

The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

www.skagitaudubon.org

Vol. 34 No.1

JANUARY 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

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, January 3

Washington Park

Shoreline & Forest Birds

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 or longer

Here's a great field trip to keep your New Year's resolution to "heat up" your birding skills.

On this trip we will visit Anacortes shoreline "hotspots"

Field Trips continue on page 6

JANUARY MEETING AND PROGRAM

A Natural History Video Of Ethiopia

Presented by Keith & Jan Wiggers

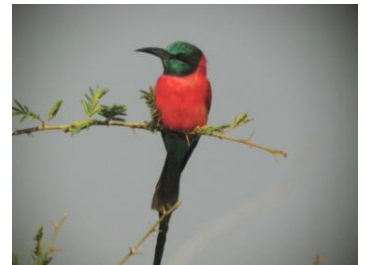
Tuesday, January 13, 2015

7:00 Social; 7:30 Program

Padilla Bay Interpretive Ctr.

10441 Bayview-Edison Road

Mt. Vernon, Washington



Northern Carmine Bee-eater
Photo by Keith & Jan Wiggers

Keith and Jan Wiggers will be sharing six weeks of travel in Ethiopia. Their video and stills of this Texas-sized African country will acquaint you with the great diversity of its land forms, wildlife, and people. One can travel from one of the lowest and hottest places on earth to over 15,000 feet in the Simien Mountains. The waters of the Blue Nile River originate from these highlands.

Ethiopia has a rich, and ancient, history. It was in the east African Rift Valley where the oldest hominid fossils, including Lucy, have been found.

The Wiggers will be showing people, landscapes and some of the 843 species of the country's birds, as well as a few of the unique and endemic mammals, such as the Gelada, the Walia Ibex and the Ethiopian Wolf.

There will be pre-program stills shown during the social.

2015 NEW YEAR WILDLIFE BOOK EXCHANGE

At Tues., Jan. 13 General Meeting 7p.m.

START THE YEAR WITH NEW WILDLIFE BOOKS

"Bring Your Read Books and Trade for Others"



SKAGIT AUDUBON

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**White-cheeked
Turaco**

Photo by Keith & Jan Wiggers

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

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



SKAGIT AUDUBON JANUARY CONSERVATION REPORT

By **TIM MANNS, CONSERVATION CHAIR**

The Washington State Legislature convenes January 12, 2015, with issues to address of special interest to Audubon members. Jen Syrowitz, who has been doing an excellent job as Audubon Washington's Chapter Conservation Manager, provided the following article on these issues and how you can participate in the outcomes. Audubon is Washington's only conservation organization with a truly state-wide system of chapters. We can make a difference!

Avian Advocacy in the 2015 Washington State Legislative Session

Avian advocates across Washington are gearing up for the 2015 Washington State Legislative Session. The Governor's December announcement on **climate legislation**, focused on curbing pollution and transitioning to cleaner sources of energy, ensures there will be a full plate of issues we care about, and plenty of opportunities for important activist participation.

What we are working on

Audubon advocacy efforts in Washington during the 2015 session will focus on marine birds/forage fish and climate change, including carbon emissions reduction, clean energy options and fossil fuel transport and export. In September 2014, Audubon released the **results of a seven year study** predicting climate change's effect on the ranges of 588 North American birds. A few weeks later when all Washington Audubon chapters met, the Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee (WSACC) passed a resolution **opposing increased oil transport and export** through Washington State. We continue to work with flyway, state, and local partners to advocate for the needs of marine birds in Puget Sound, throughout the Salish Sea and along the outer coast.

Who we are working with

We are working with several collaborative organizations including the Environmental Priorities Coalition (EPC), the West Coast Climate Campaign (WCC), Sound Action, and others to achieve legislation good for birds and people. Since 2003, Audubon has been a member of the **Environmental Priorities Coalition**, over 20 leading environmental groups in Washington State working to influence policy at the state level. Each legislative session the Coalition selects priority issues important to protecting our state; the 2015 legislative session will focus on oil transport and climate/carbon reduction. Audubon Washington is also partnered with the **West Coast Climate Campaign**, a group of environmental organizations in California, Oregon, and Washington working on strategies to combat climate change in the Pacific Northwest through carbon pricing, replacing coal with clean energy, and reducing carbon pollution from transportation with a clean fuel standard. **Sound Action** is a strong shoreline health advocate whose mission aligns with our coastal stewardship work.

Plan of action

Audubon Washington and Black Hills Audubon Society are hosting an **AUDUBON ADVOCACY DAY** on Wednesday, February 18, 2015. Please join us for a day of constituent conversations on issues of concern to Audubon members – let's make our voices heard on behalf of birds with our elected officials. More information and logistical updates are available at <http://wa.audubon.org/legislative-session-2015>. Weekly legislative updates will be sent from the Audubon state office to the WaGeneral and WSACC listservs. If you are not on one of these lists, please sign up now to stay current on statewide Audubon issues! Visit <http://wa.audubon.org/communication-tools>.

New in 2015, Audubon Washington will send out participatory action alerts around our most pressing issues. Please take advantage of these easy activist actions and help us show the power and extent of our grassroots network! The 2015 legislative session runs January 12 to April 27. Your participation is vital to avian conservation in Washington State – please join our efforts towards positive environmental change this session. As stated by Audubon President David Yarnold, "You are what hope looks like to a bird."



Nov. 17 through Dec. 18, 2014

This column reports submitted sightings. Any rare sightings should be accompanied by detailed written documentation and if possible a photograph. A second person to verify rare sightings is extremely helpful. Do not hesitate to call any observer to help document unusual sightings. Also do not hesitate to call if you need clarification on locations.

Please submit your sightings to Pam Pritzl
ppritzl@frontier.com or 360-387-7024.

WATERFOWL

Greater White-fronted Goose 1 at Hayton Reserve on 11-28 (GB)

White-winged Scoter 2 off Clayton Beach, Larrabee State Park on 12-5 (TM)

Black Scoter 1 male on Fidalgo Bay east from Waverling Spit on 12-13 (SAS)

Ruddy Duck 2 on Mud Lake on 11-23 (GB)

GREBES

Pied-billed Grebe 2 on Fidalgo Bay, Anacortes on 12-13 (SAS)

Pied-billed Grebe
Photo by Ron Holmes

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

California Quail 6 near Guemes Ferry on 12-6 (JO)

PELICANS

Brown Pelican 1 seen from West Point at Deception Pass State Park on 12-13 (AT)

HERONS and ALLIES

American Bittern 1 at the Skagit Game Range on 11-23 (GB)

HAWKS, EAGLES and ALLIES

Sharp-shinned Hawk 1 at home in Anacortes on 12-8 (JO)

SANDPIPERS, PHALAROPES and ALLIES

Greater Yellowlegs 11 at Jensen Access on 11-29 (GB)

SPOTTED REDSHANK 1 at Jensen Access on 12-1 (Tweeters) **RARE**

Spotted Sandpiper, 1 at Secret Harbor, Cypress Island, on 12-18 (TM)

ALCIDS

Ancient Murrelet 2 at Samish Island Public Beach on 12-7(GB)

GULLS and TERNS

Bonaparte's Gull 4 on Fir Island on 11-23 (GB)

Western Gull 1 on Butler Flats on 11-26 (GB)

OWLS

Snowy Owl 1 on Samish Island on 11-23 (KW)

Northern Pygmy-Owl 1 at Rasar State Park on 12-13 (GB)

WOODPECKERS

Red-breasted Sapsucker 1 on Lincoln Hill, Mount Vernon on 12-7 and 12-8 (TM)

FALCONS

Merlin 1 at 9th and K, Anacortes on 11-28 (JO); 1 on Lincoln Hill, Mt. Vernon on 12-3 and 12-5 (TM)

Prairie Falcon 1 on Fir Island on 11-23 (GB)

CORVIDS

Gray Jay 3 at Thunder Lake on 11-22 (GB)

Clark's Nutcracker 1 at Swamp Creek on 11-22 (GB)

BUSHTITS

Bushtit 20 on suet at Camano Island home on 12-16 (SRP)

WAXWINGS

Bohemian Waxwing 15 at Grassmere and 9 at Martin Road on 11-30 (GB)

WOOD WARBLERS

Northern Waterthrush 1 at the Skagit Game Range on 11-30 (AWa)

Orange-crowned Warbler 1 at home in Anacortes from 12-5 to 12-15 (JO)

Yellow-rumped Warbler 1 near Guemes Ferry on 12-15 (JO)

SPARROWS and ALLIES

Savannah Sparrow 8 at the West 90 on 12-6 (AW)

FINCHES and ALLIES

Evening Grosbeak, 1 in yard on Camano Island on 11-23 (PP); 3 on Lincoln Hill, Mount Vernon, on 12-15 (TM)

Pine Grosbeak small flock on the Padilla Bay trail on 12-13 (LM)

Red Crossbill 9 in yard on Camano Island on 12-16 (SRP)

Common Redpoll 1 near Cockreham Island on 11-7 (GB)

Field Sightings are continued on page 5



Field Sightings are continued from page 4

1Pine Siskin 60 in yard on Camano Island on 12-12 (PP); 60 in yard on Camano Island on 12-16 (SRP)

(GB) Gary Bletsch; (TM) Tim Manns; (LM) Libby Mills; (JO) John O'Connell; (SRP) Sheila & Ron Pera; (PP) Pam Pritzl; (SAS) Skagit Audubon Field Trip; (AT) Anna Theobald; (AWa) Allison Warner; (AW) Andrea Warner; (KW) Kamriell Welty

SKAGIT AUDUBON HIKING ~ JANUARY

BY JOAN MELCHER

Four hikes are scheduled for the first month of the New Year. Unexpected circumstances such as weather, wash-outs, closed trails, logging, construction, or road conditions may cause cancellations or changes in the scheduled hikes. A hike will be canceled if there are high wind warnings, flooding conditions, predictions of heavy rain, or snowy or icy roads. Dogs are discouraged on Audubon-sponsored hikes. If dogs are on a hike, they must be on a leash at all times. All the hikes are on a Wednesday. Call if you have questions anytime up until 7:45 the morning of the hike.

Contact: Joan Melcher: 360-424-0407 or jdmelcher@comcast.net

WED. – JAN. 7 – INTERURBAN TRAIL

Walk off some of those holiday pounds on the Interurban Trail. Several options are available. The hike has up to 14 or more miles with a slight elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Lost Lake Trailhead parking lot, formerly known as the Clayton Beach Parking lot, which is at the south end of Larrabee State Park on Chuckanut Drive. Return time depends on the hike options you select. **A Washington State Discover Pass is required for your vehicle!**

WED. – JAN. 14 – FRAGRANCE LAKE

Hike to a lovely mirror lake above Larrabee State Park. It is a 7 mile loop with a 1,000 ft. elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Lost Lake Trailhead parking lot, formerly known as the Clayton Beach Parking lot, at the south end of Larrabee State Park on Chuckanut Drive. You may leave when your carload has safely returned to the trailhead. **A Washington State Discover Pass is required for your vehicle!**

WED. – JAN. 21 – DECEPTION PASS AREA

(This is a re-schedule of a December 2014 hike which was canceled due to predictions of heavy rains and strong winds.) Hike on trails at Sharpe Park, Pass Lake, Rosario, and Bowman's Bay. These are hikes adding up to 10.7 miles with a 1,000 ft. total elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at Sharpe Park trailhead off of Rosario Road south of Anacortes. Parking is limited at Sharpe Park so please car-pool if possible. Joan will shuttle anyone who wants to walk between Sharpe Park and the park access off the Ginnett Road and again, at the end of the hike, from Rosario up to Sharpe Park. Contact Joan Melcher (see above) if you need driving directions to Sharpe Park. Joan's last shuttle will leave Rosario at 3 p.m. **If you park at Deception State Park, a Washington State Pass is required for your vehicle!**

WED. – JAN. 28 – WHATCOM FALLS & CREEK, BIG ROCK LOOP, & THE STIMPSON FAMILY NATURE PRESERVE

—a number of options

I. Whatcom Falls & Creek: Hike along Whatcom Creek from Whatcom Falls Park to the I-5 Freeway bridge and back. This is a 4.4 mile round trip, with a slight elevation gain.

II. Big Rock Loop: Instead of or in addition to the Whatcom Falls & Creek hike, you can do this hike, which is a 6 mile loop that begins and ends at Whatcom Falls Park. This loop takes the hiker north on some ups and downs with a few short, steep sections. It is mostly a trail with some sidewalk/road walking.

III. Stimpson Family Nature Preserve: If you wish to do this hike after **I, II, or both above**, then drive to the Stimpson Family Nature Preserve and hike up to 4 miles there, with about a 400 ft. elevation gain. For all of the above, meet at 8:30 a.m. at the I-5/Chuckanut Drive Park-n-Ride near exit 231 from I-5 **OR** meet at 9 a.m. at the Whatcom Falls Park parking lot on Arbor Street off Electric Avenue. Ride with those who plan to do the hike(s) you wish to do. When all return to your car, you may leave.

WED. – FEB. 4 – SUGAR LOAF & MT. ERIE

Hike in the popular Anacortes Forest Lands. Terry Slotemaker, 360-293-6514, or his designee, will lead us on a 5 mile hike, with a 1,400 ft. total elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Mt. Erie parking lot off the Heart Lake Road south of Anacortes. Most are back to the trailhead by 1 p.m. You may leave when you return to the trailhead vehicle. **A Washington State Discover Pass is required for your vehicle!**



Field Trips continued from page 1

for birding, including Washington Park, Ship's Harbor, and Guemes Channel. Birds to see at these sites include loons, grebes, gulls, ducks, murrelets and many more sea and shoreline species! Dress warmly for windy conditions. Plan to meet at the first parking lot on the right after entering Washington Park. We will walk to Green Point and then plan carpooling to the additional sites. Plan to walk at each location.

Please Contact Leader: Libby Mills at 360-708-6975, libbymills@gmail.com

**Saturday, January 10
Samish Flats and Beyond**



Rough – legged Hawk
Photo by Joe Halton

8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Join us as we explore birds of prey and waterfowl country at the peak of winter birding. We will meet at Padilla Bay Interpretive Center and then work our way around Samish flats seeking white birds, fierce birds, shorebirds and more.

Dress for the weather,

bring a lunch or snack we will meet at Padilla Bay

Interpretive Center parking lot to carpool.

Please Contact Leader: Bob Kuntz at 360-424-9099 or annebobkuntz@gmail.com

**Thursday, January 15
Reifel Bird Sanctuary, B.C.
7:30 a.m. to Late Afternoon**

Keith and Jan Wiggers will be our guides for a trip to the ever-popular Reifel Bird Sanctuary. Feed chickadees from your hand, observe waterfowl and their iridescent plumage at close range, and look for Saw-Whet Owls. Meet to arrange car pools at 7:30 a.m. at the “Chuckanut Park-and-Ride” at north end of Burlington Blvd. and Chuckanut Drive, I-5 Exit 231, this is about one mile south of Cook Road. The lot is just north of the Burlington high school and roundabout there, just south of the roundabout at the 231 Exit from I-5. Bring appropriate ID for the border crossing – either a passport, or an enhanced driver's license, – a crossing-friendly lunch, and a few dollars for the entry fee and bird feed. There will be additional stops for any special birds reported in nearby areas.

Please Contact Leaders: Keith and Jan Wiggers at 360-757-0772 or Cell 360-540-3464

**Saturday, January 31
Camano/Stanwood Area Birding
8:30 to Mid-afternoon**

Meet at the Stanwood QFC parking lot at 8:30 a.m. Visit Camano Island and Stanwood hotspots (English Boom, Utsalady boat ramp, Maple Grove, Iverson Spit and Eide Road). Habitats include extensive salt water, mudflats, marsh and beach, along with shrubs, cropland, and forested hillsides. We'll walk about a mile on easy terrain. Expect to see a variety of waterfowl, seabirds, raptors and passerines. Bring boots, lunch and liquids. Scopes are a plus.

Please Contact Leader: Pam Pritzl at ppritzl@frontier.com

Don't forget your Discover Pass!

Start Planning Your Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) Events

February 13-16, 2015

Don't forget to save the dates for the next Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC): February 13-16, 2015. The GBBC is a great way to engage your community in appreciating birds and citizen science and is perfect for beginning birders and experts alike. Stay tuned for more information on promotional materials and informational webinars and be sure to explore the **GBBC website**.



WDFW NEWS RELEASE

REPORT DEAD, SICK OR INJURED SWANS

November 24, 2014.

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/news/>

(360) 466-4345, ext. 266.



TRUMPETER SWAN
Photo by Ron Holmes

Hotline to report dead, sick or injured swans available

OLYMPIA - The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has re-established a hotline to report dead, sick or injured swans in three northwest Washington counties as part of its ongoing effort to assess the impact of lead poisoning on trumpeter swans.

People can call (360) 466-4345, ext. 266, to report dead, sick or injured swans in Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish counties. Callers should be prepared to leave a message including their name and phone number, and the location and condition of the swans. The hotline is available 24 hours a day through the end of March.

Some trumpeter swans in those three counties, and in southwestern British Columbia, die each winter from lead poisoning after ingesting lead shot in areas where they feed. Lead shot has been banned for waterfowl hunting in Washington for more than two decades. But swans can still pick up and ingest lead shot while foraging in shallow underwater areas in fields and roosts where lead shot is still present.

People who observe dead, sick or injured swans are advised not to handle or collect the birds, said Paul DeBruyn, WDFW wildlife biologist for Skagit and Whatcom counties. Instead, people should call the hotline, he said. WDFW and Puget Sound Energy employees, as well as volunteers from the Trumpeter Swan Society, will pick up the birds.

WDFW and other agencies and organizations have been working since 2001 to locate sources of toxic lead.

Fostering the Christmas Bird Count in Cuba

The Christmas Bird Count is well established in the United States and Canada, but how does one get a CBC going in a country that doesn't have a long history with the project? In 2011 biologist Robert Norton traveled to Cuba to help reinvigorate the CBC in that island nation. With the help of enthusiastic volunteers, Norton was able to run three counts, and he is poised to lead more this season.

Climate Corner

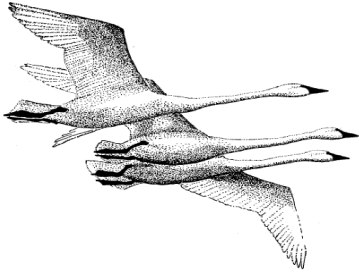
Late Tuesday night (Nov. 11, 2014), President Obama made a historic announcement with China to achieve new, more ambitious goals in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting clean energy. The targets put forth by both countries will reduce climate pollution in the U.S. by 26-28 percent from 2005 levels, and will peak CO₂ emissions in China by 2030 and increase its non-fossil fuel share of all energy to around 20 percent by 2030.

Together, the U.S. and China account for over one third of global greenhouse gas emissions. The joint announcement highlights the critical role the two countries must play in addressing climate change.

More needs to be done to reduce carbon pollution, but the joint agreement is heralded as a major step forward in the international effort to avoid the worst effects of global warming.



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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A Day of Advocacy in Olympia
focuses on Audubon issues of concern

Wednesday, February 18, 2015
FOR MORE INFORMATION
See Page 3 "Conservation Report"

Gather Your Used Wildlife Books
for the
WILDLIFE BOOK EXCHANGE
At Tues., Jan. 13 General Meeting
BRING YOUR READ BOOKS!
TAKE HOME NEW ONES!

January 2015 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Dec. 28	Dec. 29	Dec. 30 Hike: Dugualla State Park	Dec. 31 New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day	2	3 Field Trip: Washington Park, Shoreline & Forest Birds
4	5	6 SAS Board Meeting: 7:00 PM	7 Hike: Interurban Trail	8	9	10 Field Trip: Samish Flats & Beyond
11	12	13 General Meeting: Social 7:00 PM/ Meeting 7:30 PM	14 Hike: Fragrance Lake	15 Field Trip: Reifel Bird Sanctuary, B.C.	16	17
18	19	20	21 Hike: Deception Pass Area	22 Christmas Day	23	24
25	26	27	28 Hike: Whatcom Falls & Creek; Big RockLoop; Nat.Pres Feb. 4 Hike: Sugar Loaf & Mt. Erie	29	30	31 Field Trip: Camano/Stanwood Area Birding

Visit the Skagit Audubon Society Website at www.skagitaudubon.org The Skagit Flyer is printed on recycled paper

