

# The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

[www.skagitaudubon.org](http://www.skagitaudubon.org)

Vol. 33 No. 9

## NOVEMBER FIELD TRIPS

By Libby Mills

### About the field trips

Beginning birders and friends are always welcome on Skagit Audubon field trips. Membership in Skagit Audubon is encouraged but not required for participation. Please be prepared for the weather with suitable clothing, and bring field guides, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Carpool whenever possible and contribute to the driver's expense. Watch the email reminders for the latest information, including any changes and/or additions to the field trip schedule. To be added to the email field trip list contact Libby Mills:

[libbymills@gmail.com](mailto:libbymills@gmail.com)

**If you plan to join a field trip some place other than the described starting point, call the trip leader the day before to ensure a successful rendezvous. Trip plans may change.**

**Saturday, November 1  
Deception Pass State Park,  
Rosario Head, & Lake Erie  
8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon**

The varied habitats near Deception Pass, from old growth forest to the open waters off Rosario Head, attract a variety of birdlife. Expect to see

Field Trips continue on page 7

## NOVEMBER MEETING AND PROGRAM

### Day Hiking the San Juans and Gulf Islands with Craig Romano

Tuesday, November 11, 2014

7:00 Social; 7:30 Program

Padilla Bay Interpretive Center

10441 Bayview-Edison Road

Mt. Vernon, Washington



Turtlehead Preserve  
Orcas Island, San Juan Islands, WA

Come day hike the San Juan and Gulf Islands with award winning author, **Craig Romano**. In his new release, *Day Hiking The San Juans and Gulf Islands (The Mountaineers Books)* Craig will be spotlighting some of the best hiking destinations within the Salish Sea. The San Juan and Gulf Islands are a one-of-a-kind natural landmark; a region divided by two countries, sharing a common human, cultural and natural history. Yet each island retains its own identity—its own distinct atmosphere.

Craig hiked nearly a thousand miles on 28 islands researching this, his 12<sup>th</sup> book. Encompassing all of the ferry-accessible islands, Craig also includes trails on Anacortes/ Fidalgo Island, Tsawwassen/ Point Roberts, and Victoria/ Saanich Peninsula—the islands' gateways. Come learn about fascinating trails within the new San Juan National Monument and Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. Discover trails on undeveloped islands; trails to secluded beaches, bays and coves; trails on rugged coastal ledges and bluffs; and trails through magnificent old-growth forests that were old even when George Vancouver sailed into the Salish Sea. Explore state and provincial parks, nature preserves, historic sites, lighthouses, hill tops, and open bluffs that burst with wildflowers.

Craig looks forward to sharing some of his favorite trails and wild places within the San Juan and Gulf islands.



# SKAGIT AUDUBON

## Board of Directors

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[plwright@comcast.net](mailto:plwright@comcast.net)  
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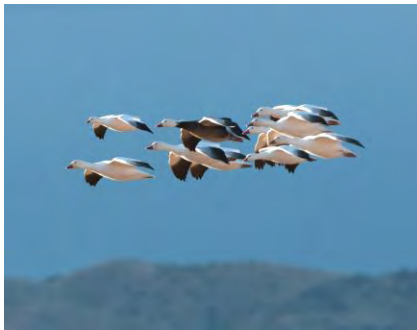
### REPRESENTATIVES

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[skagitaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:skagitaudubon@gmail.com)



## SNOW GEESE

They're Back!

Photo by Joe Halton

## MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTIONS

**General membership meetings of the Skagit Audubon Society** are held at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center, 1043 Bayview-Edison Rd., Mt. Vernon, WA—7:00 PM Social/ 7:30 PM Program—on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June. The board of directors meets at the same location at 7:00 PM on the first Tuesday of each month.

**Skagit Audubon Society (SAS) membership** provides a local chapter affiliation and newsletter, **The Flyer**, for individuals who want all their funds to benefit their local chapter. Newsletters from additional chapters can be sought by contacting their websites and membership chairs from links at <http://wa.audubon.org/audubon-locations/>. **To join Skagit Audubon Society** use the form below.

**National Audubon Society (NAS) membership is separate from SAS membership** and includes Audubon magazine. National Audubon membership does not provide Skagit Audubon membership; however, NAS will assign you an affiliation with a local chapter. To change your chapter assignment call 800-274-4201. **To join National Audubon Society** use the form below.

**Skagit Audubon Society is a Chapter of the National Audubon Society.** Our mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

### Skagit Audubon Society Membership Form

Annual membership in the Skagit Audubon Society includes 10 issues of our newsletter, *The Skagit Flyer*, available on our web site. Membership includes all members of your household.  
\$20 one (1) year      \$40 two (2) years

I wish to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to Skagit Audubon Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### Clip form/Mail to/Payable to:

Skagit Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 1101  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273-1101

Please do not share my personal information with National Audubon Society. (It is the policy of SAS not to share information with any other groups.)

Using the form below to initially join the **National Audubon Society** will ensure that the **Skagit Audubon** chapter receives a cost share to support local programs.

### National Audubon Society Membership Form

Annual membership to the National Audubon Society includes a subscription to *Audubon* magazine. Membership includes all members of your household.

\$20 for one-year introductory membership with one chapter affiliation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Clip form/Mail to/Payable to:

National Audubon Society  
Chapter Membership Data Center      Y21  
P.O. Box 422246-2246  
Palm Coast, FL 32142  
[www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

*For members receiving a paper copy of The Skagit Flyer, the mailing label includes your membership expiration date in the upper right corner. If that date is highlighted in orange it is a reminder that your membership is about to or has expired. All other members will receive an email notice when their membership is about to expire. The Skagit Flyer is published monthly from September through June. Unsolicited material for the next month's Flyer should be sent to the editor by the third Saturday of the current month. For questions or problems about your Skagit Flyer subscription, contact membership chair: Sheila Pera, [skagitmembers@gmail.com](mailto:skagitmembers@gmail.com)*



The National Audubon Society released an important study “**Birds and Climate Change**” in September. This study by Audubon ornithologists concludes that global warming is the greatest threat birds face today. More than half of the nearly 600 North American birds studied are at risk and nearly one quarter face possible extinction by the year 2080.

The study was the centerpiece of the annual Audubon Washington conference, held in Ocean Shores in September. Gary Langham, Audubon’s Chief Scientist, made an impressive presentation at the meeting, explaining the science behind the study and the expected changes in the ranges of individual species which will result from the increase in global temperature. The study, which has taken seven years, uses many years of data from the Christmas Bird Count, the North American Breeding Bird Survey and forty years of North American climate data to understand the link between where birds live and the climatic conditions that support them. Understanding those links then allows scientists to project where birds are likely to be able to survive – and not survive – in the future.

Of the 313 regularly occurring birds in Washington State included in the study, nearly 100 are climate threatened or endangered. Some are projected to lose a substantial percent of their summer ranges as summer temperatures rise. For example: horned grebe and trumpeter swan (projected to lose 100% of their summer range), merlin, northern pygmy-owl and California gull (98% loss), Barrow’s goldeneye (97% loss). Although these birds are projected to lose less of their winter ranges (46-73%), if they are unable to breed due to loss of summer range, they are threatened with extinction.

As Tim Manns, our Conservation Chair, said in his October Conservation Report:

The Audubon report ends with two points: we can and should act to address climate change and the necessary transition from fossil fuels. And, the protection of habitat for birds and other creatures is key to their survival. Habitat protection drives Skagit Audubon’s conservation advocacy: supporting our local land trusts, encouraging public land managing agencies to protect and restore habitat, urging much greater care in the transport and processing of fossil fuels while transitioning away from them.

There is much information on Audubon websites about the study. The Audubon Washington website has a full list of resources under Conservation: <http://wa.audubon.org/climate-change-0> . This includes links to articles in the Puget Sound press and the best resources on Audubon’s website. I encourage you to take a few minutes to become familiar with this important study.

**Skagit Audubon Society Income & Expenses**  
**Fiscal year 7/01/13 - 6/30/2014**

*Submitted by Hella Lee, Skagit Audubon Society Treasurer*

INCOME		EXPENSES	
Chapter Memberships	\$ 3,560	Audubon Washington	\$ 1,000
Nat'l Audubon Baseline	\$ 1,434	Skagit Audubon Project -	
Nat'l Audubon Dues Share	\$ 15	Debay Slough Interpretive Sign	\$ 359
Interest Income	\$ 93	Conservation Donations	\$ 2,700
Donations	\$ 808	Education Programs & Supplies	\$ 1,401
Hospility (coffee can)	\$ 52	Hospitality	\$ 66
Seabird Trip Fundraiser	\$ 495	Insurance	\$ 313
		Office Expenses	\$ 98
		Skagit Flyer Printing & Postage	\$ 1,403
		Speaker Expenses	\$ 140
		Website Design & Maintenance	\$ 1,376
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 6,457</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 8,856</b>



**SKAGIT AUDUBON NOVEMBER CONSERVATION REPORT**  
**By TIM MANNS, CONSERVATION CHAIR**

Migrating Vaux's Swifts and three Merlins on the hunt made dramatic viewing at the Northern State Hospital roost site in September. Planning for the future of this state-owned property continues. Go to [portofskagit.com/skagit-advantage/north-cascades-gateway-center-project/](http://portofskagit.com/skagit-advantage/north-cascades-gateway-center-project/) to see the public support for varied uses, continued public ownership, and preservation of the historic structures. Skagit Audubon sent local and state officials and the planners a letter explaining the importance of the migratory roost stack and urging its preservation.

During September, your chapter submitted brief comments to the National Park Service supporting its plan to work with Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) in restoring the fisher, a mustelid between the pine marten and river otter in size, to North Cascades and Mount Rainier National Parks. The fisher is believed to have been extirpated from Washington by the 1990's. Restoring it fits well with Audubon's mission to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats.

WDFW is finishing plans to restore 126 acres of tidal marsh habitat to support Chinook smolts at Fir Island Farms Reserve Unit (also known as Hayton Snow Goose Reserve) by moving back the dike on Skagit Bay. About 100 acres of farmed field will remain as a non-hunted resting spot for snow geese. WDFW will have to replace the 126 inundated acres with land for snow geese elsewhere under the grant terms of the property's acquisition. For more information, go to [wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas/skagit/final\\_restoration\\_study.php](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/skagit/final_restoration_study.php).

There is now a third proposal for bringing unit trains of crude oil to Grays Harbor, this one submitted by Grays Harbor Rail Terminal, LLC (a subsidiary of U.S. Development). Unfortunately, in addition to increasing the overall risk of a spill into this harbor so important for migrating shorebirds, waterfowl, and several federal and state listed species, this terminal is to be built directly adjacent to Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is the most important part of the harbor for those shorebirds. For information, go to <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/geographic/graysharbor/ghrt.html> and send in your comments on what the environmental impact statement should cover by November 3.

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## **Tufted Puffins Need Your Help!**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is considering the addition of Tufted Puffins to the state's endangered species list. This once common species of the San Juan Islands, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the outer coast of the Olympic Peninsula, has shown a marked decline or abandonment in 38 of 43 known breeding sites in Washington. WDFW estimates an 8.9% annual rate of decline for this well-known, colorful seabird.



The one-page summary report is available at [wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01642](http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01642).

Public comments are being solicited through Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>. Send them by email to:

[TandEpubliccom@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:TandEpubliccom@dfw.wa.gov) Or by mail to: Penny Becker,

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, 600 Capitol Way N., Olympia, WA 98501-1091

### **PADILLA BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

**Saturday, Dec. 27, 2014**

Audubon Chapters nationwide organize and run hundreds of count circles; these good efforts are the reason the longest running "CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECT" in the world is so successful.

**GET INVOLVED! CONTACT: Tim Manns at [bctm@fidalgo.net](mailto:bctm@fidalgo.net) or 360-336-8753**





Cold season hikes begin this month. We move from the high country to lowland hikes near the water and on the foothills. Hikes may be canceled or destinations changed due to weather, logging, construction or unforeseen circumstances. A hike will be canceled if there are high wind warnings, predictions of very heavy rain, flooding conditions, or snowy or icy road conditions. Because this is hunting season, wear bright-colored clothing. Dogs are discouraged on Audubon-sponsored hikes. If dogs are on a hike, they must be on a leash at all times. For all hike information or other questions contact: **Joan Melcher: 360-424-0407** or [jdmelcher@comcast.net](mailto:jdmelcher@comcast.net)

**\*WED. –NOV. 5 –OLD SAUK RIVER TRAIL**

The Old Sauk River Trail is a hike along the scenic Sauk River. On this low-elevation trail you will walk through patches of old growth Douglas firs. It is 6 miles round trip, with a little elevation gain. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the Mount Vernon Safeway. Audubon South hikers may go directly to the trailhead. Drive to Darrington. At the four-way stop there, turn RIGHT onto the Mountain Loop Highway. About 4 miles south of this turn you will come to the Clear Creek Campground. The trailhead is a little farther down the road. Turn LEFT into the parking area, which is a short way down a dirt road. Follow the trail through the forest and along the Sauk River until the trail comes out onto the Mountain Loop Highway. Then return the way you came. When all the people in your car have returned to the trailhead, you may leave.

**\*A U.S. Forest Service parking permit required.**

**WED.–NOV. 12–LITTLE CRANBERRY LAKE**

Do a hike around Little Cranberry Lake in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. It is 6.0 miles round trip, with a 670 ft. total elevation gain. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the trailhead located on “A” Ave. between 37<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> Streets in Anacortes. You may

leave when all in your vehicle return to the trailhead. Historically, all are back by 1 p.m.

**WED. – NOV. 19 – LITTLE MOUNTAIN**

Explore the trails on Little Mountain southeast of Mount Vernon, WA. It is a part of the Mount Vernon City Park system. A number of options are available. There will be elevation gains. Meet at 9 a.m. on the Little Mountain Park access road. Park on the side of the road, before the gate. The gate opens at 10 a.m. The Little Mountain Park access road is off the Little Mountain Road, which is off the Blackburn Road. Your car load may leave when you return from the hike.

**WED. – NOV. 26 – THANKSGIVING WEEK  
NO HIKE**

**WED. –DEC. 3 – EAST SHORE LAKE**

**WHATCOM**

The East Shore of Lake Whatcom Hike is fairly level. You walk among trees bordering the lake shore. It is 6.25 miles round trip, with very little elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at the new Chuckanut Drive Park-n-Ride. This lot is on the east side of I-5, off Exit 231 of I-5. Your carload may leave when you return to the trailhead.

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Craig Romano  
Guidebook Author

**!!! CRAIG ROMANO: Guidebook Author!!!**

Craig Romano is one of the most prolific trails writers in the Northwest, having penned books covering the Olympic Peninsula, North Cascades, Eastern Washington, Idaho, and the Columbia River Gorge. His *Columbia Highlands: Exploring Washington’s Last Frontier*, was recognized in 2010 by Washington Secretary of State, Sam Reed, and State Librarian, Jan Walsh, as a Washington Reads book for its contribution to Washington’s cultural heritage.

Craig is currently working on several other books including a guide to Mount St. Helens. He lives with his wife, Heather and cats, Giuseppe and Mazie in Skagit County, WA, close to the San Juans. His writings can also be regularly found in magazines, websites, and his numerous books.

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## Birds at Risk in Washington State

The list below includes a small sample of climate threatened and endangered birds from Washington state. Audubon's new study reveals the devastation global warming will likely have on birds—and identifies the habitat strongholds they'll need to hang on.

For a more complete list see *Washington in Pacific Flyway* at:  
<http://climate.audubon.org/geographical-search/washington>

BIRD NAMES	SUMMER RANGE LOST	WINTER RANGE LOST	BIRD NAMES	SUMMER RANGE LOST	WINTER RANGE LOST
Trumpeter Swan <i>Cygnus buccinator</i>	100%	67%	Common Merganser <i>Mergus merganser</i>	72%	39%
Northern Pygmy Owl <i>Glaucidium gnoma</i>	98%	68%	American Kestrel <i>Falco sparverius</i>	72%	2%
Northern Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	86%	5%	Mountain Chickadee <i>Poecile gambeli</i>	71%	67%
American Dipper <i>Cinclus mexicanus</i>	88%	58%	Red Crossbill <i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	71%	81%
Red-breasted Nuthatch <i>Sitta Canadensis</i>	82%	42%	Golden-crowned Kinglet <i>Regulus satrapa</i>	70%	17%
Double-crested Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	80%	28%	Western Tanager <i>Piranga lludoviciana</i>	70%	37%
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	74%	58%	Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	75%	9%



### December Potluck and Membership Show



## THE TRADITION CONTINUES .....

**When: Tuesday, Dec. 9    Time: 6:45 Potluck ~ 7:30 Program**  
**Program Organizer: Libby Mills**

**EMAIL PHOTOS TO: [libbymills@gmail.com](mailto:libbymills@gmail.com)**

- **Libby asks: Send no more than 5 pictures in .jpg format**
- **Pictures should be sufficient resolution to project well: between 300 KB & 1 MB**
- **Include Name of Photographer, Description of Subject, and Location**
- **Topics include Wild Nature, Flowers, Birds and other Animals, Landscapes, Trips, Backyard Habitat, and Hikes**

**Please Send Your Pictures ASAP ~ NO LATER than DECEMBER 1**



Field Trips continued from page 7  
winter songbirds, waterfowl, gulls, and other seabirds. Past trips have yielded Red Crossbills,



Red Crossbill  
*Photo by Joe Halton*

Brandt's, Pelagic, and Double-crested Cormorants, Belted Kingfishers, several duck and gull species and more. Then we will drive to Lake Erie below Mt. Erie to look for the several species of ducks and waterfowl that we didn't see at Rosario. Meet in the parking lot at Rosario Beach and be sure to dress for the weather.

**NOTE: A Discover Pass (parking permit) is required on this field trip.**

**Leader: Phil Wright**, contact at [plwright@comcast.net](mailto:plwright@comcast.net) or 360-299-8212

**Saturday, November 8**  
**Fisher Slough, near Conway**  
**8:30 a.m. to about 12 Noon**

Meet at 8:30 at the South Mount Vernon Park and Ride south of the I-5 Anderson road exit at Hickox and Highway 99. Carpool to Fisher Slough as there is limited on-site parking along the north dike of Fisher Slough. Joelene will be at the site early to make sure the gate is open and help park cars. A map will be provided in field trip reminder mail. This field trip will look at the Nature Conservancy's restoration project, its goals, what's been done, monitoring, and what's been learned. Come ready to learn about estuaries. Bob will lead the bird portion of the tour. It is a good location to see some of Skagit's big wintering waterfowl.

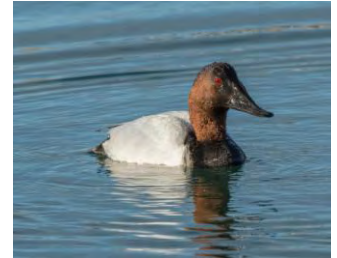
**Leaders: Joelene Boyd**, 919-323-0345 cell  
**Bob Kuntz**, [annebobkuntz@gmail.com](mailto:annebobkuntz@gmail.com)

**Saturday, November 15**  
**North Whidbey Island Birding Route**  
**8:30 a.m. to Early Afternoon**

Join us as we bird on an auto route visiting Dugualla Bay, Cornet Bay, Swantown, Penn Cove, and more. Meet at the Shell Park 'n Ride located one-half mile east of Sharpe's Corner on SR 20 at 8:30 a.m.

We'll search north Whidbey Island hoping to find Long-tailed Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, Harlequin Ducks, and possibly 3 kinds of Scaups. We'll seek birds on both fresh and salt water and hopefully shorebirds, especially at Penn Cove. Expect minimal walking, as we will depend on binocular and scopes in these coastal areas. The trip will end around 1:00. Dress for the weather and remember it can be cold in the wind this time of year (hot thermos beverages are recommended). Bring scopes, as many birds will be distant.

**Leader: Ivar Dolph** contact at [pidolph@frontier.com](mailto:pidolph@frontier.com) or 360-293-5951



Canvasback  
*Photo by Joe Halton*

**Saturday, November 22**  
**Padilla Bay and Samish Flats**  
**8:30 a.m. to about 12 Noon**

Meet at 8:30 at Padilla Bay Interpretive Center parking lot for a morning of exploring the area for winter specialties of Samish flats and Padilla Bay. We'll begin by looking for birds in the uplands of Padilla Bay then take carpools to the bay and then finally, drive onto the flats to search with bins and scopes for our favorite winter birds. Bring a hot thermos, scope if you have one, and appropriate clothing. We will end around noon.

**Leaders: Libby Mills**, [libbymills@gmail.com](mailto:libbymills@gmail.com)  
360-708-6975 and **Kraig Kemper**

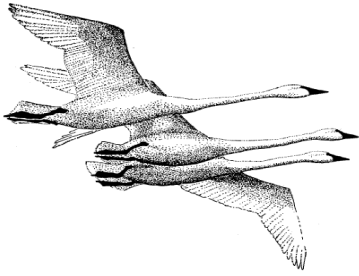
**Our Skagit Audubon Society Needs a Program Chair**

We are in need of a Program Chair to assist in finding speakers for our membership meetings and in coordinating the arrangements. This is a collaborative effort as other board members often have good ideas, and potential speakers often contact us directly.

Please contact Phil Wright if you might be interested: 360-299-8212, [plwright@comcast.net](mailto:plwright@comcast.net)



SKAGIT AUDUBON SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 1101  
MOUNT VERNON WA 98273



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DECEMBER ~ POTLUCK  
PHOTOGRAPHY MEETING

**Tuesday, Dec. 9**  
**!SEND YOUR PICTURES ASAP!**  
*More Info On Page 6*

PADILLA BAY  
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT  
**Saturday, Dec. 27, 2014**

*November 2014 Calendar*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Oct. 26	Oct. 27	Oct. 28	Oct. 29 Hike: North Chuckanut Mountain	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	1 Field Trip: Rosario Head, Deception State Park, Lake Erie
2	3	4 SAS Board Meeting: 7:00 PM	5 Hike: Old Sauk River Trail	6	7	8 Field Trip: Fisher Slough, near Conway
9	10	11 General Meeting: Social 7:00 PM/ Meeting 7:30 PM	12 Hike:: Little Cranberry Lake	13	14	15 Field Trip: North Whidbey Island
16	17	18	19 Hike: Little Mountain	20	21	22 Field Trip: Padilla Bay & Samish Flats
23 <hr/> 30	24	25	26 No Hike <hr/> Dec. 3 Hike: East Shore Lake Whatcom	27 Thanksgiving	28	29

Visit the Skagit Audubon Society Website at [www.skagitaudubon.org](http://www.skagitaudubon.org) The Skagit Flyer is printed on recycled paper

