

The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

www.skagitaudubon.org

Vol. 36 No. 1

SWAN HOTLINES

By Martha Jordan

Hello Birders,

It is swan season again. Since many of you are out and about, please be aware that when you see a dead, sick or injured swan, please pass this information on immediately. The Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) is once again tracking the mortality issues with swans, thus picking up the birds is very important. The sooner we are aware of a downed swan the better the chance to get it before it is predated.

There is a WDFW swan hotline for Skagit and Whatcom Counties. Call and leave a message: 360-466-4345 ext 266

For Snohomish, King, and Pierce counties please call me (Northwest Swan Conservation Association) at **206-713-3684**. If you do not get a live person please leave a message with your name and phone numbers and as exact a location of the swan as possible. This will help us get out to the bird as expediently as possible. It is important that you call rather than leave an email as that delays our response. The swans are picked up and sent for

Swan Hotlines continue on page 7

JANUARY MEETING AND PROGRAM

Elk Herd Management In The North Cascades by Jennifer Sevigny

Tuesday, January 10, 2017
7:00 Social; 7:30 Progra
Padilla Bay Interpretive Center
10441 Bayview-Edison Road
Mt. Vernon, Washington



Elk of the North Cascades

Photo by Jennifer Sevigny

Jennifer Sevigny, current wildlife biologist for the Stillaguamish Tribe, will talk about the management of the North Cascades (Nooksack) Elk Herd. She will cover its history and methods of monitoring it. This includes the GPS collaring project and how its data is being used to create strategies for elk conflict zones along State Route 20.

The Tribes and Washington State have been actively managing this herd through a co-management approach since the late 1990's. Jennifer Sevigny has been with the Tribe for 15 years. Elk are a culturally significant species for the Tribe and maintaining a sustainable population on the landscape and protecting Tribal Treaty Rights is a primary focus of Jennifer Sevigny's job.

Jennifer Sevigny have a BS in Wildlife Biology from the University of Vermont and a MS in Wildlife Biology from Kansas State University (Fort Hays). She spends most of her time working with large game species, but also works with migratory birds and listed species such as the Marbled Murrelet and Spotted Owl. She also leads the Tribe's Climate Change Program.



SKAGIT AUDUBON

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Northern Shrike Winter Birds Have Arrived!

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.orgaudubon-locations/. **To join Skagit Audubon Society** use the **1st** 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 2nd 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 at: http://www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter. Membership includes all members of your household.									
Check one:	\$20.00 one (1) year	\$40.00 two (2) years							
Additionally, I wish to donate to Skagit Audubon Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. in the amount of \$									
Donations of \$100.00 of more receive a personal field trip by a Skagit Addubort field trip reader.									
Check one:	New Membership	Renewing Membership							
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SAS does not share your contact information. Clip form/Mail to/Payable to: Skagit Audubon Society P.O. Box 1101 Mount Vernon, WA 98273-1101									
Use the form below to initially join the National Audubon Society.									
National Audubon Society Membership Form									
Annual membership to the National Audubon Society includes a subscription to <i>Audubon</i> magazine. Membership includes all members of your household.									
\$20 for one-year introductory membership with one chapter affiliation									
	Phone								

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:

Pam Pritzl membership@skagitaudubon.org

Please mail chapter-created new membership forms to address below: (Payable to same)

Phone: (844) 428-3826



Zip.

For membership related questions and address:

Email: customerservice@audubon.org

Address_ City/State

P.O. Box 97194

National Audubon Society Y21

Washington, DC 20090-7194

Attn: Chance Mueleck

Sponsor Your Bird for Education

It's a cold winter's day. You're cozy and warm indoors enjoying the perfect view of your bird feeder when suddenly tragedy strikes! A Cooper's Hawk swoops in and sends the birds fleeing for their lives. Bam! A bird hits your window. Oh no, time to grab a jacket to go out and search for the bird. Was the hit fatal or is the bird just stunned?

This is a scenario I have lived more than once. Most often the bird is just shaken and within a few minutes able to fly away. If I find it on the ground, I always try to place it in a bush far from the reach of my neighbor's outdoor cat. Occasionally, the hit will be fatal. The bird is then collected in a zip-lock bag with the date, my name and address, and the best ID I can assign. Next, it goes to my freezer so I can forget to bring it to the next Audubon meeting. Better leave myself a reminder before my husband Mark asks if we're having sparrow for dinner.



Sheila Pera & Irene Perry Education in Progress

This time of year many dead birds are found near our homes in good condition. Skagit Audubon has a program where these birds can be used for scientific study and education. Each month Pam Pritzl brings a cooler to our monthly meeting to collect frozen birds. These birds are then given to the University of Puget Sound. Our chapter now has an opportunity for you to sponsor a bird for our education programs. These sponsorships start at \$25.00 for a songbird study specimen. You can also sponsor a bird for taxidermy. Please contact Sheila Pera,

skagiteducation2@gmail.com or Pam Pritzl, **membership@skagitaudubon.org** for more information.

So the next time tragedy strikes your window, you can make a difference collecting the bird and going through the few steps to preserve and bring it to our next meeting. If your bird is in good condition, consider

sponsoring it for our chapter's education programs. The small things we do together can make a big difference connecting people to nature.

SKAGIT AUDUBON JANUARY CONSERVATION REPORT BY TIM MANNS

On January 9th, the Washington State Legislature will convene for a Regular (i.e. budget writing) Session scheduled to end April 23. Meeting the mandate in the State Supreme Court's 2012 McCleary decision to adequately fund public education, and the pressing need to improve mental health services, will dominate the budget discussion, as will necessary related tax reform. Some legislators have been using these critical needs as reasons for reducing state programs and services vital to restoring and protecting the environment with all the implications such reductions would have for the well-being of people and all other life. The balance of political power in the Senate and House will present great obstacles to passing environmental legislation. It is nonetheless important to make our interests known and push for what we believe important. If our state's tax system were less regressive, we could readily afford to properly fund education and mental health services

Conservation Report continued on page 4



without sacrificing the environment.

Audubon Washington, on behalf of the state's 25 Audubon chapters, participates with over 20 other conservation organizations in the Environmental Priorities Coalition. Each year this group chooses a few areas on which to focus its collective efforts with the state legislature. Priorities for the 2017 session build on those of recent years:

- 1. <u>Further improve the safety of oil transportation by rail, ship, and pipeline.</u> Improvements are needed in spill prevention and response, liability for accidental damage, and pipeline safety.
- 2. Reform the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) of 1988. Passed as a voter initiative, for 27-years this law has helped clean up 6,600 toxic sites from leaking gas station tanks to large industrial areas along the Anacortes waterfront. MTCA is funded by a tax on hazardous substances with 95% of the revenue tied to oil prices. Since these prices



- substances with 95% of the revenue tied to oil prices. Since these prices began dropping in 2014, revenue has also dropped sharply. At times the legislature has further depleted the fund by diverting MTCA revenues to needs unrelated to the purposes of the act. The Environmental Priorities Coalition will work to restore and stabilize MTCA funding so that environmental clean-up can continue apace.
- 3. <u>Protect regulations regarding instream flow.</u> Protection and restoration of salmon stocks depends on sufficient flows of water in streams and rivers. Inadequate planning and regulation by certain counties plus poor decisions by some landowners have created great pressure to overturn instream flow rules, which would be bad news for salmon and other aquatic creatures, and ultimately for people too.

There are several others areas in which Audubon Washington and the chapters will be active during the 2017 legislative session. Carbon pricing initiative I-732 failed on the November ballot but garnered a higher level of support than many expected. Realizing that climate change is the greatest threat to birds as well as a crisis for people, Audubon will support any well-designed carbon pricing bill or other approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Audubon will also work with the Washington Public Interest Group to build grass roots support across the state for greatly increasing solar energy in Washington while also supporting legislated incentives for installing solar power.

Maintaining forest cover is important for many reasons, including protecting bird habitat. Audubon Washington will continue pursuing what Skagit Audubon initiated a year ago, seeking reform of the Forest Practices Act to prevent clear-cuts in urban growth areas. What happened next to Mt. Vernon's Little Mountain Park in 2015 despite the city's critical areas ordinances should never happen again in any of Washington's urban areas. With other organizations, Skagit Audubon will also keep pushing for the funding needed to protect Blanchard Mountain Forest's 1600 core acres. This is the only remaining place where the forests of the Cascades touch the Salish Sea.

The November 2016 election outcome should motivate us all to practice active citizenship. Here are two ways you can do that:

- 1) Sign up for legislative alerts and updates with Audubon Washington:

 http://wa.audubon.org/conservation/legislative-session-2017. Also, our state government has a good website for tracking bills, commenting on them, seeing committee assignments, and contacting your legislators: http://leg.wa.gov/. While you're at it, please sign up for National Audubon alerts too: http://www.audubon.org/takeaction.
- 2) Participate in Audubon Advocacy Day on February 21st. More information will be coming soon on signing up to visit your state legislators and urge their support for the conservation measures discussed in this report. Let's go to Olympia!



Four hikes are scheduled for the first month of the New Year. Unexpected circumstances such as weather, washouts, closed trails, logging, construction, or road conditions may cause cancellations or changes in the hikes. A hike will be canceled if there are high wind warnings, flooding conditions, predictions of heavy rain, or snowy or icy road conditions. For information on or questions about the hikes, call **JOAN MELCHER**, 360-424-0407 or e-mail at **jdmelcher@comcast.net**. All the hikes are on a Wednesday. Dogs are discouraged on Audubon-sponsored hikes. If dogs are on a hike, they must be on a leash at all times.

WED. - JAN. 4, 2017 - INTERURBAN TRAIL

Walk off some of those holiday pounds on the Interurban Trail. There are several options available adding 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, on Chuckanut Drive at the south end of Larrabee State Park. Return time depends on hike options you select and the group you are with. A Washington State Discover Pass is required for parking your vehicle in the Lost Lake Trailhead Parking Lot.

WED. – JAN. 11 – FRAGRANCE LAKE



View from Fragrance Lake formerly known as *Photo by Collie Martin* the Clayton Beach

Hike to a lovely mirror lake above Larrabee State Park. The hike is a 7 mile loop with a 1,400 ft. total elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Lost Lake Trailhead parking 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 parking your vehicle at Deception Pass State Park.

WED. – JAN. 18 – 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

WED. – JAN. 25 – THE TOMMY THOMPSON TRAIL (The TTT)

Walk on the Tommy Thompson Trail in Anacortes from the Cap Sante Marina to the far end of the

trestle on March Point (7.2 miles round trip) and, if desired, walk around part of March Point and back to Anacortes (up to 13 or more miles). Meet at 9 a.m. at the north end of the Marina between the restroom and the Preston river boat. Walking shoes are recommended. You may leave when you return to the starting point.

WED. - FEB. 1 - WHATCOM FALLS &

CREEK, BIG ROCK LOOP, AND THE STIMPSON FAMILY NATURE PRESERVE

-- a number of options



Photo by Collie Martin

1) Whatcom Falls & Creek:

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

2) 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; with some ups and downs. There are a few short, steep sections, but mostly it is a trail with some sidewalk/road walking.

3) Stimpson Family Nature Preserve:

If you wish to do this hike after **1)**, **2)**, 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 the three choices above, meet at 8:30 a.m. at the I-5/Chuckanut Drive Park-n-Ride near exit 231 off I-5 <u>OR</u> meet in Bellingham at 9 a.m. at the Whatcom Falls Park parking lot on Arbor Street off of 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.



the trailhead.

SKAGIT AUDUBON FIELD NOTES: NOVEMBER 24 TO DECEMBER 14, 2016

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 birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org or 360-387-7024.

WATERFOWL

Wood Duck 8 near Cockreham Island on 12-4 (GB)

Cinnamon Teal 1 on Lindgren Road, Mount Vernon on 12-4 (GB)

Long-tailed Duck 1 at March Point on 12-1 (RK); 2 at March Point on 12-3 (RK)

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

California Quail 1 along Ship Harbor Trail on 11-27 (NO)

Ruffed Grouse pair on the Cascade Trail ¼ mile west of Coal Creek on 12-4 (DW)

GREBES

Western Grebe 1 at Clear Lake on 11-25 (RK); 2 at Rosario Head on 12-3 (RK)

SANDPIPERS and ALLIES

Black Turnstone 1 at Rosario Head on 12-5 (RK) **Surfbird** 4 at Rosario Head on 12-5 (RK) **Long-billed Dowitcher** 3 on Alice Bay on 12-9 (HA)

ALCIDS

Marbled Murrelet 6 off Green Point, Washington Park, Anacortes on 12-1 (RK); 3 at Rosario Head on 12-3 (RK)

Ancient Murrelet 11 off Green Point on 11-26 (GB); 3 off Green Point, Washington Park, Anacortes on 12-1 (RK)

OWLS

Great Horned Owl pair frequenting Glasgow Way area, Anacortes during sighting period (NO)

Barred Owl hooting while hiking on north end

Mount Erie trails on 12-4 (NO)

HUMMINGBIRDS

Anna's Hummingbird at least 12 at east Fidalgo Island home on 12-14 (RW)

WOODPECKERS

Red-breasted Sapsucker 1 at Cap Sante, Anacortes on 12-10 (JH); 1 at east Fidalgo Island home since 12-10 (RW)

FALCONS

American Kestrel 5 in Samish Flats on 12-3 (SAS)

Merlin 1 on Bayview/Edison Road by Samish River Bridge on 12-5 (AW)

SHRIKES

Northern Shrike 1 at end of Rawlins Road on 12-10 (NO)

THRUSHES

Varied Thrush 4 while hiking on north end Mount Erie trails on 12-4 (NO)

WAXWINGS

Bohemian Waxwing 15 at Skagit WMA (Wylie Slough) on 12-10 (RK); 101 at Skagit WMA (Wylie Slough) on 12-10 (GB, JO) **Cedar Waxwing** 1 at Burlington home on 11-24 (LE); 8 at Skagit WMA (Wylie Slough) on 12-10 (GB, JO)

WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler 1 at Roger's #1 Access (Samish River at Old Highway 99) on 12-4 (GB); 1 on Lincoln Hill, Mount Vernon on 12-15 (TM) Yellow-rumped Warbler 12 along Ship Harbor Trail on 11-27 (NO)

SPARROWS and ALLIES

American Tree Sparrow 1 at Lindgren Rd, Mt. Vernon on 12-4 (GB); 1 at Lindgren Rd, Mt. Vernon on 12-6 (RK)

Swamp Sparrow 1 at SR 20 Milepost 76 fields on 12-11 (GB)

White-throated Sparrow 1 at Burlington home on 11-24 (LE); 1 "tan-striped" at Camano Island home on 12-5 (PP)

TANAGERS and ALLIES

SUMMER TANAGER 1 at west Mount Vernon residence on 12-3 (JA, RK, GB) RARE in WA (2nd time in Skagit County and 10th time in State)

BLACKBIRDS

Yellow-headed Blackbird 4 at Anacortes feeder on 12-1 and 12-2 (NJH)

Rusty Blackbird 1 on Francis Road on 12-4 (GB)

FINCHES and ALLIES

American Goldfinch 20 at SR 20 milepost 76
Field Notes continue on page 7



Field Notes continued from page 6

fields on 12-13 (GB)

MAMMALS

Steller's Sea Lion 1 off Rosario Head on 12-10 (GB)

(HA) Howard Armstrong; (JA) Jean Ashby; (GB) Gary Bletsch; (LE) Larry Edwards; (JH) Joe Halton; (NJH) Nancy & Jerry Husred; (RK) Robert Kuntz; (TM) Tim Manns; (NO) Neil O'Hara; (JO) Jeff Osmundson; (PP) Pam Pritzl; (SAS) Skagit Audubon Society Field Trip; (AW) Andrea Warner; (RW) Regan Weeks; (DW) Daria Wheatly

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 distribution 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, Jan. 7 Skagit Flats / Fir Island 8:30 a.m. to noon

Begin our new year with a visit to Skagit Flats with Skagit Audubon! Birders flock to the Skagit Flats from all over Cascadia to enjoy searching for big white birds of winter and other more subtle birds. We begin our exploration at Fir Island Farm (formerly known as Hayton Access) of the Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Skagit Wildlife Area. There are often raptors, shorebirds and waterfowl to be found from this spot. Bring

Swan Hotlines continued from page 7

necropsy. Also, we are preventing secondary lead poisoning to raptors, who may ingest any lead shot found in the swan.

Power line collisions need to be documented as well, in addition to any other mortality factors. It is important to report as many power line collisions as possible so the power companies know where the problems are. They can mark the lines and reduce the chances of it happening again. If you find birds of any kind dead from power line collision you can also contact me, Martha Jordan: **206-713-3684.** You may notice that swans are all over the news across

plenty of warm layers, binoculars and scope if you have one. Contact our leaders, so they can contact you in the event of a weather cancellation.

Leaders: Irene & Mark Perry irene.perry@yahoo.com

Driving Directions: From Interstate 5, take Exit 221 (Lake McMurray/Conway), turn west. Drive 0.1 mile. Turn right (west) onto Fir Island Road. Drive west 3.2 miles. Turn left (south) at Wash. Dept. of Fish & Wildlife sign. Drive 0.5 mile to parking area, meeting spot. There is no restroom at this meeting place. **To park have a Discover Pass!**

Saturday, Jan. 28 Camano Hot Spots, plus Eide Road 8:30 a.m. to noon

Join Pam Pritzl for exploration of birding hot spots on Camano Island. Depending upon tides and weather, possible sites to visit are: Iverson Spit, LeQue Island, and English Boom. There's a potential for many types of winter birds. Dress for January weather and be sure to wear sturdy, water repellent boots. Meet at the QFC supermarket on SR 532 in downtown Stanwood to arrange carpooling. Plan to walk up to 2 miles on easy terrain. Bring a snack or lunch if you need reinforcements. Boots, binoculars and spotting scopes are recommended. To park have a Discover Pass! Leader: Pam Pritzl, 360-387-7024

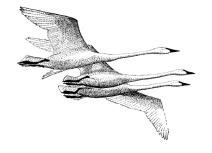
western Washington. This is all about the lead poisoning and power line collision issues. You can keep up with this via our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/nwswans. If you are not a Facebook user, send me your email at mj.cygnus@gmail.com> and I will add you to the list for updating.

Thanks for your help. Happy birding! Martha Jordan, Everett, WA

Northwest Swan Conservation Association By Martha Jordan, taken from Tweeters, Sun., 13 Dec 2015; Sun., 27 Nov 2016 & Tue, 13 Dec 2016



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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Field Trips:
Skagit Flats / Fir Island
Camano Island, plus Eide Road
See page 7

January 2017 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Skagit Audubon Board Meeting: 7:00 PM	4 Hike: Interurban Trail	5	6	7 Field Trip: Skagit Flats & Fir Island
8	9	10 Skagit Audubon General Meeting: Social 7:00 PM Meeting 7:30 PM	11 Hike: Fragrance Lake	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 Hike: Sugar Loaf & Mt. Erie	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Hike: Tommy Thompson Trail	26	27	28 Field Trip: Camano Island, Plus: Eide Road
29	30	31	Feb. 1 Hike: Whatcom Falls & Creek, Big Rock Loop, & Stimpson Family Nature Preserve	Feb. 2	Feb. 3	Feb. 4

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