

The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

www.skagitaudubon.org

Vol. 33 No. 8

OCTOBER 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, October 4 Wiley Slough, Skagit Game Range 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon

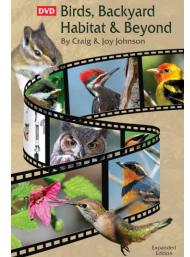
The Skagit Wildlife Area has several sections to explore for birding. Ducks and geese, who will be moving in Sept. and Oct. as the migratory songbirds

Field Trips continue on page 7

OCTOBER MEETING AND PROGRAM

Birds, Backyard Habitat and Beyond A Film by Craig and Joy Johnson

Tuesday, October 14, 2014 7:00 Social; 7:30 Program Padilla Bay Interpretive Center 10441 Bayview-Edison Road Mt. Vernon, Washington



Puget Sound area watercolor artist and photographer Craig Johnson, with his wife and writer Joy Johnson, have created a DVD that beautifully illustrates what can happen

when native habitat is allowed to flourish even in as small a space as a suburban backyard. The Johnsons illustrate the delights possible by recording the birds and other creatures that visit their backyard.

This remarkable film provides a window to behaviors never before recorded here. A panoply of creatures forage for food, raise young, maintain their plumage, battle for territory and much more. The original film has been expanded to contain over 65 bird species and numerous other native creatures interacting with native habitat, as Craig continues to capture bird behaviors on video.

Craig and Joy Johnson have created and published four books containing colorful, close-up photographs of birds mostly found in the Puget Sound area. Their latest photo book is titled *Our Pacific Northwest Birds & Habitat*. Check out their website: www.pugetsoundbackyardbirds.com



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DOUGLAS TREE-SQUIRREL

Photo by Ron Holmes

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 www.audubon.org/states/wa/ .To join Skagit Audubon Society please 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, <i>The Skagit Flyer</i> , available on our website . 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/StateZip						
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.

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_ Telephone No._ Clip form/Mail to/Payable to:

National Audubon Society Membership Form

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.co



SKAGIT AUDUBON OCTOBER CONSERVATION REPORT By TIM MANNS, CONSERVATION CHAIR

PRESERVING NORTHWEST HABITAT: In mid-September, friends kindly invited Brenda and me to join a group visiting Vendovi Island. It is to the credit of the San Juan Preservation Trust and its many generous donors that this island's almost three miles of pristine shore and over 200 forested acres have been preserved forever. How encouraging for anyone who cares about local conservation! (Note: the Trust needs your continued generosity to finish repaying the loan that made this victory possible.) The past few years have seen other notable local conservation successes too: the protection from development of Kiket Island, now Kukutali Preserve, Skagit Land Trust's preservation of Guemes Mountain summit amidst a large area protected by conservation easements, big additions to Barney Lake Conservation Area east of Mount Vernon, and more. In each case private donations, often combined with public grants, made habitat protection possible.



Vaux's Swift 14,600 at Northern State Hospital Sedro-Woolley, WA on 9-13-2014 Photo by Ron Holmes

AUDUBON'S CLIMATE CHANGE STUDY: Issued September 9th, this important study concludes that shrinking and shifting ranges could imperil nearly half of U.S. bird species within this century. It's no surprise that climate change is the greatest overall threat to birds. 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.

BAKKEN CRUDE OIL TRAINS: Since the Skagit *Flyer*'s last issue your Audubon chapter submitted comments to Skagit County Planning critiquing its "modified Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance" for Shell's crude-by-rail project. With other conservation groups, we maintain that the Bakken crude oil trains this project will bring, added to those already coming to the Tesoro refinery, pose significant and insufficiently addressed threats to the environment and to human health and safety. The county's modification of its earlier determination includes improvements but falls short. Our county should require a full environmental impact statement followed by specific and detailed requirements to reduce and manage risk. The county's determination has been appealed to the County Hearing Examiner.

WASHINGTON STATE HYDRAULIC CODE: Recently, Skagit Audubon joined Audubon Washington, our state office, in commenting on Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's proposed revised rules implementing the state's Hydraulic Code. These regulations governing construction and other activity in streams, rivers, and the saltwater nearshore have important implications for marine birds, mammals, and fish whose diets depend on forage fish spawning on beaches or nearby.

WHY SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE DONE: In using widely separated places and both wild and human-altered habitats, birds knit our world together. It's not surprising then that the worldwide phenomenon of climate change should threaten the future of so many bird species. The very beauty and diversity of the place we live heightens awareness of what needs to be done, and can be done, to leave this place we care about in good shape for those who will inherit it.



SKAGIT AUDUBON FIELD NOTES

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

Cinnamon Teal 54 at Channel Drive on 8-24 (GB) Common Merganser 750 off Jensen Access on 8-24 (GB)

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

Ruffed Grouse 1 at Howard Miller Steelhead Park on 9-13 (GB)

White-tailed Ptarmigan 6 on Table Mountain, Mt, Baker on 9-21 (RHa)

GREBES

Horned Grebe 30 off Jensen Access on 9-14 (GB) **Red-necked Grebe** 1 at Samish Island Public Beach on 8-24 (GB)

Western Grebe 1 at Samish Island Public Beach on 9-14 (GB)

HERONS AND ALLIES

LITTLE BLUE HERON 1 seen and photographed at the Skagit Game Range by Michael Hobbs and Doug Schurman on 9-14 (GB) RARE IN OUR AREA Green Heron 1 at Channel Drive on 8-21 (GB)

HAWKS, EAGLES, AND ALLIES Red-tailed Hawk 1 (with Long Bill Syndrome, banded) at the Skagit Game Range on 9-10 (AW)



OYSTERCATCHERS Black Oystercatcher 2 at Kukutali (Kiket Island) Preserve on 8-14 (GB)

Black Oystercatcher Photo by Joe Halton

PLOVERS

Semipalmated Plover 23 at the West-90 on 8-21 (GB)

SANDPIPERS, PHALAROPES, and ALLIES Solitary Sandpiper 1 at Nichols Bar on 8-24 (GB) Whimbrel 2 at March Point on 8-14 (GB) Ruff 1 at the Skagit Game Range on 9-14 (GB) Baird's Sandpiper 1 at Lyman on 9-7 (GB)

Pectoral Sandpiper 1 at Lyman on 9-7 (GB) **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 6 at Channel Drive on 8-24 (GB)

Wilson's Snipe 14 at the Skagit Game Range on 9-14 (GB)

Red-necked Phalarope 8 at Channel Drive on 8-21 (GB); 1 at Channel Drive on 9-10 (AW)

GULLS and TERNS

BLACK TERN 1 at Jensen Access on 6-2 (RM) UNUSUAL FOR OUR AREA

GULLS and TERNS



Bonaparte's Gull 2 at March Point on 8-6 (GB)

SWIFTS Black Swift 6 at Lyman on 8-13 (GB)

Vaux's Swift 14,600 at Northern State Recreation

Area on 9-13 (TM, RH); 3,600 at Northern State Recreation Area (SAS)

HUMINGBIRDS

Anna's Hummingbird 1 on Sauk Mountain 7-4 (RM)

WOODPECKERS

Lewis's Woodpecker 1 at the Skagit Game Range on 9-14 (GB)

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

Willow Flycatcher 1 at Samish Island on 9-14 (GB)

Least Flycatcher 1at Diablo on 6-2 (RM)

VIREOS

Cassin's Vireo 1 at Pressentin Park on 9-14 (GB) **Hutton's Vireo** 1 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 9-13 (SAS); 1 at Camano Island home on 9-15 (PP)

CORVIDS

Steller's Jay 3 at the Skagit Game Range on 9-14 (GB)

Western Scrub-Jay 1 in Mt. Vernon yard on 9-8 (RK); 1 in Burlington yard on 9-18 (LE) Clark's Nutcracker 10 on Maple Pass hike on

9-16 (RHa)

Common Raven 1 at Cranberry Lake on 9-13 (SAS)

NUTHATCHES

Red-breasted Nuthatch 1 at the Skagit Game Range on 9-14 (GB)

Skagit Field Notes continue on page 5



Skagit Field Notes continued from page 4

THRASHERS

Sage Thrasher 1 at Marblemount on 6-7 (RM)

PIPITS

American Pipit 2 on Maple Pass hike on 9-16 (RHa)

WOOD WARBLERS

OVENBIRD1 found by Ryan Schain at Channel Drive on 9-13 (GB) **UNUSUAL FOR OUR AREA**

SPARROWS and ALLIES

Clay-colored Sparrow 1 at Jensen Access on 6-2 (RM); 2 at South Cascade Road on 9-13 (GB)

Vesper Sparrow 1 at South Cascade Road on 9-13 (GB)

LE CONTE'S SPARROW 1 at Marblemount on 6-13 to 6-21 (RM) **RARE FOR OUR AREA**

White-throated Sparrow 1 on Bryson Road, Sauk Valley on 6-2 to 7-19 (RM); 1 at Martin Road, Rockport on 6-28 (RM)

White-crowned Sparrow 1 "Gambel's" on Sauk Mountain on 7-4 (RM)

TANAGERS and ALLIES

Western Tanager 1 female in Burlington yard on 9-6 (LE); 2 females at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 9-13 (SAS)

FINCHES and ALLIES

Red Crossbill 7 at Kukutali (Kiket Island) Preserve on 8-24 (GB); 12 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 9-13 (SAS); 12 at Camano Island home on 9-17 (PP)

Pine Siskin 8 at Kukutali (Kiket Island) Preserve on 8-24 (GB)

Lesser Goldfinch 1 at Diablo on 5-26 (RM); 1 at Marblemount on 6-13 (RM)

(GB) Gary Bletsch; (LE) Larry Edwards; (RH) Ron Holmes; (RHa) Ramona Hammerly; (RK) Randy King; (RM) Ryan Merrill; (TM) Tim Manns; (PP) Pam Pritzl; (SAS) Skagit Audubon Field Trip; (AW) Andrea Warner

Thanks to Ron Holmes!

During the September Skagit Audubon meeting Ron Holmes, photographer and naturalist, donated his book titled "A Few Feathered Friends" to the Education Committee.

This 100 page hard bound book is a magnificent photographic study of 50 birds seen in and around Puget Sound. The book documents these birds displaying many different behaviors in their natural habitats. Ron has illustrated the spirit of these birds, from the grace of Trumpeter Swans to the tenaciousness of the Red-breasted Nuthatch. One series of photos shows an American robin, her nest with cerulean blue eggs, and finally her nestlings.

A portion of the book is dedictated to fierce hunting behavior of hawks and eagles. Ron has photographs of Bald Eagles, Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, Rough-legged Hawks, and American Kestrels. In some of the photos Ron captures the incredible acrobatics of raptors as they swoop for prey.

Many of the photographs are close-up shots showing amazing detail of the birds' faces and

bodies. In the classroom this will be especially useful when we are talking about how to identify birds.

To see a selection of Ron's photographs go to the Skagit Audubon website:



Dunlin *Photo by Ron Holmes*

http://www.skagitaudubon.org/birding/gallery

Thanks Ron for the wonderful book; it is a great addition to our classroom teaching materials.

The Education Committee

The Editor of this Skagit Audubon Flyer also wants to Thank Ron Holmes, Joe Halton and others who allow their photos to be used monthly in this newsletter.



BY JOAN MELCHER

October can produce great hiking weather along with beautiful fall colors. However weather conditions, forest fires and smoke, logging, construction, or other unexpected circumstances may cause changes or cancellations. All of the outings 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. For all hike information or other questions contact:

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

* A Northwest Forest Pass for parking is required.

*WED. –OCT. 1 –HIKES FROM SCHREIBERS MEADOWS



Park Butte
Photo by Gene Kiver

Options include parts of or all of the Scott Paul Trail, Park Butte, or up to the Railroad Grade Moraine. Reports are the Railroad Grade Moraine is very narrow and dangerous for one to hike up to the climbers' camp. There are great views if the weather is good and significant streams to

cross by rock hopping or wading. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot. At 4 p.m. return to the trailhead.

A Northwest Forest Pass for parking is required.

*WED. - OCT. 8 - IRON GOAT TRAIL

This trail, on the old Great Northern route, connects Wellington and Scenic. There are different starting and ending point options. Shuttle cars if needed. If you hike uphill between Scenic and Wellington, there is a 1,000 foot elevation gain. It is 5 to 10 miles depending on the route taken. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Mt. Vernon Safeway. Flashlights are recommended if you wish to walk through the Windy Point tunnel. Seattle/Snohomish County/Camano Island hikers can meet the group at the Skykomish Ranger Station, located a few miles east of Skykomish on Highway 2 at 9 a.m. At 3 p.m. return to Scenic.

A Northwest Forest Pass for parking is required.

*WED. – OCT. 15 BAKER LAKE FROM THE NORTH DOWN TO NOISY CREEK

Hike over the Baker River Bridge, the Blum Creek Bridge, and along the northern section of the Baker Lake Trail to Noisy Creek and back. It is 9.2 miles round trip with a slight elevation gain. Meet at 8 a.m. on the east side of the parking lot at the Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion. At 3 p.m. return to trailhead.

A Northwest Forest Pass for parking is required.

WED. – OCT. 22 - RUBY ARM and/or RUBY CREEK

For both hikes, meet at 7:30 a.m. on the east side of the Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot. No parking permit is required. There are two different return times. Carpool accordingly. Return time is 2 p.m. for those who do shorter hikes; 3:30 p.m. for those who go longer distances.

I. RUBY ARM: Hike on the East Bank of Ross Lake Trail over a carpet and under a canopy of fall leaves. Kick leaves to your heart's content. Hike to either Ruby Arm, Hidden Hand Pass, or part way up Little Jack Trail. The round trip is 7 to 8 miles.

II. RUBY CREEK TRAIL: Hike the beautiful Ruby Creek trail from Panther Creek to Canyon Creek and back. The round trip is 7 miles with a 650 foot total elevation gain.

WED. – OCT. 29 - NORTH CHUCKANUT

MOUNTAIN: Hike trails on the northwest side of Chuckanut Mountain. The main hike is a loop hike of 8.7 miles. There are options for shorter hikes as well as side trips. The outbound loop consists of parts of the Interurban Trail, the Hemlock Trail, the Lost Lake Trail, the Lower Salal Trail (Hush-Hush), and all of the Raptor Ridge Trail. The return consists of the Hemlock and Interurban Trails. There is up to a 1,700 foot elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at the North Chuckanut Parking Lot located on the east side of Chuckanut Drive between the Old Samish Highway and California Street. This is about at milepost 18.5. You may leave when your car-load has returned.



!!! CONTRIBUTE TO A BIRD FEEDER SALE !!!~ OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING ~



Red-breasted Nuthatch *Photo by J. B. Smith*

Have extra bird feeders you're no longer using? Bring them in for an October Second-hand Bird Feeder Sale!

Last spring, Skagit Audubon Society member, Penny Weller, moved to Seattle. Rather than take all her bird feeders with her, Penny decided to donate them to our local Audubon Society. She suggested we sell them at a reduced price with the monies earned going to benefit our local Society. Penny moved to Seattle in the spring. Our

SAS Board thought it best to wait until fall when members scramble around to hang their winter feeders.

....And further we thought, why not open the sale to other members so they too can clear out their homes of idle bird feeders. Yes, we welcome you to bring in those feeders hidden in secret corners around your garages and cellars.

Bring in those extra bird feeders to the October 14th General Meeting!

HELP your fellow SAS members prepare for the coming winter feeding!

At the same time HELP donate monies to our local Audubon Society!

Field Trips continued from page 1

depart. The wetlands always offer a chance of finding some shorebirds and other water associated birds. Bring your Discover Pass and park at the lot straight ahead as you enter the wildlife range. Bring binoculars and scopes, snacks and water for this flat walk of about three miles by ponds, hedgerows, and finally the estuary. This is a great walk for beginners and experienced birders alike. **Leaders:**

Phil Wright and Ivar Dolph, plwright@comcast.net Driving Directions:

Take Interstate 5 to Exit 221, just south of Mount Vernon in Skagit County. Go west from the freeway and turn right on to Fir Island Road, follow the sign for Conway/La Conner. In 1.8 miles, turn left onto Wylie Road and follow for 1 mile to a T-intersection and a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife sign. Turn left and then left again at the "T" to reach the parking lot where we will meet.

Saturday, October 11, 2014 Blaine, Semiahmoo, Birch Bay State Park, & Sandy Point 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

We will begin birding at Blaine, then drive on to Semiahmoo and Birch Bay State Park, and end our trip at Sandy Point. Our focus will be on water birds, targeting all three scoters, three loon species, grebes, and Long-tailed Ducks, plus shorebirds, e.g. Sanderlings, Black Turnstones, and Dunlin. Bring binoculars, scopes, lunch, and wind and rain gear. If coming from south of Bellingham, meet at 8:30 a.m. to arrange carpools at the Chuckanut Park-and-Ride lot. (Please be prompt.) We'll meet Andrea Warner, at 9:15 a.m. at the Arco Gas Station on Slater Road. Take I-5 Exit 260, turn right from the off ramp and you'll see the Arco station on your right. Leader: Andrea Warner, 360 734-9881 or warneraj@me.com; Libby Mills, 360-224-9291

Drivers will need a Discover Pass for parking at Birch Bay State Park

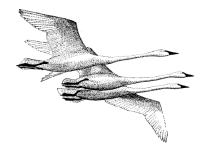
Saturday, October 18 Birds then Brew in Anacortes 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Extend your October Fest celebration with morning birding followed by beer tasting and lunch in Anacortes. We'll begin the day with a visit to Washington Park, then stop at Ship Harbor and on to other Fidalgo Island hotspots. We're sure to see the return of many grebes, loons, and ducks as we say farewell to the last fall migrants. After birding, we'll break at noon for a refreshing beer tasting and lunch in town. Come for the birding. Come for the brew. Join us for both. Bring binoculars and a scope, if you have one. Expect some walking on smooth trails. Meet at Washington Park, in Anacortes at the first parking lot to the right after entering the park. Leaders: Mark and Irene Perry

931-623-2084 or <u>irene.perry@yahoo.com</u>



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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PREPARE FOR WINTER

DONATE A USED FEEDER

OR
BUY A USED FEEDER

AT THE OCT. 14TH MEETING

\$\$ GO TO LOCAL AUDUBON
For More Info See Page 7

October 2014 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Sept. 28	Sept. 29	Sept. 30	1 Hike: Schreibers Meadows	2	3	4 Field Trip: Wiley Slough, Skagit Game Range
5	6	7 SAS Board Meeting: 7:00 PM	8 Hike: Iron Goat Trail	9	10	11 Field Trip: Blaine, Semiahmoo, Birch Bay State Pk
12	13	14 General Meeting: Social 7:00 PM/ Meeting 7:30 PM	15 Hike:: Baker Lake	16	17	18 Field Trip: Birds then Brew
19	20	21	22 Hike: Ruby Arm and/or Ruby Creek	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 Hike: North Chuckanut Mountain	30	31	Nov. 1

Visit the Skagit Audubon Society Website at www.skagitaudubon.org
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