

Echo



Olympia, Washington
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November/December 2011

Conservation of Maytown Lands: An Evolving Saga

Seven years ago Black Hills Audubon began working on the conservation of lands in the Rocky Prairie area near Maytown in southern Thurston County. In 2005, Black Hills signed a Settlement Agreement obligating the owner (and its successors) of the gravel-rich Maytown lands to permit monitoring of water quality and quantity, and species of fauna and flora of interest, as well as to provide funding for this effort. In return we refrained from contesting the Special Use Permit (SUP) that was granted by the County in 2005.

In December of 2010 the Thurston County Hearing Examiner, as part of the Five-Year Review of the SUP, issued a ruling generally favorable to the current owner, Maytown Sand and Gravel, and the Port of Tacoma, which retains rights to a portion of the proceeds from gravel mining. Black Hills Audubon appealed that ruling and the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners supported a portion of our Appeal, remanding the case back to the Hearing Examiner for further study and determination of critical areas

that might need protection. In response, Maytown Sand and Gravel and the Port of Tacoma appealed the County Commissioners' decision to Superior Court in Lewis County, and on July 20th the Superior Court Judge ruled in their favor.

We have decided now to focus our efforts on working with other conservation organizations and governmental agencies to use the funding mentioned above (to be known as the Maytown Conservation Fund) for monitoring the physical and biological conditions on the Maytown lands, for enhancement and/or reclamation, and for the possible acquisition of nearby lands in the Black River watershed for conservation.

We deeply appreciate the support, both financial and moral, that we received from so many of you, our members and supporters. That support has made possible this continued effort over a multiyear span. Thank you! 🐝

—Sam Merrill

Thursday, November 10 Oil Spills in Washington Waters

Despite having one of the better oil-spill programs in the country, Washington State's waters, wildlife, and economy are still at high risk from oil spills. In this talk we'll review some of the risks we have in our waters, the effects we can expect, what currently is and isn't being done to protect our environment, and what an oil spill could mean to birds and other wildlife. We'll also discuss what you can do to help protect our waters from spills and help minimize oil spill damage to birds and the environment. Marine Biologist Jerry Joyce is a member of the Puget Sound Partnership Oil Spill Workgroup.

Thursday, December 8 Native Bees

Every summer, a vast and interesting tribe of insects is hard at work in the fields and gardens around Olympia. They are the native bees. Did you know there is a bee that incubates its eggs like chickens do? Another mother bee gives her offspring a dab of a powerful antibiotic to protect them. Join Naturalist Rob Sandelin and explore the fascinating lives of our native bees. 🐝

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—the program will begin promptly at 7:30.



Thurston County's Critical Areas Ordinance: Public Hearing December 10

Donna J. Nickerson

BHAS encourages its members and friends to attend the upcoming public hearing about the update of the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO). The time and location of the Saturday December 10, 2011 hearing will be announced on the County website (http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/critical_areas/criticalareas_home.htm).

All chapters of the Draft Update are available on the same website.

The Growth Management Act requires local governments to protect five types of critical areas: important fish and wildlife habitat areas, wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas; and geologically hazardous areas, (such as bluffs). Thurston County's critical areas regulations are a response to that law – they regulate how development and redevelopment can safely occur on lands that contain critical areas.

The Thurston County CAO has not been updated since 1994. The new land use rules made for critical areas must be based on the best available science (BAS) and must satisfy the CAO standard of “no net loss” of ecosystem function. It is a lofty standard, and it should be. We are dependent on healthy critical areas for many reasons. Clean drinking water, rich soils, fish and shellfish, prevention from floods and land slides and other hazards are all irreplaceable benefits provided by our healthy critical areas. It also makes economic sense to protect these ecologically critical areas. In addition to providing elements vital to a high quality of life, these areas generate valuable economic benefits both to the public and to private landowners.

Valuing the Puget Sound Basin: Revealing Our Best Investments, a recent study by Earth Economics, (www.earthconomics.org/Page12.aspx) shows that a healthy Puget Sound Basin generates billions of dollars in goods and services each year. Most of Thurston County lies within the Basin and contributes to these good and services.

We are dependent on healthy critical areas for many reasons. Clean drinking water, rich soils, fish and shellfish, prevention from floods and land slides and other hazards are all irreplaceable benefits provided by our healthy critical areas.

Here are some key comments to consider voicing at the public hearing:

- ▶ High quality riparian buffers with mature, native vegetation typically dominated by conifers will provide the key riparian functions needed to sustain healthy streams and marine areas.

- ▶ BAS indicates that a minimum 1,000-foot buffer is needed to maintain some key freshwater and marine riparian functions: pollutant removal; sediment filtration/control; inputs of large woody debris; and wildlife habitat.

- ▶ Fish and Wildlife guidance (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/pub.php?id=00029>) recommends a 250-foot minimum buffer for marine areas. This will not satisfy the “no net

loss” standard on its own. However, if there are also incentives to increase buffers to and above 250 feet, improved resource stewardship for all waterfront landowners to maintain and enhance the condition of their riparian habitat areas, and if Thurston County seeks further approaches to protect ecosystem functions at a landscape scale under the Comprehensive Plan, a 250-foot minimum buffer can be a reasonable step towards achieving CAO goals.

- ▶ Apply minimum riparian buffer widths of 250 feet for fish bearing streams; 100–200 feet for non-fish bearing streams that drain to high quality water bodies; and 100–150 feet for other non-fish bearing streams.

- ▶ The County must ensure that riparian vegetation is conserved where new developments or uses are proposed. In cases where the riparian area has been altered, the habitat should be restored to native vegetation

and habitat structure.

- ▶ Hold landowners accountable to maintaining/restoring/increasing healthy buffers, and reward them with open space tax credits. This should

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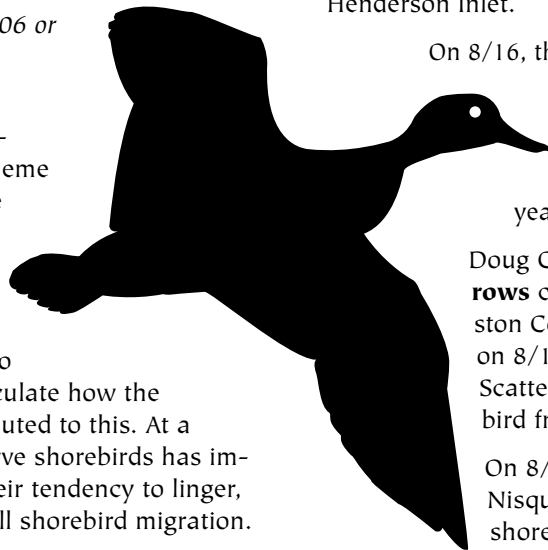
Birding in Earnest August–September 2011

By Bill Shelmerdine

To reports sightings call 866-9106 or email at georn1@hotmail.com

Shorebirds, shorebirds, shorebirds. Fall shorebirds is the theme and Nisqually Wildlife Refuge was the place (at least on the local scene). From a birder's perspective, all was right with the world, things as they should be, so to speak. It is interesting to speculate how the recent restoration has contributed to this. At a minimum, the ability to observe shorebirds has improved as, potentially, has their tendency to linger, at least with regards to the fall shorebird migration.

Overall this season **Semipalmated Plover**, and **Semipalmated** and **Pectoral sandpiper** numbers have all exceeded previous years counts (at least by my tally). None of these have been particularly easy birds to find in prior years. Semipalmated Plover have been reported in varying numbers throughout the August – September period. Semipalmated Sandpipers have been reported on at least nine occasions from late July to late August (thanks to



Bill Tweit, Whittier Johnson, Dave Richardson, Shep Thorp, and Ryan Shaw for their reports). Pectoral Sandpipers have been reported throughout September and into October (many observers).

On August 11, an adult **Heerman's Gull** was seen with a group of **California Gulls** at the mouth of Henderson Inlet.

On 8/16, three **Semipalmated Plover** were seen on Cooper Point, an unusual occurrence for that location. They have been reported much more frequently at Nisqually this year than in previous years.

Doug Canning reports **Vesper Sparrows** continuing at some of the Thurston County Prairies into mid-August: on 8/10 he reported two birds from Scatter Creek and on 8/16, a single bird from West Rocky Prairie.

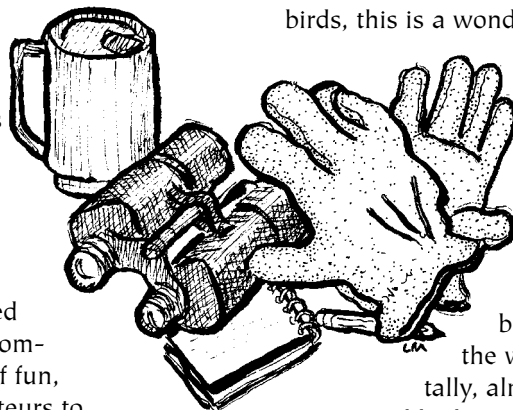
On 8/17, shorebird surveys at Nisqually recorded thousands of shorebirds including two **Ruddy Turnstones**, two **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, and two **Baird's Sandpipers** (Shep Thorp). On the 18th, big numbers of shorebirds (**Western** and **Least Sandpipers**) appeared at Mud Bay. On the 26th another push of migrants brought 150 **Bonaparte's Gulls**, 80 **Ring-billed Gulls**, 350 **Western Sandpipers**, and 15 **Greater Yellowlegs** to the flats at Mud Bay.

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Christmas Bird Count Sunday, December 18

This year's Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be held on Sunday, December 18. This event, sponsored by BHAS, needs volunteers to spend the day (or part of the day) in the field counting birds in their group's assigned count area. Folks new to birding, or those who prefer, will be partnered with experienced group leaders. This is a serious commitment, as well as a whole lot of fun, and it's also a great way for amateurs to become familiar with our local birds.

The day will conclude with the traditional post-count chili dinner shortly after dark at the Gull Harbor Lutheran Church in Olympia, 4610 Boston Harbor Road. After a wintery day spent counting



birds, this is a wonderful way to sit down, warm up, and share your group's count numbers.

Our count is part of the National Audubon Society's 112th CBC. These events are more important than ever because the results are used as tools to monitor the status and distribution of bird populations across the western hemisphere. Incidentally, almost every year Olympia has the national high count for Golden-crowned Kinglet and, in some years, Winter (now Pacific) Wren.

This work is very important and very appreciated. To join in, contact Count Coordinator Bill Shelmerdine at georn1@hotmail.com, or call Bill at (360) 866-9106. 🐦

Birding in Earnest

from previous page

On 8/27 a single **Red-necked Phalarope** was on Squaxin Passage. Sheila Harper reported a flock of 34 on the sound between Fox and McNeil Islands

Two **Baird's Sandpipers** were seen from the boardwalk at Nisqually on 8/31 (Shep Thorp).

On 9/3 Whittier Johnson reported an immature **Yellow-headed Blackbird** at Nisqually.

Sandhill Cranes made a showing at Nisqually on 9/3, and 9/14-16. Thanks to Shep Thorp and others for taking the time to record their sightings.

On 9/5 a juvenile **American Golden Plover** was photographed at the entrance slough at Nisqually by Ed Newbold. This would be the first documented by photograph in Thurston County.

A **Solitary Sandpiper** was reported by Matt Kizer at Nisqually on 9/7. While generally uncommon in our area, it is much more frequently reported during spring migration.

The biggest news of the season came on 9/8, when Alan Knue located a juvenile **Ruff** at Nisqually. This Eurasian shorebird is an exciting a first county record and a first for the refuge. The bird was reported again on 9/9 and 9/11.

On 9/16 Dennis Ellison reported a Whimbrel at the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge.

On 9/19, Penny Koyama reported a **White-throat-**

ed Swift from near Lewis and Clark State Park in Lewis County. This would be a Lewis County first, and a very rare west-side sighting for this east-side species.

A bit further afield the "tailed" shorebirds did not disappoint. **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers** have graced Ocean shores and the game range recently (late September), and **Bar-tailed Godwits** have been downright cooperative. **Bar-tails** have shown up at traditional locations such as Bottle Beach, Westport Marina, and Tokeland, but what is remarkable has been the number (at least four or five) and duration of stay.

Also just out of our area, Tacoma has been a hot spot and gulls and "friends" have been on the menu. A **Black-tailed Gull** has been a frequent flyer (or fortunately, a frequent afternoon rooster). The bird was first reported by Shep Thorp in early/ mid September and has continued through the month. Also in the area a **Franklin's Gull** was located by Bruce Labar, the first Thayer's Gulls of the season have arrived (seems early to me).

And finally among the many Bonaparte's and Common Terns in the area, several Parasitic Jaegers have been reported.

Looking ahead, it's not too early to start preparing for Christmas – Christmas Bird Count Season that is. See the article in this Echo, and also the BHAS website (<http://blackhills-audubon.org>) for more information.

Why not participate in more than one count this year? Of course if it comes down to a choice, I would suggest the Olympia count... 🐦



Volunteers Wanted

Joint Base Lewis-McChord is seeking volunteers to assist with the management of their purple martin and western bluebird nest box programs. Work can be on McChord Field and/or Lewis-Main. Work would occur intermittently from approximately April through September. Work would entail monitoring nesting progress and submitting monthly reports. Off-season work is also available. Bird banding is a possibility, if volunteer(s) is properly trained and permitted. Volunteer(s) would be welcome to attend appropriate species work group meet-



ings. Volunteers would be required to use their own vehicles, 4-wheel drive is a plus. Due to military security issues only U.S. citizens or Nationals should apply. A background check is required. Having base access is also a plus. Contact Valerie Elliott, Natural Resource Planner, JBLM, at 253-966-6450 or valerie.r.elliott@us.army.mil, before 31 January 2012 for additional information and to apply. 🐦

Please help us plan for the upcoming year's Black Hills Audubon Society field trips by completing the survey below. Mail it to — **Bonnie Wood**
2800 Aberdeen Court S.E.
Olympia, WA 98501

Or go to www.surveymonkey.com/s/LV53975 (under the title **BHAS Field Trip Survey**) and complete the survey on-line. **Thanks!**

1. Have you participated in Black Hills Audubon Society (BHAS) field trips before? Yes No
2. If you have never participated in a BHAS field trip, please share your reason(s).

3. Do you consider yourself a novice, less knowledgeable birder?
 intermediate, moderately knowledgeable birder? advanced, very knowledgeable birder?
4. Generally, do you or would you prefer field trips of a half-day's duration or less?
 all-day field trips? all-weekend field trips?
(Sometimes it is possible for us to arrange discount lodging.)
5. Generally, do you or would you prefer field trips closer to home (Thurston County and environs)?
 farther afield, to see birds not common here (eastern Washington, the Cascades, the coast)?
6. Generally, do you or would you prefer field trips that integrate more physical activity, such as hiking or biking while birding? Yes No
7. To get to the field trip location, do you or would you generally prefer carpooling?
 getting yourself there? either, depending on field trip location and parking availability?
8. Would you join a field trip group to such birding festivals as the Othello Crane Festival, the Woodpecker Festival in Bend, Oregon, and similar festivals? Yes, quite possibly No, probably not
9. Would you join a field trip that was designed primarily for novice birders?
 Yes, quite possibly No, probably not
10. If you have participated in BHAS field trips before, what are your favorite locations and trips?

11. Which of these field trips would appeal to you? (Check all that apply.)
 field trips seeking birds primarily field trips seeking birds and their songs—birding by ear
 field trips seeking birds and mushrooms field trips seeking birds and butterflies
 field trips seeking birds and bats field trips seeking birds and identifying plants
 field trips seeking birds and investigating geology
12. Do you know anyone who would be able and willing to lead (or co-lead) these trips (BHAS member or not)? Please contact me with any ideas.
13. Do you have other comments or thoughts that would help us plan successful field trips?

Thanks so much for your input and thoughts!

BHAS Field Trip Survey

Swifts, Swifts and More Swifts

By Valerie R. Elliott, Natural Resource Planner, Joint Base Lewis-McChord

The end of September is upon us and soon the migration of Vaux's swifts (*Chaetura vauxi*) through Washington State and specifically Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) will end. This September has been an exciting one for many people who had the opportunity to view the phenomena of thousands of small birds entering a chimney on the base.

The swifts migrate from Mexico and southern California to southeast Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon and California in the spring to breed and return in the fall.

The migration numbers are greater in the fall due, in part, to the juveniles, born in the summer, joining the adults.

Vaux's swifts recently started using brick chimneys because their preferred nesting and roosting habitat – hollow, often broken-top trees large enough for them to fly inside – are difficult to find. However, old-fashioned brick chimneys are no longer being built and existing ones are being torn down or sealed. This is producing a serious nesting and roosting site shortage for Vaux's swifts.

The Vaux's swifts were first found at the JBLM chimney on September 24, 2009, following a report that bats were entering a building in the early morning hours. The bats turned out to be Vaux's swifts – hundreds of them. This chimney is 70 feet tall with square inside measurements of 36 inches. It is located in the Lewis Main area of JBLM. The building and its chimney were built around 1946 as a heating plant for three adjacent warehouse buildings. The structures are not scheduled for any alterations.

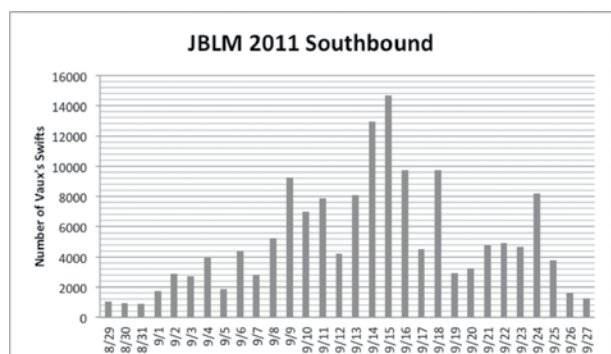
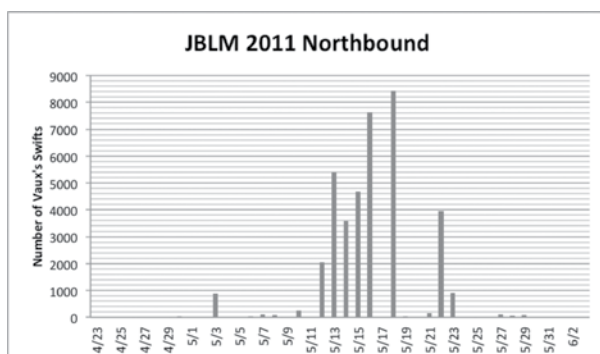
From September 2009 through September 2010, only sporadic observations and counts were made at the JBLM chimney. An estimate of 3,000 swifts was given for the fall 2009 migration. The north-

bound (spring) migration in 2010 had 6 observations totaling 400 swifts in the chimney. The southbound (fall) migration had 3 observations totaling 10,600 swifts. In the spring of 2011, a more concentrated observation effort by Burney Huff, a volunteer, provided the information in the following graphs. The spring migration totaled 38,500 swifts roosting in the JBLM chimney.

Burney Huff, along with several other volunteers he recruited, continued counting for the fall 2011 migration. At the time this article is being written, the southbound migration has not quite finished, but it is definitely winding down. Observations of the southbound migration began on August 29 and continue as of September 28. This year's highest total of birds was 14,695 on September 15. The total number of swifts counted during this fall migration period is over 150,000, as seen on the graph below.

Currently, four of Washington State's Vaux's swift migratory communal roost sites, believed to shelter over 90% of the species in both migrations, have been identified. They are, from north to south, Old Northern State Hospital (Sedro Woolley, Skagit County, WA), Monroe Wagner Elementary School (Monroe, Snohomish County, WA), Selleck Old School House (Selleck, King County, WA), and JBLM. For the fall 2011 migration, JBLM is the second most significant site in WA State. The world's population of migratory Vaux's swifts is considered to be 200,000. If this is a valid figure and the average length of stay at any one roost site is three days, that would mean that during this migration JBLM sheltered 50,000 of these swifts, or 25% of the world's population. Pretty amazing for a 70 foot chimney! 🦉

Additional information about the Vaux's swifts and their migrations can be found at www.vauxhappening.org.



BHAS Calendar

November

November 10, Thursday—Monthly Program Meeting: Oil Spills in Washington Waters, First Christian Church Meeting Hall, 107 S. Franklin Street in downtown Olympia. Doors open at 7:00 pm, program begins at 7:30.

November 12, Saturday—Field Trip: Kitsap and Jefferson Counties.
7:00 am-5:00 pm

December

December 8, Thursday—Monthly Program Meeting: Native Bees, First Christian Church Meeting Hall, 107 S. Franklin Street in downtown Olympia. Doors open at 7:00 pm, program begins at 7:30.

December 10, Saturday—Field Trip: Port Townsend and vicinity.
8:00 am to late afternoon

December 11, Sunday—Field Trip: Downtown Ducks at Capital Lake.
9 am-12:00 pm

December 18, Sunday—Annual Christmas Bird Count. All day, ending with the traditional Chili Feed in the evening. See the article in this *Echo* for more information.

December 31, Saturday—Deadline for annual award nominations
(see article in this *Echo*)

January 2012

January 7, Saturday—Field Trip: Downtown Ducks at Capital Lake.
9 am-12:00 pm

January 12, Thursday—Monthly Program Meeting.

Mark Your
Calendar for the
BHAS Annual Dinner
& Auction -
Saturday March 3,
2012

Field Trips and Events

November 10, Thursday, 7:30 pm
Monthly Program Meeting

November 12, Saturday, 7:00 am-5:00 pm
Kitsap and Jefferson Counties
Leaders: Phil Kelley and Ruth Sullivan

This trip will cross the Narrows Bridge with Port Townsend as the final destination, with several stops along the way, including Marrowstone Island and Fort Flagler. The emphasis of the day will be water birds arriving for the winter. In addition to waterfowl and other birds, this trip offers lovely views of Hood Canal, Admiralty Inlet, and the Straits of Juan de Fuca. There will be a little walking over terrain that is not difficult. Dress for weather, which means possible rain and wind (it is winter in the PNW, after all). Bring food and drinks. There is a limit of 4 cars. Meet at the Martin Way Park and Ride at 7:00 and the 6th Avenue Park and Ride in Tacoma at 7:30 am. Call Phil at 360-97-6323 or Ruth at 253-564-7419 to reserve a spot for this trip.

December 10, Saturday, 8:00 am to late afternoon
Port Townsend and vicinity
Leader: Lonnie Somer

Stops will include Fort Worden, Point Hudson, Mystery Bay, and Fort Flagler State Parks, and Kah Tai Lagoon. Possible species include Ancient and Marbled Murrelet, Rhinoceros Auklet, Pigeon Guillemot, Black Oystercatcher, loons (including a possibility for Yellow-billed Loon), Brant, Long-tailed, Harlequin, and Ruddy Duck, and 8 or more species of shore birds. This is a great opportunity for beginning birders to see some of our harder-to-find northwest specialties! It may be windy, rainy, and cold, so appropriate winter weather clothing and rain gear are strongly recommended. Also bring water, snacks, and lunch. The trip will entail several stops with short walks on level ground. Meet at the Mud Bay Park & Ride at 8:00 am. This trip is limited to 12 participants and up to 3 vehicles. Contact Lonnie Somer, wheelermombi@comcast.net.

Sunday, December 11th, 9 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, as well as passerines to be seen 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.


Saturday January 7th, 2012 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Downtown Ducks at Capital Lake
Leader: Burt Guttman

If you missed the December Downtown Ducks trip, here's a second chance. See the description for the December 11 trip.

Field Trip Guidelines

Here are ten guidelines to help keep the field trip experience a good one for all participants.

- Plan to arrive 10-15 minutes before the designated departure time.
- Expect to carpool. In many cases, field trips travel to places where roads are narrow, or parking may be an issue. Also, we want to conserve resources as much as possible.
- Dress in layers and always be prepared for any weather possibility. Field trips in the northwest often take place in rainy, windy, and/or cold conditions. Field trips are not cancelled unless safety is a concern.
- Always bring water, lunch, drinks, snacks, etc., especially for trips that extend past midday. Be prepared with a bit of money for the occasional coffee or bakery stop as well.
- Bring binoculars, field guides and, if you have them, spotting scopes and walkie-talkies.
- Bring any park passes you have, such as Golden Age or Golden Eagle. As of July 2011, there is a mandatory Discover Pass requirement for all state owned/managed recreation lands. See the link on the Black Hills Audubon website for more information.
- Bring cash for carpooling fees. The customary amount is 25 cents per mile to be divided by the passengers in each car.
- Pets are not allowed on field trips.
- Please do not wear perfume or other scents, as some participants may be very sensitive to them. Also, scents are frequently attractive to insects.

As with most organizations, Black Hills Audubon is now asking field trip participants to sign a release of liability form before departure. You may view the form on our website. 

Critical Areas Ordinance Hearing Dec. 10

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- also be used to reward landowners who maintain and/or restore shorelines.
- ▶ All of the nearshore areas in Thurston County are habitat for the Puget Sound Chinook Salmon (listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)), the Puget Sound-Strait of Georgia ESU Coho (listed as a species of concern under the ESA), as well as Chum, Cutthroat Salmon and Steelhead (WRIA 13 data).
 - ▶ The GMA requires every county to give “special consideration” or extra weight on functions necessary to recover salmon. The “special consideration” means that “the scientific evidence... must be more heavily weighted against issues of practicality and economics...when dealing with anadromous fish. ... Local governments must go beyond what might otherwise be done in designating and protecting other kinds of critical areas.” (Clark County Natural Resources Council v. Clark County, 1996)

- ▶ The CAO must explicitly consider the cumulative effects of development and other human activities in light of expected sea level and hydrological changes. It may be prudent to require wider vegetated buffers and wider building setbacks along low-lying rivers and coastlines.

For more information on the process, see the Thurston County website listed at the beginning of this article.

BHAS encourages your participation in the public comment opportunity during the public hearing. You may also submit written comments, which can be sent to Andrew Deffobis at deffoba@co.thurston.wa.us

Finally, please see our website for more comments on other CAO chapters, and please contact me with any questions. 🐦

D.J.Nick@comcast.net



Basic Birding Class in November and December

BHAS is pleased to offer another class on birding basics. This class will run for six Tuesday evenings in November and December – November 8, 15, and 22, and December 6, 13 and 20 – from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Classes will be held at the State Capitol Museum Coach House in Olympia. There will also be two field trips, the dates of which will be determined at the first class. Cost for the class is \$80, and includes the book *Finding Your Wings* by Burt Guttman. Some scholarships are available.

This course will provide an introduction to birding with an emphasis on developing identification skills. Other topics will include a review of birding tools including binoculars and field guides, an introduction to birding terminology, and some discussion of basic bird biology as they relate to identification. The course is designed primarily for beginning birders but should be useful for many mid-level birders as well.

Register by calling Deb Nickerson at 754-5397 or emailing her at debranick@gmail.com. Class size is limited to 25 persons. 🐦

Newly Formed Hospitality Committee Needs Your Help!

We are looking for people to serve on our Hospitality Committee, which provides snacks and staffs an information table at the Monthly Program Meetings and the Annual meeting. Activities can include

- Serving as a greeter;
- Bringing cookies;
- Staffing the Chapter’s information table;
- Assisting at the Annual Dinner in March setting up, cleaning up, and managing tables.

This is a great opportunity to get to know current members and mentor new members as they learn more about BHAS. If you are interested, please contact either Leslie Lynam (leslielynam@yahoo.com, or 360-402-9513) or Deb Nickerson at (debranick@gmail.com, or 360-754-5397). You may also sign-up on the sheet provided at the program meetings. The next Hospitality Committee meeting is November 16th from 6:30pm to 7:30pm at Deb Nickerson’s house. 🐦

The Dave McNett Environmental Educator Award Nominating Criteria

Black Hills Audubon is proud to continue recognizing environmental educational efforts by area residents. We would like to receive nominations of individuals who have carried on Dave McNett's tradition of educational excellence by making a positive difference in the lives of living beings through their work as an educator.

Deadline is December 30th, 2011. The award will be presented at the Annual Dinner, March 3, 2012.

The criteria for nominations for this award are:

- Work has generally been within the BHAS geographical base (Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties).
- Nominees may be members of BHAS, but don't have to be.
- Their work has been inspirational to those with whom they have worked or taught.

- Work need not have been done on a volunteer basis but did involve volunteers or one's own volunteer time. One can be a professional in the field of environmental education but need not be.
- Nominees worked collaboratively with others to attain educational goals of informing the public about an aspect of our natural world pertaining to bird habitat or conservation.
- Nominees have worked in the field for at least two years.

Please email your completed nominations, along with a description of why you are nominating the person, by December 30th, 2011, to McNettEnvEducatorAward-nom@blackhills-audubon.org, or mail it to Black Hills Audubon Society, PO Box 2524, Olympia WA 98507. For questions, please contact the Chair of the Education Committee, Debbie Nickerson, at 360-754-5397. 🦋



Ongoing Bird Feeder Cleaning Benefits BHAS

At any time of the year, take your bird feeder to Dave, the manager of Wild Birds Unlimited on Cooper Point Road. WBU will clean the feeder, and \$2 of the \$6 charge will go to the Black Hills Audubon Society Chapter. Keeping your feeders clean will minimize the risk of disease, and help keep birds healthy. We appreciate Wild Birds Unlimited's partnership in our work to protect birds and their habitats and promote local birding. 🦋

BHAS Annual Dinner and Auction

Mark your calendars for the 2012 Black Hills Audubon Society annual dinner and auction, scheduled for the evening of Saturday, March 3, 2012. Once again, the event will be held at the downtown Olympia Center.

Invitations will be sent out in early February. In the meantime, anyone with auction items or ideas for auction items may contact Margery Beeler at (360) 352-5437 or at mswampcat@aol.com. 🦋

Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award Nominating Criteria

This award is primarily for citizens who have volunteered their time and skills in the field of conservation and is intended for persons who have not previously received the award.

The deadline for nominations is Dec. 30th, 2011. The award will be presented at the Annual Dinner, March 3, 2012.

Please be guided by the following set of criteria:

- Work has generally been within the BHAS geographical base (Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties).
- Nominees may be members of BHAS but are required to be.
- Work was a volunteer initiative relying heavily on volunteer time.
- Nominees worked collaboratively with others, including governmental and non-governmental organizations to help resolve an environmental issue.
- Nominees used objective sources of information and reliable data and demonstrated professionalism throughout.

- Nominees worked consistently on the issue and persevered, proving resourceful under difficult challenges.
- Results of the work made a significant difference either in real environmental benefits or improved awareness by the public or governmental agencies on an environmental issue.

Submit the name(s), and a brief description of the effort made by the individual(s) or teams and their progress and successes in regards to the Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award criteria. If you are nominating a team, please list the key individuals who have led the team and their contact information.

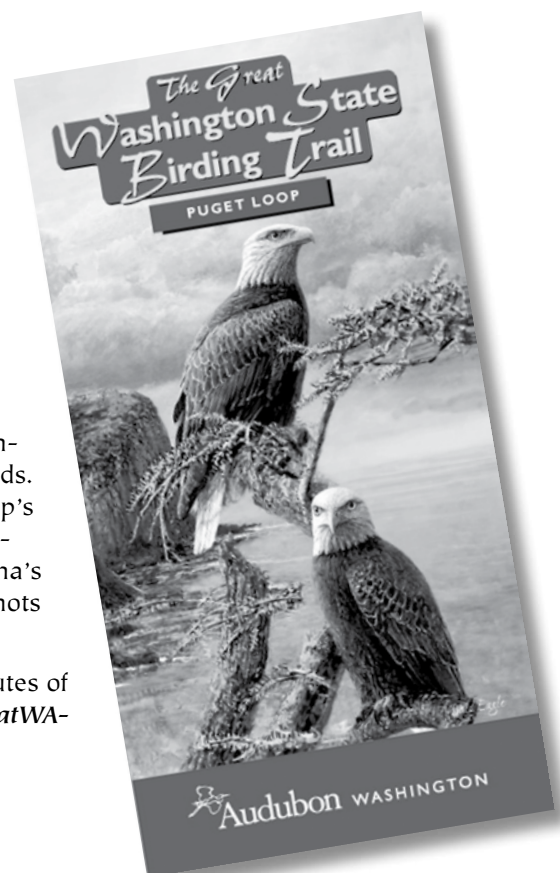
Please mail your nominations by December 30th, 2011, to the Black Hills Audubon Society, PO Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507, or send email to Conservationawardnom@blackhills-audubon.org.

The Conservation Committee will review the nominations received and will make a recommendation to the BHAS board members for final selection and approval. The award will be presented at the BHAS Annual Dinner March 3, 2012. 🦅

Birding Trail's Puget Loop Debuts for Holidays

Delight your favorite birders this holiday season with the newest – the seventh and final – map of the Great Washington State Birding Trail: the Puget Loop. Hot off the press Thanksgiving weekend, this signature route features 220 of our 346 annually recorded bird species around Puget Sound from Seattle to Mt. Rainier, plus Lake Washington, Kitsap Peninsula, and Vashon, Bainbridge, Whidbey and San Juan islands. Travel by car, bus or ferry, or bike or paddle to the Puget Loop's 42 main sites and 18 "more birding" locations for avian highlights: Bald Eagles, Pileated Woodpeckers, Pacific Wrens, Anna's Hummingbirds, Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Pigeon Guillemots – and more.

Order the Puget Loop Birding Trail Map, plus all six other routes of the statewide Birding Trail: http://wa.audubon.org/birds_GreatWABirdingTrail.html. 🦅



Black Hills Audubon Society Contacts

BHAS Board Members

President: Sam Merrill 360-866-8839

Co-Vice President:

Whittier Johnson 360-866-8156
co-vicepresw@blackhills-audubon.org

Co-Vice President:

Kris Schoyen 360-754-1710
co-vicepresk@blackhills-audubon.org

Secretary: Meagan Thorn

secretary@blackhills-audubon.org

Treasurer: Susan Markey 360-438-9048

treasurer@blackhills-audubon.org

Committee Chairs

Conservation: vacant

Education: Debbie Nickerson 360-754-5397
debranick@gmail.com

Field Trips: Kristin Stewart 360-456-5098
kristinstewart01@comcast.net

Membership: Margery Beeler 360-352-5437
mswampcat@aol.com

Programs: Kris Schoyen 360-754-1710
co-vicepresk@blackhills-audubon.org

Publications and Webmaster:

Debra Jaqua 360-491-3325
webdeb1@gmail.com

Board Members at Large

Tracey Scalici *trscalici@gmail.com*

Shelley Horn *shelleysmail@me.com*

Leslie Lynam 360-402-9513
leslielynam@yahoo.com

Member Volunteers

Bird-a-thon Coordinator:

Sheila McCartan 360-357-9170
schooleymccartan@comcast.net

Bird Identification:

Bill Shelmerdine 360-866-9106
georn1@hotmail.com

Echo Designer:

Lee Miller 360-753-0942
aleemiller@igc.org

Echo Editor:

Robin Shoal *rzshoal@gmail.com*

Phone Team: Carolyn Harmon and Bonnie Wood



Black Hills Audubon Society

Mailing address: PO Box 2524, Olympia WA, 98507.

Phone: 360-352-7299 (Messages)

Website: www.blackhills-audubon.org

E-mail: 4info@blackhills-audubon.org

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. Coot on page 2 and dowitchers on page 10 by Kirsten Munson; graphic on page 3 by Lee Miller.

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 January/February 2012 issue, the deadline for which is December 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!

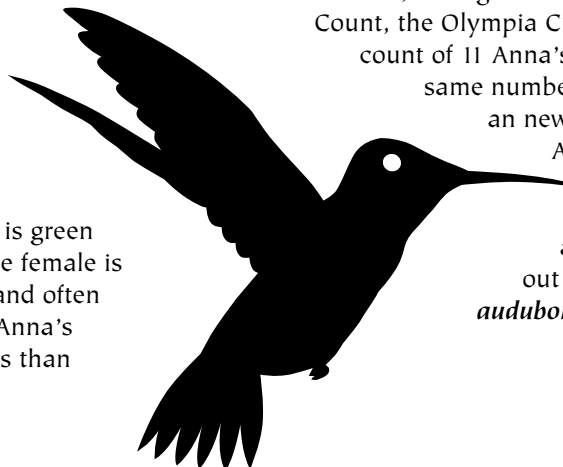


Return service requested

The Occasional Bird

Anna's Hummingbird—*Calypte anna*

Anna's Hummingbirds are commonly seen in urban and suburban communities along the West Coast of North America and as far east as New Mexico. Anna's Hummingbirds are readily attracted to feeders, which probably contributes to their abundance in residential areas. The Anna's Hummingbird is generally larger than the Rufous Hummingbird, another familiar Pacific Northwest hummer. The male Anna's Hummingbird has a red throat and a distinctive red forehead, and can be distinguished from the usually smaller male Rufous Hummingbird by its back, which is green where the Rufous' is rusty red. The female is greenish above and pale below, and often has a patch of red on its throat. Anna's are also typically less pugnacious than their rufous relatives.



In many localities, including in our South Puget Sound area, Anna's Hummingbirds are increasingly present throughout the year, which is unusual for a hummingbird. It is unclear if the wintering birds are resident or if they are replaced by individuals from another region.

In 2006, during the 107th annual Christmas Bird Count, the Olympia Circle tallied an all-time high count of 11 Anna's. The following year saw the same number, and the 2009 count recorded an new all-time high count of 22

Anna's Hummingbirds. For more information about the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), see the article in this Echo, and check out the CBC website: <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>.

—RZS