, please contact me as soon as possible.

Hospitality Committee—Provide snacks for our monthly program meetings, welcome newcomers to our programs and events, or staff a table at local events.

Annual Dinner in March—Help with registration, set-up, cleanup, greet guests, staff a table, silent auction facilitator or assist as a cashier. Many hands are needed. Contact Meagan Thorn directly (see p.2).

Development Committee—Do your talents lie in the area of building partnerships for funding support? Do you have fundraising ideas in which you would like to take a leadership role? Money raised through such efforts go to support our conservation and education programs and special projects.

Conservation Committee—We often need to research and comment on local environmental issues. Examples include the Critical Areas Ordinance; gravel mining in Thurston County, and strengthening Important Bird Areas conservation. A background in policy, environmental science, communication or political science is desired.

Education Committee—Help plan, organize or publicize our birding courses. Develop specialized courses, or support our instructors with their needs. Volunteers are also needed to present programs to school age children or assist on field trips to local natural areas. Binocular and book drives assist school children with their appreciation of our natural world through better observation and knowledge of its wildlife. Field guides and optics are loaned to children for aid in the field portion of their study.

Citizen Science Volunteer Opportunities:

Vaux Swift Monitoring—Several sites in the residential area of the south Capital neighborhood in Olympia are roosting spots for migrating Vaux Swifts in late August through September. Volunteers monitor an area for new activity, or estimate the

numbers using a known chimney. Contact Whittier Johnson directly (see p.6 for contact info).

Plant Providers—Do you have an area capable of housing native plant starts that can be used in local restoration projects? We want partnerships with local organizations and schools to develop habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Grant Writing—Small grants can provide the chapter with such things as binoculars, scopes or a video projector, which can be used for programs or field trips. 🦋

Join the Great Backyard Bird Count

**Presidents' Day Weekend,
February 17-20**

Join bird watchers across North America to make your love of nature add up for science and for the future during the 15th annual Great Backyard Bird Count on "Presidents' Day" weekend, February 17-20, 2012. The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

Go to: <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/> for the GBBC data form, instructions, and more information. This is also the website where you will submit your completed checklists (or go to ebird.org/ and enter your birding observations any time of year). You can compare results from your town or region with others, as checklists pour in from throughout the U.S. and Canada. In 2011, participants sent in over 90,000 checklists tallying 594 species and over 11 million individual birds. The GBBC is a great opportunity for all participants—families, teachers, children, groups, individuals—to enjoy nature and have fun while generating valuable information for science and conservation. You can also submit bird photos, and peruse prior years' photo contest winners.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is led by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada and sponsorship from Wild Birds Unlimited. 🦋

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Black Hills Audubon Society is a non-profit organization. A member chapter of the National Audubon Society, it represents Audubon members in Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties.

Our goals are to maintain, restore and protect our ecosystems for future generations, and to promote environmental education and nature-based recreation.

Monthly program meetings are usually held at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday evening of each month, September through June, at the First Christian Church's Hall at 701 Franklin Street in downtown Olympia (between 7th and 8th Avenues).

Board meetings are usually at 5:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. The site varies from month to month; please call the message phone number to inquire as to the location.

Phone and e-mail messages are welcome, but please remember that we are a volunteer-based organization, and it may take us a few days to get back to you.

The Echo is published bi-monthly. Editor: Robin Shoal. Layout and design by Lee Miller. Graphics by Nature Icons/Ultimate Symbol unless otherwise identified. Heron above by Daniel Kilby; grebe on page 4 by Kirsten Munson.

Material for *The Echo* should be sent to PO Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507, or e-mailed to Robin Shoal at rzshoal@gmail.com. The next *Echo* will be the March/April 2012 issue, the deadline for which is February 5. 🦩

Black Hills Audubon Society (BHAS) Membership form

Type of Membership—check appropriate box

Member of Black Hills Audubon Society Chapter (BHAS) only

Singles or household

- \$20, regular member
- \$35, regular member for 2 years
- \$50, regular member for 3 years,
- \$15, senior or full-time student
- \$25, senior or full-time student for 2 years
- \$35, senior or full-time student for 3 years

Please make check payable to Black Hills Audubon Society.

All dues go to support local Black Hills Audubon chapter efforts.

Receive the chapter newsletter, *The Echo*, which describes local chapter conservation action, events, and field trips.

Member of Black Hills Audubon Society Chapter and National Audubon (both)

- \$20, first-time member price
- \$15, Senior or full-time student

Please make check payable to National Audubon Society.

Renewals: please renew your National Audubon Membership by filling out the forms sent to you by National and sending directly to National Audubon. Thanks!

Most of the dues go to support national efforts.

Receive the award-winning national magazine, *Audubon*, and the chapter newsletter, *The Echo*.

Chapter: C 9 Z Y12 0 Z

Subscription only—receive the chapter newsletter, *The Echo* (does not include membership)

- \$10 chapter newsletter only

Please make check payable to Black Hills Audubon Society.

Receive the chapter newsletter, *The Echo*

- I would like to help Black Hills Audubon's programs of education and conservation.

Enclosed is my additional donation of \$_____

Renewals: please renew your National Audubon Membership by filling out the forms sent to you by National and sending directly to National Audubon. Thanks!

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/zip _____

Phone/Email _____

My check for \$_____ is enclosed.

Please fill out this form and mail it with your check to the appropriate address:

Black Hills Audubon Society is a 501(C)3 organization. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Membership
Black Hills Audubon Society
PO Box 2524
Olympia WA 98507

Membership
National Audubon Society
225 Varick Street, 7th floor
New York, NY 10014


Thank you for supporting the Black Hills Audubon Society!





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Environmental Lobby Day is January 25

When: Wednesday, January 25, 2012; 8:30 am to 6 pm

Where: United Churches of Olympia, 110th East 11th Ave (opposite Capitol Campus)

Come to the State Capitol with twenty-four of the state's leading conservation groups and hundreds of citizen lobbyists to push for the passage of the Environmental Priorities Coalition's legislative package:

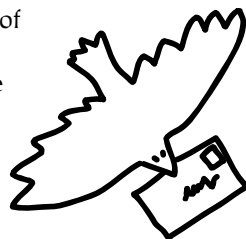
Toxic-Free Kids: Protecting children's health from cancer-causing flame retardants and helping to put businesses on the path to using chemicals that won't harm the environment or the bottom line.


Fulfill Our Clean Energy Initiative: Sustaining the success of I-937, our state's voter-approved clean energy initiative, in bringing investments, jobs, and economic development throughout Washington.

Pollution-Free Prosperity: Preventing attempts to weaken, delay or roll back state environmental laws

and programs that are critical for clean air, clean water, and healthy communities.

Test your powers of persuasion as you meet face-to-face with all three of your state legislators. Receive detailed briefings on each priority and training on how to lobby from top environmental lobbyists. We'll fuel your activism with a breakfast and lunch.



Birding Map: On Lobby Day, you are invited to attend the unveiling of the final map—The Puget Loop —of the Great Washington State Birding Trail hosted by Audubon Washington. 

For more information on Environmental Lobby Day and to register, go to:

<http://pugetsound.org/events/environmental-lobby-day-2012>

For more information on the priorities of the Environmental Priorities Coalition, go to:

<http://environmentalpriorities.org/>