

**Black Hills
Audubon Society**
Olympia, Washington

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September/October 2010



Thanks to Thurston County Commissioners for Wildlife

—Sue Danver

There is some sadness when July melts into August. Not only do our days become shorter and cooler, but our forests, prairies, and riparian areas become much quieter. The nesting season winds down and territorial songs disappear. In late July, I strain to hear the haunting song of the Swainson's Thrush one last time. The thrush's flutelike notes bring peace to any hectic

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Thursday Sept. 16th, 7pm Amazing New Zealand

Former Audubon Washington office manager Jamie Morgan spent a month travelling around New Zealand last year. She'll be sharing her vacation photos, which happen to include many shots of New Zealand's nifty birds, amazing landscapes, and kooky tourist activities. Jamie is an expert on many topics—unfortunately, ornithology is not one of them—and will take you along for a (budget-conscious) ride that covers the beautiful island nation of New Zealand from the tip of Cape Reinga to Milford Sound. *Kia Ora!*

These Monthly Program meetings will be held at the Capitol Museum Coach House, 211 W. 21st St, in Olympia. Social hour is at 7pm, with programs beginning promptly at 7:30 pm. BHAS membership meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of the month (exceptions: no March, July, or August meetings).

Driving directions from Olympia: From I-5, take exit 105 following the "State Capitol/City Center" route. Go straight, through the tunnel. At the light (Capitol Way) turn left (south). After 7 blocks, turn right onto 21st St. The Museum is two blocks down on the left. The Coach House meeting room and parking are south of and behind the Museum.

Thursday Oct. 21st, 7pm Northwest Bats: Conservation Issues and Observations

Greg Falxa, a bat researcher working out of Cascadia Research, has spent the past 8 years studying bat behavior and life history strategies in Washington, Oregon, and California, with an emphasis on western Washington. Bats receive little attention from the public or even the research community, and management of bats as wildlife has typically been haphazard. There are areas of South

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Birdathon 2010 Wrap-up

—Sheila McCartan

The 2010 Birdathon was a great success. Sixty-four people participated, either as birders, supporters, or both during this 3rd annual event held during the month of May. After pledges were gathered and tallied, a total of \$2,754 had been raised for the chapter.

We'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who participated and found creative ways to have fun, watch birds, and raise money at the same time. A special thank you to the trip leaders (Matt Pike, Phil Kelley, Whittier Johnson, Kristin Stewart, and Sheila McCartan) for lending their time and expertise to this important chapter program.

Thank you Birdathon Contributors:

Marian Bailey, Andrew Beelik, Patt Brady and Fred Fiedler, Betty Brickman, Larry and Susan Carlson, Warren Carlson and Pat Gallagher-Carlson, John Carmichael, Rob Cole, Richard Cormier, Peggy and David Edwards, Friends of the B Flat Farm, William Frymire, Lee Hoemann, Whittier Johnson, Marjorie and Thomas Juelson, Phil Kelley, Susan

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Markey, Jean MacGregor, Clarice McCartan, Sheila McCartan, Sam Merrill, Elizabeth Morrison and Geoffrey Crooks, Betty Nickerson, Deb Nickerson, Matt and Lisa Pike, Ralph and Julie Pike, Judith and Richard Playter, Jane Poole, Doug Roster, Maria Ruth, Tom Schooley, Clifford and Jean Smith, Anne Solwick, Mary Ann Steele, Kristin and Michael Stewart, Randy Stearnes, Jean Takekawa, Greg Trautman, Robert Wadsworth, Gary Wiles and Jan Sharkey, Debra and Ralph Wilhelmi, Peter and Janice Woo. 🐦

Birdathon: "Big Day in Thurston County" Trip

—Tom Schooley

Matt Pike and I worked over Thurston County in search of all things feathered on Saturday, May 15, 2010, for the BHAS Birdathon. We started in Capital forest at about 4:30 a.m., with Mt. Rainier and Venus beautiful in the predawn light. As the sun rose, a **Spotted Towhee** rang the chorus bell and the **robins** jumped into full song. Soon the **Song Sparrows** joined in, followed by **Chestnut-backed Chickadees**, a **Hammond's Flycatcher**, and some **MacGillivray's Warblers** in the background. The bass line was carried by a **Mourning Dove**.

We moved around the hillside picking up **Olive-sided Flycatchers**, a **Rufous Hummingbird**, and a stunning **Hermit Warbler**. The hills provided many fine finds such as **House Wren**, **Hairy Woodpecker** and **Band-tailed Pigeon**.

We moved into the lowlands with a stop in Mima Mounds. A **Western Meadowlark** greeted us, and I caught the end of a **Sooty Grouse** humming. **Ravens** and a **Cooper's Hawk** had the small birds upset, but not much was new here.

We traipsed around the southwest corner of the county coming up with many farmland birds. **Chipping Sparrows** and **Oregon Juncos** kept the Christmas tree farm ringing; a **Eurasian Collared Dove** put in an appearance; **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** showed up in numbers; and a male **Northern Harrier** cruised a field on a mission of mousy intent. We left for Tenino with most of the passerines under our belt, but several specialties to go.

The marshes around Tenino were not so productive, but the overhead show was OK. The **Red-winged Blackbirds** were hammering on a **Red-tailed Hawk**. A **Western Wood Pewee** quietly sallied out for flies, and several **Yellow-rumped Warblers** did, too. We soon headed north to hit the saltwater and start our ducks, but a stop at the Weir Prairie produced a **Western Bluebird** and a **Vesper Sparrow**.

The Bayview Grocery in downtown Olympia was a great place to pick up our initial **gulls** with at least one clean **Glaucous-wing** and a stunningly white **Glaucous Gull**. We tried Priest Point Park but too many picnickers and too many tree leaves blocked

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“Big Day”

From previous page

the water views. Boston Harbor was a hit, **Purple Martins** chattered away while we scoped the deep waters finding **Pigeon Guillemots** and a pair of **Marbled Murrelets**. We moved on to Woodard Bay, which was a very productive spot. Three species of **cormorants** and two of **loons** added spice to several new **ducks** such as **Surf Scoters**, **Common** and **Red-breasted Mergansers**.

The afternoon wore on and the tide was on the rise as we got to Luhr Beach. There we added **American Wigeon** with a **Eurasian** for icing. The distant flock of **Common Goldeneye** seemed pure, and **Ring-billed Gull** and **Caspian Tern** added to our slim list of larids.

We headed to Nisqually NWR having saved the best location for last. It did not fail us. Several **Cackling Geese** were still present on the entrance road. We walked first to the twin barns picking up **Golden-crowned Sparrow** and **Swainson's Thrush** along the way. The new outer dike trail was splendid with great looks at three **Wilson's Phalaropes**, **Cin-**

namon and **Blue-winged Teal**, and **Long-billed Dowitchers**. Five **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** were an unusual treat. A **Spotted Sandpiper** teetered around on the mud hummocks and a few **Least Sandpipers** settled in for a spell. The day closed with **Wilson's Snipe** piping and a **Virginia Rail** whinnying in the cattails. A pair of **Greater Yellow-legs** landed as we headed back to the parking lot.

We were lamenting one particular hole on our list when a soft chatter caught our attention. Soon a **Bushtit** carrying some bugs paused as it crossed our path, and then headed towards its pendant nest just off the trail. He proved to be our last bird of the day. Our desperate drive around Capital Lake for a grebe was fruitless; even the local swift at my house would not show.

Our final tally put us at **123 species**, a truly magnificent day of birds for our small county. 🦋

Note: *Matt and Tom's Birdathon pledges totaled \$414. Thanks to both of these outstanding birders and their supporters for their contributions to the 2010 Birdathon.*

.....

The total list is below.

Canada Goose	Barn Swallow	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Swainson's Thrush
Cooper's Hawk	Wilson's Warbler	Golden-crowned Sparrow	Purple Finch
Hammond's Flycatcher	Gadwall	Red-breasted Merganser	Pelagic Cormorant
Yellow Warbler	Long-billed Dowitcher	Marbled Murrelet	Red-breasted Sapsucker
Cackling Goose	Steller's Jay	Brown Creeper	American Robin
Red-tailed Hawk	Western Tanager	White-crowned Sparrow	House Finch
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Eurasian Wigeon	Ring-necked Pheasant	American Bittern
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Wilson's Snipe	Rhinoceros Auklet	Downy Woodpecker
Wood Duck	Western Scrub Jay	Bewick's Wren	Varied Thrush
American Kestrel	Black-headed Grosbeak	Dark-eyed Junco	Red Crossbill
Purple Martin	American Wigeon	Blue Grouse	Great Blue Heron
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Wilson's Phalarope	Rock Pigeon	Hairy Woodpecker
Green-winged Teal	American Crow	House Wren	Cedar Waxwing
Virginia Rail	Spotted Towhee	Red-winged Blackbird	Pine Siskin
Tree Swallow	Surf Scoter	California Quail	Turkey Vulture
Townsend's Warbler	Ring-billed Gull	Band-tailed Pigeon	Northern Flicker
Mallard	Common Raven	Winter Wren	Eurasian Starling
Killdeer	Chipping Sparrow	Western Meadowlark	American Goldfinch
Violet-green Swallow	Common Goldeneye	Pacific Loon	Osprey
Hermit Warbler	Glaucous-winged Gull	Mourning Dove	Pileated Woodpecker
Blue-winged Teal	Black-capped Chickadee	Marsh Wren	Hutton's Vireo
Greater Yellowlegs	Vesper Sparrow	Yellow-headed Blackbird	Evening Grosbeak
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Bufflehead	Common Loon	Bald Eagle
MacGillivray's Warbler	Glaucous Gull	Eurasian Collared Dove	Olive-sided Flycatcher
Cinnamon Teal	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Warbling Vireo
Spotted Sandpiper	Savannah Sparrow	Brewer's Blackbird	House Sparrow
Cliff Swallow	Hooded Merganser	Double-crested Cormorant	Northern Harrier
Common Yellowthroat	Caspian Tern	Rufous Hummingbird	Western Wood-Pewee
Northern Shoveler	Bushtit	Western Bluebird	Orange-crowned Warbler
Least Sandpiper	Song Sparrow	Brown-headed Cowbird	
	Common Merganser	Brandt's Cormorant	
	Pigeon Guillemot	Belted Kingfisher	

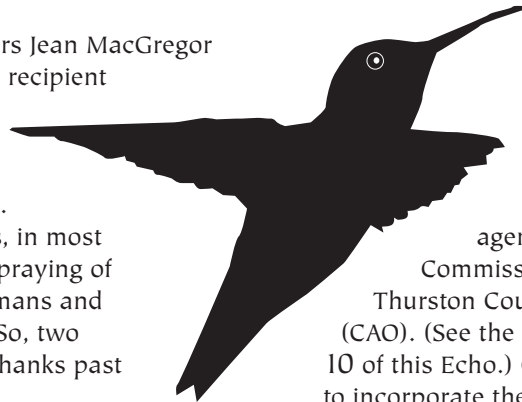
Thanks to Thurston County Commissioners

From page 1

day. Each year I wonder if other residents choose not to take a vacation from the Pacific Northwest from mid-June to late July so as not to miss this beautiful concert.

We should celebrate the density of our birds in Thurston County. One reason for the relative health of our bird population is due to an extraordinary effort over two decades ago by Thurston County staff Mark Swartout, Black Hills Audubon Society members Jean MacGregor and Adrian Brown (this year's recipient of the Jack Davis Conservation award), and others who worked diligently to reduce the use of roadside herbicides. Mechanized removal of plants, in most circumstances, replaced the spraying of poisons, harmful to birds, humans and wildlife, along County roads. So, two decades later, BHAS heartily thanks past

Our Commissioners are attempting to incorporate the soundest science to best protect the birds, fish, other wildlife, soils, aquifers, coastal lands, and streams that are critical to and/or enhance our lives. These are not easy decisions, balancing private property with incorporating important conservation measures.



Thurston County Commissioners who ended reliance on roadside spraying and subsequent Commissioners who have chosen not to reverse the policy.

I have been fortunate to travel and converse with residents from Yelm to Rochester and from Capitol

Forest to Puget Sound.

With the caveat that one should not generalize, the majority of Thurston County residents appreciate the great beauty of our County. Many citizens enthusiastically watch birds. But the love of wildlife by Thurston County citizens extends beyond the avian world. Conversations about birds often digress into discussions about other wildlife that frequent resident's yards, nearby fields, forests and

streams. Thurston County residents, from mobile home to mansion, talk proudly about 'their' otters, eagles, foxes, cougars, pheasants, ravens, bears, etc.

Now, as part of the Growth Management Act, the Thurston County Commissioners and staff are updating Thurston County's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO). (See the article about CAO updates on page 10 of this Echo.) Our Commissioners are attempting to incorporate the soundest science to best protect the birds, fish, other wildlife, soils, aquifers, coastal lands, and streams that are critical to and/or enhance our lives.

These are not easy decisions, balancing private property with incorporating important conservation measures. We thank the current County Commissioners for putting much thought into the final measures they plan to approve in 2010.

Today, healthy populations of thrush sing, partially due to actions taken against roadside sprays. Perhaps in the future, citizens will marvel at a gloriously restored prairie, a well-oxygenated Deschutes River, or conservation lands around the Black River Corridor resulting from policies implemented by our current County Commissioners. 🐦



October program
From page 1

Sound that are rich with bats, and Greg will talk about these, and about how much of the new information about the bats in this area have come from citizens rather than formal studies. Plenty of time will be reserved for questions.

Biking/Birding

By Maria Ruth

The morning of May 23 began early, gray, and rainy—the perfect day for a bike ride. I consider myself a fair-weather biker, or at least I did until I was lured out into the gloom by the promise of seeing dozens of species of birds along the Chehalis Western Trail...by bike.

This was my second-ever BHAS Bird-a-thon. My first was a traditional hike-that-becomes-a-stroll to Woodard Bay in 2009 coordinated by Debbie Nickerson. It was lovely, though all the little brown birds had decided the night before to stay just beyond identification range. The wildflowers and the companionship and the gourmet picnic overlooking the bay more than compensated for the lack of avian activity. I hadn't done much birding since then, but enjoyed the idea of getting outside and under the wing of experienced birders. I figured I'd cover more ground (and therefore see more birds) by bike than by foot, so I signed up to join Debbie for my second Bird-a-thon.

At 7 a.m. our group of seven assembled at the Fir Street parking lot, including Whittier Johnson, and Tracey Scalici. Whittier and Tracey, I would soon learn, had bionic ears. Amid the clatter of car doors slamming and our chatter, Whittier turned his head and pointed toward a stand of trees.

“**Song Sparrow**. Probably with young. Oh, and a **Brown-headed Cowbird**. **Spotted Towhee**, of course.”

We weren't quite ready to launch into the official Bird-a-thon count, but nothing would stop Whittier. He kept pointing at different trees and underbrush, low, high, left, right.

“**Violet Green Swallow**. And there's an **American Robin**.”

Tracey Scalici took out a pencil and paper and started keeping a list. The count began. And there we all were, in the parking lot, straddling our bikes, not going anywhere.

“**White-crowned Sparrow**. And a **Yellow Warbler**. **Orange-crowned Warbler**,” said Whittier.

Tracey nodded in agreement, jotted down the names, and added several of her own. “**Dark-Eyed Junco**. There. Hear it?” I listened. We all listened.

Some nodded. I wasn't too sure. I would just have to take her word for it.

After about fifteen minutes, we decided that maybe we should start biking. Our goal was the Monarch Sculpture Park, several miles south. We crossed the road and went about fifty yards before Whittier stopped again. We all stopped and straddled our bikes while Whittier and Tracey named bird after invisible bird. Once they heard a call, they would repeat it or describe it for the rest of us. These people were amazing. Or were they secret BHAS-ringers pulled in to elevate our count? At this rate—25¢ a species—I would be broke before noon!

When we started getting chilled from standing so long in the middle of the bike trail, we decided to try to bike without stopping for ten minutes. We laughed at such a “challenging” goal, but we were determined to actually ride our bikes instead of straddling them down the trail.

Five minutes later, I found myself in the lead with Whittier and Tracey nowhere in sight. I made a U-turn and decided this was about birding, not biking, so I should just relax and try to learn how to identify a bird or two by ear. I pulled my bike up next to Whittier who was pointing at some trees near a wetland.

“There's a **Hairy Woodpecker** there in that snag. And a **Red-winged Blackbird**. **Willow Flycatcher**.”

I nodded. And then I heard a call I had never heard before.

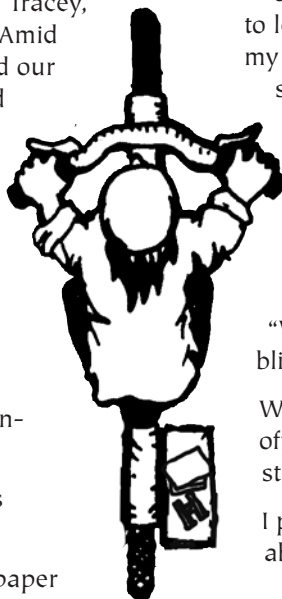
“What's that? That kind of trilly, tweeting, warbling over there?”

Whittier listened for a minute. Then he rattled off three more species he was hearing over the strange call.

I persisted. “Hear it?” I pointed. “I'm not sure about that one,” he said. “But do you hear the **Red-breasted Merganser**?” I nodded. Other biking-birders were adding in other birds they were hearing and seeing. After adding **American Robin**, **Common Raven**, and **Steller's Jay** to our list (I tried to be humble about these), I heard the strange call again.

Since this was one of the few birds whose song I could pick out, I wanted to learn who it belonged to.

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Birding in Earnest; June 2010 – July 2010

By Bill Shelmerdine

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

Bird reports typically fall off as we head into summer. This year however, things seemed a little late. Two county-firsts were recorded in early June. A **Gray Catbird** at Nisqually on June 4, and a **Lark Sparrow** along the edge of Capitol Forest were the first reports I know of for Thurston County. Beyond those, only a couple of noteworthy reports were submitted, with the vast majority around the first week of June.

One June 4th, a **Gray Catbird** was seen and photographed at the Nisqually Refuge by Scott Graham and Keith Bagnall.

Also on 6/4, Russ Koppendrayner reported a nice day list from the upper Cowlitz area near Randle. Of particular interest were **Western Kingbird** (2), **Bank Swallow**, **House Wren**, and **Lazuli Bunting**.

On June 5, Tyler Hicks reported 2 **Western Kingbirds** from the North Unit of Scatter Creek. Apparently this is around the peak time in Western WA for that species.

On June 6 an alternate plumaged **Eared Grebe** was noted on Eld Inlet by yours truly.

On June 7, a **Lark Sparrow** was seen and photographed by Scott Mills near the intersection of Waddle Creek and Sherman Valley Roads at the edge of Capitol Forest.

On June 22nd a **Red-eyed Vireo** was singing at Volunteer Park in Bucoda, and a **Purple Martin** was near the Steam Plant along Big Hanford Road. Both were treats on my breeding bird survey route.

While a bit out of the local reporting area of Lewis, Mason, and Thurston County, a June 26 pelagic trip with Westport Seabirds produced a basic plumage **Horned Puffin** along with a spectacular showing of mammals. To name just a few, the trip high counts of Humpback Whales; a Minke Whale; and large numbers of Northern Right Whale and Pacific White-sided Dolphins. The full list can be found on Westport Seabirds.com.

Moving into July, **Wilson's Phalarope** were still being seen at Nisqually Refuge. On July 2, Shep Thorp

reported a single bird. Toward mid-month shorebirds started showing up there with the continuing **Wilson's Phalarope**, **Red-necked Phalarope**, **Lesser** and **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Long-billed** and **Short-billed Dowitchers**, and an influx of **Least** and **Western Sandpipers**. Thanks go to Shep and Phil Kelly for their continuing reports.



And finally on July 22nd, an adult **Heerman's Gull** was seen on Eld Inlet.

The end of summer and early fall is upon us. The high country is a good bet about now, but so are the shorebirding and seabirding possibilities. August and September are the peak for both of these activities in our area. Trips into the

deep water areas off of Westport are available from Westport Seabirds for most weekends in August and September. Check out the schedule on-line at Westport Seabirds if interested. 🐾

Biking/Birding

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"Did you figure that one out yet?" I asked Whittier. "No," he said. "And I would appreciate it if you wouldn't bring it up again." I glanced quickly at him to read his face, sensing I had breached some rule of birding etiquette by pestering a fellow birder for an identification. But no, Whittier was smiling. Relieved, I had a good laugh. I didn't bring it up again. It was the only bird—among the 53 identified that day—that remained a mystery.

In fits and starts we made it all the way to the Monarch Sculpture Park for delicious homemade banana bread before turning back north. We biked along at an aerobic pace and, while it was good to warm up, it was hard to watch the landscape zipping by, knowing there were dozens more birds in the trees and thickets all around us.

I am looking forward to traveling the Chehalis-Western Trail again with my list of 53 birds and my book of recorded bird songs to see how many I can hear myself.

I wouldn't say I learned how to bird by ear that morning. That skill takes many years of practice and, if you're lucky, some time with birders like Whittier and Tracey. It was a wonderful morning among the birds and among a band of birders with a sense of wonder and sense of humor. 🐾

BHAS Calendar

September:

September 16th, Thursday, 7-9pm, Monthly Program Meeting:
Amazing New Zealand

September 18th, Saturday—19th, Sunday, Field Trip to
Portland to see the Swifts at Chapman School

September 19th, Sunday, Patrick Sullivan Memorial Walk

September 25th, Saturday, Field Trip to Tokeland

October:

October 2nd, Saturday, Fall Bird Feeder Cleaning

October 9th, Saturday, Field Trip to Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge

October 11th, 18th, 25th, Nov. 1st (Mondays, in class) and
Oct. 31st and Nov. 7th (Sundays, field trips) Beginning
Birding Class

October 16th, Saturday, (Date is tentative. It may be pushed
forward or backward within the month of October depend-
ing on wetness of season.) Millersylvania Mushroom Foray
field trip

October 21st, Thursday, 7-9pm, Monthly Program Meeting:
Northwest Bats: Regional Conservation Issues and Local Observations

October 23rd, Saturday, Field Trip: Westport to Tokeland

Field Trips and Events

September 19th, Sunday, 8:00 am to around noon

Event: Patrick Sullivan Memorial Walk at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge
Leader: Those of us who loved and admired Patrick Sullivan

This will be the 4th annual Patrick Sullivan Memorial Walk. Nisqually is not at its most active at this time of year, but this is close to the anniversary of Patrick's death, and Patrick loved to bird at Nisqually. It is fitting then, that we gather together in his memory, as we have in past years, to enjoy Nisqually NWR.

We will meet at the Visitor's Center overlook at 8:00 am, and amble through the refuge to enjoy the refuge and remember Patrick. Nisqually is wonderful at all times of the year. Call Kristin Stewart at 360-456-5098 if you have questions.

September 25th, Saturday, 8 am–end of the day.

Field Trip: Tokeland
Leader: Phil Kelley

Meet at Mud Bay Park & Ride at 8:00 AM. We will carpool to Tokeland for large shorebirds and anything else of note in the area.

In addition to Tokeland, home of the Marbled Godwits, we will stop at Midway Beach, Wash Away Beach, John's Landing, and Bottle Beach. Target birds are large shorebirds on fall migration but we will see passerines and small shorebirds, as well.

Trip will last all day. Bring food, water and dress for weather. Call Phil Kelley at 360-459-1499 to reserve a spot.

October 2nd, Saturday, 9am to 3pm

Event: Fall Bird Feeder Cleaning
Location: Wild Birds Unlimited in Olympia
Let Us Clean Your Bird Feeder(s)!

Get your feeders cleaned so your birds remain healthy and happy! Drop off your feeders at Wild Birds Unlimited at Cooper Point Marketplace (address below) and we will scrub them for you for \$5.00 each (slightly more if unusually large or dirty). All proceeds go to further the chapter's conservation and education work. If you have time and want to volunteer to help us clean feeders, we would greatly appreciate the help. It's fun! Call or email Debbie Nickerson to sign up to be part of the cleaning crew. Debbie's phone number is 754-5397 and her email is debranick@gmail.com. Thank you!

Wild Birds Unlimited, Cooper Point Marketplace, Suite 304, 1200 Cooper Point Rd. SW, Olympia, WA 98502

October 9th, Saturday, 7:00 am until late afternoon

Field Trip: Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge
Leader: Scott Morrison

Ridgefield always holds a potential for unusual bird species. We'll begin with a walk on the trail at the Carty Unit and finish with the (mostly driving) tour of the River "S" Unit. White-breasted Nuthatch is regular and abundant waterfowl. We are likely to see good numbers of Sandhill Cranes, also. Red-shouldered Hawk has been recorded Ridgefield.

Meet in the south parking lot of the Labor and Industries Building at 7:00 a.m. Trip is limited to three cars—12 to 14 people. This is a fairly long day (~ 1.5 hours drive each way) so bring adequate food and beverage. Call Scott Morrison at (360) 412-1260 to reserve space. Please indicate whether you're willing to drive.

October 11th, 18th, 25th, Nov. 1st

(Mondays, in class) and
Oct. 31st and Nov. 7th (Sundays, field trips)
Event: Beginning Birding Class
Instructor: Matt Pike

See article on page 7 of this Echo issue for details.

October 16th, Saturday, 9:00 am to early afternoon

(Note: this date is tentative. It may be pushed forward or backward within the month of October depending on wetness of season.....check the BHAS Website.)

Field Trip: Millersylvania Mushroom Foray
Leader: Jim Pruske

We will learn to identify many of the more common mushroom species associated with conifer and deciduous forest. With luck, chanterelles and other edible species will be found. I plan to discuss the ecological value of fungi to the overall health of a forest. Be prepared to walk through damp undergrowth and kneeling on wet ground. Bring brown-bag lunch and water. Bring a basket if you plan to take any specimens home. Plan to look for forest birds and amphibians as well.

Meet at Martin Way Park & Ride at 9:00 am. This trip is limited to 5 cars. Call the BHAS office at 360-352-7299 to register.

Continued on next page

Field trips and events

From page 7

October 23rd, Saturday, 7:00 am to late afternoon

**Field Trip: Westport to Tokeland
Leaders: Ruth Sullivan and Phil Kelley**

Last year, we had ocean field trips about a month apart, and the difference in the birds was quite amazing and interesting. We are trying that again this year as well, and will stop at most spots mentioned on the September 25th trip. Ruth loves shorebirds so is always willing to search for them.

Shorebird species migrate at different times of the year, stretching from about July to the end of October and age classes of many shorebirds also migrate at different times. Phil will have led the earlier trip, so will be able to point out the changes. There are often gulls of various types in the fall, and the passerines continue to move through or settle in for the winter.

Meet at the Mud Bay Park-and-Ride to carpool. Dress for the weather, which certainly can be wet, and bring food and water for the day. Limit of 3 cars. Call Phil at 360-459-1499 to sign up. 🐦



Beginning Birding Class starts Oct. 11th

Beat the rush! Now is the time to register for our fall Beginning Birding class taught by Matt Pike. Matt has been birding since childhood and brings his passion and knowledge to the classroom as well as into the field.

The class will be held on four consecutive Monday evenings starting on October 11th, from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm. There will be two field trips on Sundays following the 3rd and 4th class. The specific location, in downtown Olympia, will be given to folks when they register.

We will use Burt Guttman's book, *Finding Your Wings: A Workbook for Beginning Bird Watchers* as a course companion and registrants are encouraged

to purchase and begin reviewing the book prior to class. (More details upon registration.)

Cost for members of BHAS is \$25, plus purchase of the book (which is approximately \$15).

Cost for non-BHAS-members is \$30, plus purchase of the book.

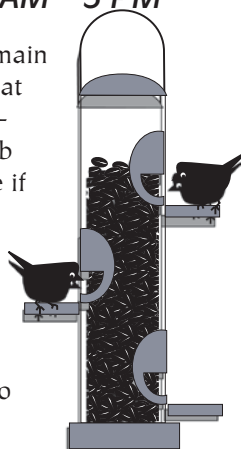
Every one of our Birding classes filled to waiting-list status last year. We invite you to sign up now, or direct any questions, to Shelley Horn (shelleysmail@directv.net) or Debra Nickerson (Debranick@gmail.com) of our Education Committee. 🐦

Let Us Clean Your Bird Feeder!

Saturday, October 2nd, 2010, 9 AM – 3 PM

Get your feeders cleaned so your birds remain healthy and happy! Drop off your feeders at Wild Birds Unlimited at Cooper Point Marketplace (address below) and we will scrub them for you for \$5.00 each (slightly more if unusually large or dirty).

All proceeds go to further the chapter's conservation and education work. If you have time and want to volunteer to help us clean, we would greatly appreciate the help. Call or email Debbie Nickerson to



sign up to be part of the cleaning crew. Debbie's phone number is 754-5397 and her email is debranick@gmail.com. Thank you, and thanks to Wild Birds Unlimited and Ruth Pagel for again hosting the BHAS feeder cleaning! 🐦

**Wild Birds Unlimited
Cooper Point Marketplace, Suite 304
1200 Cooper Point Rd. SW
Olympia, WA 98502**

Critical Areas Ordinance Best Available Science Reviews

—Donna Nickerson

Thurston County just began updating the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) Draft of 2005, with the expectation that it will be complete by the end of 2010. This update process is now with the Thurston County Planning Commission, and a series of public meetings will be held in different areas of Thurston County, likely starting in early September. The meetings will allow citizens to learn about the first draft of the proposed changes and provide feedback to the staff and other participants.

BHAS members are encouraged to visit the County's website at the address below for the up-to-date information on proposed CAO changes and public meeting venues and schedules, as well as the County staff contact who is managing this open and transparent process. The Planning Department's website for CAO: http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/critical_areas/criticalareas_home.htm

It is important to remember that the cornerstone of the Critical Area Ordinance (CAO) is the standard of "no net loss"—to prevent adverse impacts to critical areas as the first option, minimize adverse impacts

as the second option, and lastly, compensate for remaining impacts. The CAO is a key regulatory tool to ensure both preservation and enhancement of critical ecosystem functions.

Back in January of this year, the Black Hills Audubon Society started reviewing the 2005 CAO Draft, and asked specialists in the fields of geology, freshwater, and marine systems to review the Sections on Geological Hazards, Aquifer Recharge Areas, Important Habitats and Marine Critical Areas. The purpose of the review was to provide an update of the Best Available Science (BAS) available since the 2005 draft was compiled, and, where new science was available, to recommend changes in the regulations to adequately protect these critical areas. The three reports represent our comments and recommendations on the current (2005) CAO Draft. BHAS is currently using them to provide input and comment to the Thurston County update process. The reports are available on the BHAS website at www.blackhills-audubon.org/#conservation. 🐦

If you have any questions, please contact me at D.J.Nick@comcast.net.

Carry a Tune with Digital Warbler Songs

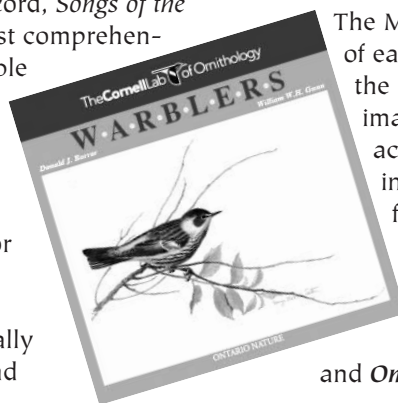
Sounds from Cornell Lab of Ornithology play on any MP3 device

Ithaca, NY—A compilation of 310 songs and calls for 57 species of warblers is now available from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Macaulay Library—the largest archive of wildlife sounds in the world. Originally released in 1985 as an LP record, *Songs of the Warblers of North America* is the most comprehensive audio guide to warblers available anywhere. The newly digitized version can be used on any device that plays MP3 files and is \$14.99 at www.macaulaylibrary.org.

"We received numerous requests for this digital release," said Macaulay Library audio curator Greg Budney. "Knowing the songs of warblers really enhances people's ability to find and identify dozens of stunning warbler species."

Multiple sounds for each species showcase the variability in warbler vocalizations, enabling listeners

to recognize the essential qualities of each species' song while also appreciating the variability within and among species. Selected examples are available for listening at www.macaulaylibrary.org.



The MP3 files are accompanied by photos of each warbler for those who download the material to a device that can show images. A PDF copy of the booklet that accompanied the original album provides information on the location and date for each recording and is included in the download. This guide to warbler songs and calls is a collaboration of the *Cornell Lab of Ornithology*, the *Borror Laboratory of Bioacoustics*, and *Ontario Nature*.

Contact: Pat Leonard, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, (607) 254-2137, pel27@cornell.edu. 🐦

Changes coming to The Nature Conservancy in Olympia

—Pat Dunn

Dear South Sound friends:

We've made tremendous gains in prairie restoration in the South Sound, thanks to the commitment by all of you to strong partnerships. [See box for latest program highlights showcasing some of the work we've been conducting this last quarter]. We also want to share with you our progress in planning the future of the Conservancy's South Sound program.

As you may know, a review of Washington State's largest and most urgent conservation challenges and the necessity to do more with fewer resources is resulting in changes to our work in the South Sound. The Nature Conservancy is in the process of developing a new business model that transitions management of the South Sound program from the Conservancy to another, as yet unidentified, entity. This decision is driven by both financial and conservation reasons.

Maintaining the conservation accomplishments of the past and ensuring future conservation success is our top goal. We are confident that this work can be accomplished independently from the Conservancy. At this point, the Conservancy is exploring in detail several alternative organizational strategies. We are looking only at organizations in which we have the highest confidence of being able to maintain and grow prairie conservation, and carry out the commitments the Conservancy has made to long term conservation and restoration in the South Sound.

In this process, some of the Conservancy staff will transition with the program to the new entity, ensuring expertise and knowledge for the future. We will also work with current volunteers to ensure that their commitment to prairie conservation continues with the new entity, or help them find new volunteer opportunities with the Conservancy.

We hope you'll understand that we can't engage in public discussion of these alternatives until we have definitive plans. As our plans become more concrete, we'll keep you informed. In the meantime, the most important thing to know is that the Conservancy's conservation work in the South Sound prairies

is continuing as we define a new way forward. We are committed to finding a new business model that builds on the legacy of the work that has been accomplished.

If you have any immediate questions or concerns, please contact Molly Ingraham, Director of Conservation at The Nature Conservancy (206) 343-4344 x348.

Sincerely,

Karen Anderson
Washington State Director

Molly Ingraham
Director of Conservation

Pat Dunn
South Sound Program Director

TNC Highlights for April-June 2010 (see complete details at www.blackhills-audubon.com/conservation-local.html):

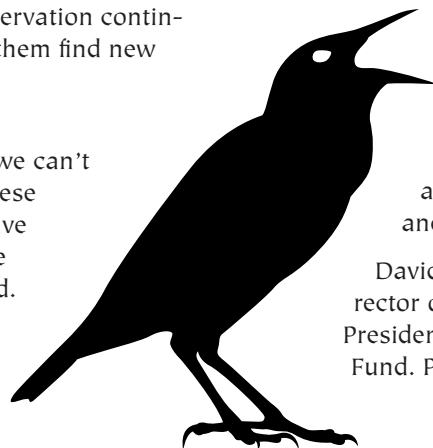
- Talors Checkerspot Release.
- Townsend's Big-Eared Bats Found along Black River
- Prairie Conservation— Plant and Seed Production
- Cooperative Conservation — ACUB Add-on
- Joint Base Lewis McChord Conservation

New (National) Audubon President

From Holt Thrasher, Audubon Board Chair

I am pleased to announce that our search committee has identified, and our Board of Directors has appointed a highly experienced, accomplished and committed conservation leader to serve as [National] Audubon's new President and CEO.

David Yarnold is currently the Executive Director of the Environmental Defense Fund and President of its Environmental Defense Action Fund. Prior to that, he was a Pulitzer Prize-



Continued on page 12

Meet a Volunteer: Burt Guttman

By Deb Jaqua

Local Birding Educator, Burt Guttman, exemplifies the Audubon spirit of educating the public and getting folks interested in birding, the outdoors, and conservation.

Many of you know Burt Guttman from the many bird walks he has led in Thurston County, aimed primarily at beginners to help them learn some birding basics (although lots of experienced people always come along, too). His winter field trips on water birds conducted at Capitol Lake have been quite popular.

Raised in Minneapolis, Burt Guttman's interest in birds and the natural world began early. At age 14, he started his "life list" when he joined the Minneapolis Bird Club. His interest in birds began to take over other interests.

Burt went on to earn his PhD in molecular biology. In 1972, Burt joined the faculty of the new Evergreen State College, where he taught genetics and evolution in interdisciplinary classes. Having retired from TESC a few years ago, Burt is now Professor Emeritus.

He enjoyed his classroom teaching experience, and has continued to share his knowledge of birds. He presented educational components for the Bird-



Volunteer Burt Guttman, birding.

wise Magazine television program produced by Tom Schooley and Tim Sweeney. Burt and Tom also started The Birding 101 class, taken by several of Black Hills Audubon's current field trip leaders. Most recently, he has worked with an elementary school class and helped high school students with their senior projects. His beginning bird book, *Finding Your Wings*, published in 2008 as part of the Peterson Field Guide series, has been a valuable tool for birding classes.

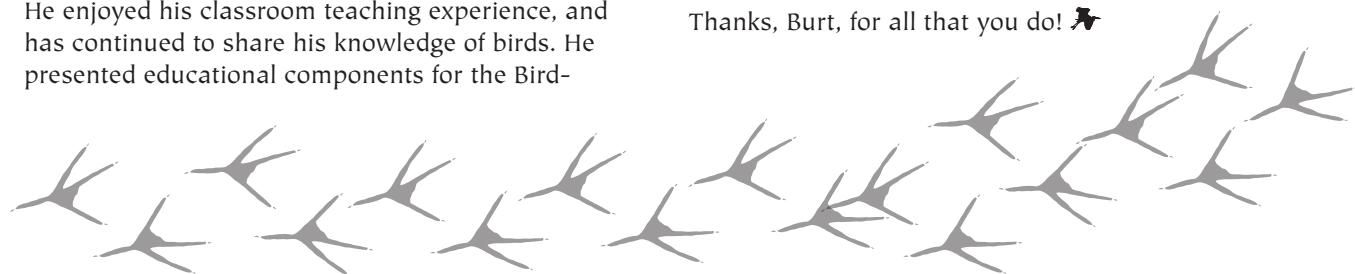
Burt continues teaching about birds at other birding events, such as the upcoming Puget Sound Bird Fest, September 10th – 12th, 2010, in Edmonds, Washington. There, he will give two sessions on "Getting Start-

ed in Birding". For more information, visit <http://www.pugetsoundbirdfest.com/index.html>.

Burt is passionate about getting people, especially young ones, out into the natural world and away from the artificial electronic world. He further believes that education is good for what ails our society.

Burt has passed on his love of nature to his daughter, Erica Guttman, who manages the Native Plant Salvage Project in Thurston County. It would seem that conservation and appreciation of the natural world runs in their blood.

Thanks, Burt, for all that you do! 🐦



New national president

From page 11

winning editor at the *San José Mercury News*.

David possesses an extraordinary array of skills and expertise that, with your ongoing assistance, will enable him to lead the Audubon network to new levels of conservation success. I am attaching an advance copy of the press release that will be distributed later today to provide you with additional information about David's background and abilities.

Additionally, a second attachment is a message that David wrote specifically to introduce himself to the important people who make up our nationwide field network. It will no doubt provide you with great insights into his personality, vision and short-term plans, not to mention his extraordinary communication skills. This is an exciting moment for Audubon and for our cause. We have found the right person to build Audubon's legacy of conservation results well into the future and to educate and empower the next generation of conservationists who will protect and restore the health of birds, other wildlife and the resources on which we all depend. 🐦

Murrelets on the Mountain

By Maria Ruth

It's about sixty miles from my home in Olympia to the town of Ashford, in the foothills of Mt. Rainier. It's an easy trip for motorists, a challenge for cyclists, and an unthinkable journey for a chubby little seabird flying non-stop from Puget Sound or the Pacific Coast. But the marbled murrelet makes this long journey from salt water to the forest to its unlikely nesting site—a wide branch high in an old-growth tree. Though most of Washington's population of murrelets nests closer to the coast, biologists have detected murrelets in an 80-acre patch of old-growth forest, known as the "Ashford 80."

These eighty acres are part of the Nisqually Land Trust's recent acquisition of 600

acres between Gifford Pinchot National Forest and Elbe Hills State Forest. This purchase, from Hancock Forest Management, brings a total of 1,940 acres of timberland into protection for the federally threatened marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl as well as nine other species of concern. The Mt. Rainier Gateway Reserve, as the property is officially called, was purchased by the Land Trust through a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a donation from the Nisqually Indian Tribe. The Washington Department of Natural Resources will hold a conservation easement on the property.

On a recent foggy July morning, I was part of an expedition to celebrate the Reserve and the marbled murrelet at the Copper Creek Hut, a cozy gathering place that is part of the Mount Tahoma Trail Association's hut-to-hut ski-trail system. An extensive stretch of the trail system is now part of the Reserve property. The low, grey clouds accompanied us through Yelm, along the Nisqually River, and past Lake Alder, but as we began the climb up toward Ashford, blue skies greeted us, as did the promise of a view of the mountain. From Ashford, we bumped along a rugged road in four-wheel drive for a good 20 minutes, imagining how very different this would be on cross-country skis or snowshoes—and on top of ten feet of snow.

The sun-drenched hut was a welcoming sight, as was the new Mount Rainier Gateway Reserve sign and the view of Mt. Rainier. This close-up view of the mountain's west side was capital-S Scenery. It was so breathtaking that I couldn't take it in with my eyes alone so I found myself taking deeper and deeper breaths to better and more fully absorb its magnificence and beauty. I had never really thought about it before, but breathing really deeply must be a physical response to breath-taking sights.



Photo caption: Judy Scavone, Mount Tahoma Trails Association Board Member and Joe Kane, Nisqually Land Trust's Executive Director, at the Mount Rainier Gateway Reserve near the Copper Creek Hut.

The view of the "Ashford 80" kept my breathing deep, almost to the point of hyperventilating. There, maybe a quarter mile below the ridge where I was standing, was a dark, green and angular patch of trees rising above the recently logged hillside. This was murrelet nesting habitat—eighty acres, sixty miles from the water. It was overwhelming.

There, somewhere in that dense wood, were wide, moss-covered branches where a pair of murrelets could lay a single egg and raise a chick. There, in the shade

of the towering evergreens, was the summer home of a seabird with a hellish daily commute to saltwater. There, each morning around sunrise, an adult murrelet would land with a whole, small fish for its chick. There, for a month, a murrelet chick would sit, still and silent, waiting for the moment when its flight feathers would carry it to the sea. There, in that piece of forest, was a future for the murrelet.

I have lived within sight of Mt. Rainier for just over three years now. I look for it when I am out driving or biking. Even a brief glimpse of it, peeking briefly out of the clouds, will make my day. As will a walk around the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge, or a crossing of a Nisqually River bridge, knowing that the murrelets may follow this river to the mountain. And now, with a view of the Ashford 80 emblazoned in my mind, I see the mountain not as a destination for hikers, day-trippers, skiers, or snow-shoers, but as a home for the murrelet, a gateway for hope.

Note: Access to Cooper Creek Hut is winter-only and restricted to members of the Mount Tahoma Trail Association. For information on joining, go to www.skimtta.com. For information on the Nisqually Land Trust properties, projects, and events, go to www.nisquallylandtrust.org. 🐾

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Phone Team: Carolyn Harmon and
Bonnie Wood

Committee Chairs may also serve as Board Members.

* BHAS Board Member



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 third Thursday evening of each month, September through June, at the Capitol Museum Coach House, 211 West 21st Street, in Olympia.

Board meetings are usually at 5:30 p.m. on the second 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: Deb Jaqua. Layout and design by Lee Miller. Graphics by Nature Icons/Ultimate Symbol unless initialed.

Material for *The Echo* should be sent to PO Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507, or e-mailed to Deb Jaqua at webdeb1@gmail.com. The next *Echo* will be the November/December issue, for which the deadline will be September 29th.

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 \$_____

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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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Venture to Portland to see the Swifts!

On September 18th - 19th, chapter members are invited to travel to Portland for a field trip to the Portland Audubon Society grounds and a picnic on the Chapman School grounds before the Swifts gather for the evening. Optional Sunday morning fields trips as well. Full itinerary will be posted on the website.

The Mark Spencer Hotel is offering a special rate for our chapter; if you decide to stay there, tell them you are with Black Hills Audubon. Register for this trip with Shelley Horn (shelleysmail@directv.net) or Debra Nickerson (Debranick@gmail.com).

