

# *The Skagit Flyer*

Skagit Audubon Society  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Find us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/skagitaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/skagitaudubon)  
Volume 42, No. 8: [www.skagitaudubon.org](https://www.skagitaudubon.org) October 2023

## **OCTOBER MEETING – PRESENTED IN PERSON ONLY**

*"Diurnal Raptors of Skagit County"*

**Presented by: Sue Cottrell**

**Tuesday, Oct. 10th at 7:00 pm**

**7:00 Meeting Begins**

**6:00 Social Hour Begins**

Please join us at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center, 10441 Bayview-Edison Rd., Mt. Vernon for a program on the diurnal (daytime) raptors of Skagit County. This meeting will be in-person only (no ZOOM attendance). The meeting begins at 7:00 pm and will be preceded by a social hour starting at 6:00 pm.  
Photo: Rough-legged hawk by Joe Halton



## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY – SECRETARY NEEDED**

Are you looking for a way to become more involved with Skagit Audubon Society? The important position of Secretary has become available. The primary duty is recording the minutes from the monthly Board meetings (Sept.-June) and the general meeting in June (elections). Questions – please contact President John Day ([president@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:president@skagitaudubon.org)) or Vice President John Farnsworth ([vicepresident@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:vicepresident@skagitaudubon.org)).

**Monthly Meeting Update:** In response to the COVID-19 virus, some of our general meetings are being held at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center while others will be available on Zoom only. Hybrid meetings are not currently offered. Please check the monthly program description for meeting details. As with our hikes and field trips, only vaccinated, symptom-free individuals should attend meetings in person. Please visit our website: [www.skagitaudubon.org](https://www.skagitaudubon.org) for updates.

**ABOUT SKAGIT AUDUBON:** 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. General membership meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 pm. Some meetings will be presented in-person at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center, 10441 Bayview-Edison Rd., Mt. Vernon and other meetings will be available on Zoom only. Hybrid meetings are not currently offered. Check the monthly Flyer for upcoming meeting details. The board of directors meets on the first Tuesday of each month, September through June, at 7 pm. Skagit Audubon membership provides a local chapter affiliation and newsletter, the Skagit Flyer, for individuals who want all their funds to benefit their local chapter. The Skagit Flyer is produced monthly from September through June and full color issues are available at: [www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter](http://www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter). Unless noted, all images, drawings, clip art, etc. appearing in The Skagit Flyer are in the public domain. We reserve the right to edit.

#### **Board of Directors-Officers**

President: John Day; [president@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:president@skagitaudubon.org)  
Vice President: John Farnsworth; [vicepresident@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:vicepresident@skagitaudubon.org)  
Secretary: Vacant  
Treasurer: Neil O'Hara; [treasurer@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:treasurer@skagitaudubon.org)

#### **Board of Directors-Committee Chairs**

Communications: Mary Sinker; [publications@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:publications@skagitaudubon.org)  
Conservation: Tim Manns; [conservation@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:conservation@skagitaudubon.org)  
Education: Jeff Osmundson; [education@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:education@skagitaudubon.org)  
Engagement: John Farnsworth (co-chair); [vicepresident@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:vicepresident@skagitaudubon.org)  
Colleen Shannon (co-chair); [fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org)  
Field Trips: Colleen Shannon; [fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org)  
Finance: Lisa Hopkins; [finance@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:finance@skagitaudubon.org)  
Hikes: Neil O'Hara-temporary; [treasurer@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:treasurer@skagitaudubon.org)  
Membership: Pam Pritzl; [membership@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:membership@skagitaudubon.org)  
Nomination & Governance: Ann Skinner; [anns@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:anns@skagitaudubon.org)  
Programs: John Farnsworth; [programs@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:programs@skagitaudubon.org)  
Technology: Ann Skinner; [anns@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:anns@skagitaudubon.org)

#### **Board of Directors-At-Large Directors**

Don Jonasson [donjonasson@hotmail.com](mailto:donjonasson@hotmail.com)  
Jeff Sinker [jmsinspect999@aol.com](mailto:jmsinspect999@aol.com)  
Libby Mills [libbymills@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:libbymills@skagitaudubon.org)  
Nancy Crowell [nancyc@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:nancyc@skagitaudubon.org)  
Renee Westlund [renew@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:renew@skagitaudubon.org)

#### **Other Volunteers**

Newsletter Distribution: John Edison

## FIELD SIGHTINGS – by Ann Skinner

This column reports a summary of selected sightings. Rare sightings should be submitted with detailed written documentation and if possible, a photograph. A second person to verify rare sightings is encouraged. Do not hesitate to contact any observer to help document unusual sightings.

Please submit your sightings to [birdsightings@skagitadubon.org](mailto:birdsightings@skagitadubon.org). For recent updates on bird sightings, check out **ABA Tweeters** and **Skagit County Ebird List** on the SAS website (Birding menu, Bird Sightings submenu).

### SHOREBIRDS

Stilt sandpiper (2) Channel Dr., 9/4 (MS/JS)  
Wandering tattler (1) RS, 8/24 (DH)

### RAPTORS/VULTURES

Osprey (4) EFI- in flight, 8/20 (RW)  
Cooper's hawk (1) EFI, 9/7 (RW)

### OWLS

Great-horned owl (2) EFI, 8/25 (RW)  
Northern pygmy-owl (1) SA, 9/5 (MS)  
Barred owl, (2) PTF, 8/27 (MS/JS)

### NUTHATCHES & CREEPERS

Red-breasted nuthatch (2) EFI, daily (AS)

### WOODPECKERS

Red-breasted sapsucker (3) SA, 9/9 (MS)  
Pileated woodpecker (3) EFI, 8/29 (RW)

### FLYCATCHERS

Olive-sided flycatcher (1) EFI, 9/4 (RW)

### CORVIDS

California scrub-jay (1) 9/10, MV (DH)  
Steller's jay (2) 8/26, EFI (RW)

### CHICKADEES

Chestnut-backed chickadee (2) EFI, daily (AS)  
Black-capped chickadee (3-4) EFI, daily (AS)

### LARKS, SWALLOWS

Purple martins (6) EFI- in flight, 9/3 (RW)

### NUTHATCHES

Red-breasted nuthatch (2) EFI, daily (AS)

### THRUSHES

Varied thrush (song) EFI, 9/5 (RW)

### FINCHES, SPARROWS

Spotted towhee (2) EFI, daily (AS)  
Black-headed grosbeak (2) EFI, 8/26 (RW)

### WARBLERS

Yellow-rumped warbler (1) CI, 9/8 (AS)  
Orange-crowned warbler (1) EFI, 8/26 (RW)  
Wilson's warbler (2) EFI, 8/25 (RW)  
Black-throated grey warbler (1) EFI, 9/12 (RW)  
Yellow warbler (2) EFI, 8/20 (RW)  
Townsend's warbler (1) EFI, 8/25 (RW)

### TANAGERS/GROSBEAKS/BUNTINGS

Western Tanager (2) EFI, 9/12 (RW)

**(SHIP)** Ship Harbor; **(SF)** Samish Flats; **(CL)** Cranberry Lake; **(EFI)** East Fidalgo Island; **(CISP)** Camano Island State Park; **(CS)** Cap Sante; **(PB)** Padilla Bay; **(RS)** Rosario Strait **(MV)** Mount Vernon; **(PTF)** Pilchuck Tree Farm, Stanwood; **(GV)** Guemes Valley; **(BUR)** Burlington; **(BLCA)** Barney Lake Conservation Area **(CI)** Cypress Island ; **(SA)** Stanwood Area; **(JS)** Jeff Sinker; **(MS)** Mary Sinker; **(AS)** Ann Skinner; **(RW)** Regan Weeks **(DH)** Diana Hoffman

## HIKING

Skagit Audubon is pleased to offer scheduled hikes. Please visit our website: [www.skagitaudubon.org/activities/hikes](http://www.skagitaudubon.org/activities/hikes) for full details on the hikes. All hikers must have a current signed liability release form (available on the website) on file prior to participating in any Skagit Audubon hike. Please be prepared to follow current COVID pandemic safety protocols and all hikers must be fully vaccinated. Questions? Contact Tom Ozretich, [tom.ozretich@gmail.com](mailto:tom.ozretich@gmail.com); 360.424.8466



**NOTE: \*means NW Forest Parking Permit required; \*\*WA State Discover Pass required**

<b>Oct. 4:</b>	Cutthroat Pass*	<b>Nov. 1:</b>	Little Cranberry Lake
<b>Oct. 11:</b>	Morovitz Creek Trail*	<b>Nov. 8:</b>	The Tursi Trail**
<b>Oct. 18:</b>	Iron Goat Trail*	<b>Nov. 15:</b>	Lost Lake**
<b>Oct. 25:</b>	Newhalem Area Hikes	<b>Nov. 22:</b>	Little Mountain
		<b>Nov. 29:</b>	East Shore Lake Whatcom and/or The Chanterelle Trail

## FIELD TRIPS – by Colleen Shannon

Beginning birders and friends are always welcome on Skagit Audubon field trips. Please be prepared for the weather with suitable clothing and bring field guides, binoculars, and spotting scopes (if you have them). Please note specific COVID guidelines in each field trip description. Questions? Contact Colleen Shannon, [fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org).



### SignUp Genius

Skagit Audubon subscribes to SignUp Genius. Most field trip leaders are using it to register for their field trips. It is quite easy to use. Just click on the link provided and follow all the prompts. You should receive an email confirmation within a couple of minutes if your registration was successful. If you have difficulty please let Colleen know at [fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org).

**October 29, 2023 Washington Park, Anacortes – 8:30 am until 11:00 am (approx.)**

**Trip Leaders:** Jeff Osmundson, [education@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:education@skagitaudubon.org) and Julie Kinder

This field trip will be geared to beginners, but those with more experience will find plenty to see as well. Being on a paved road, closed until 10 a.m. to cars, it is especially suited to folks who have difficulty walking on rugged trails. The first half mile is level, so anyone with limited mobility or in a wheelchair is invited to be in the group for this part of the walk. Seabirds, shorebirds, woodpeckers, and songbirds are among the birds we'll seek. Meet at the parking lot at 8:30 a.m. near the restrooms, just past the boat trailer lot, and plan on two hours to walk the loop road.

Directions: follow the San Juan Ferry signs through Anacortes (at the roundabout go north on Commercial to 12th, which becomes Oakes Avenue.) At the traffic light just above the ferry, keep to the left and continue straight on Sunset Avenue to its end at the park. Bring binoculars and scope if you have one and dress for the weather. We'll go rain or shine.

Please register using this SignUp Genius link

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4BA9AD2AA5FBCF8-washington>

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR - THE BIG SIT – October 7, 2023

The Big Sit, a free community birding event open to individuals and teams all over the world, returns on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. Due to the closure at Wiley Slough for dike restoration work, the **Skagit Audubon Big Sit will be held from 8 am-4 pm at Rosario Head in Deception Pass State Park.**

Rotating cadres of observers in two-hour shifts will seek to identify as many species as possible from a single location at Rosario Head over the eight-hour period. In previous years, generous SAS members have taken the initiative to pledge \$1 or more per species seen by the team in support of the Skagit Audubon Society Environmental Conservation Scholarships awarded through Skagit Valley College.

Also, you are encouraged to conduct your own Big Sit and participate from wherever you want (backyard, park, public wildlife area, etc.). Visit [www.thebigsit.org](http://www.thebigsit.org) to learn more about the event. To volunteer for two-hour shifts at Rosario, to bird your own backyard, or donate to the SAS Big Sit, contact Colleen Shannon at [fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@skagitaudubon.org). Colleen will sign up the teams prior to Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> and she will be at Rosario from 8 am-4 pm on Big Sit Day. Visitors are welcome to stop by.

## EDUCATION CORNER – by Jeff Osmundson, Education Chair

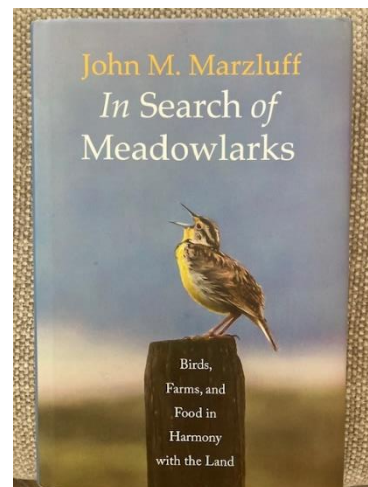
Thanks to all of the volunteers that helped out last year. We had a great year of exploring new opportunities and finding new SAS members interested in helping out. We are once again asking if you are interested in volunteering in our community, mostly with children. We can do simple book readings to classes or hands on projects that focus on birds, the environment and natural history.

We have some prepared presentations, or you can develop your own. If you would like to help with new presentations, we would certainly welcome that. This is a great opportunity to do outreach in our communities and broaden the appeal of Skagit Audubon. Those that have come before us have done a wonderful job. Now it is our turn to carry on. If you are interested, please contact me at [education@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:education@skagitaudubon.org). Once again, thanks to all of our members and the Education Committee for such tremendous progress.

## NEW PROGRAM!!! SKAGIT AUDUBON READS!

As announced at our Birthday Bash on Sept. 12th, your Program Committee is going to kick off a new program, **Skagit Audubon Reads**. We have chosen **In Search of Meadowlarks** 2020 by John Marzluff PhD. Dr. Marzluff was a distinguished professor of environment and forest sciences at the University of Washington for many years and is a prolific author. The book is concerned with “Birds, Farms, and Food in Harmony with the Land.” Dr. Marzluff will be our speaker at our February 2024 meeting.

We hope many of you will read the book and that we can have a discussion prior to his presentation. A field trip to one of the farms mentioned in the book is also in the works for May. Please join us in reading about the intersection between agriculture and bird populations.





## CONSERVATION – by Tim Manns

Page two of each *Skagit Flyer* issue quotes Skagit Audubon's purpose: "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." This statement guides which conservation issues and activities Skagit Audubon takes on with written comments, testimony at public hearings, co-signing letters by other conservation groups, recruiting volunteers, and more.

Note that Audubon's mission isn't restricted to birds; hence, our chapter's long membership in the Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly Bear, supporting this species' restoration to the North Cascades in accordance with the Endangered Species Act. Scanning the list of current issues in Skagit Audubon's Conservation Notes (<https://skagitaudubon.org/~dphwzgi/conservation/notes>) you will see that the majority are about protecting habitat. Climate change can degrade habitat on a large scale. National Audubon calls it the single greatest threat to birds. Locally, land use planning and decisions on development projects often have potential to affect wildlife habitat.

Rather than always having to fight adverse proposals, Skagit Audubon takes the opportunity to proactively protect habitat too. Protecting the best of what's left can be easier and is less expensive than later restoration. A case in point is the nomination of the upper Cascade River as

an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW). Washington State has never used this provision of the federal Clean Water Act to designate relatively pristine rivers and lakes and prevent degradation of their water quality. The Cascade is a major tributary of the Skagit, joining it at Marblemount. Washington Wild, Skagit Audubon's partner on many wilderness and river issues, is one of seven groups which nominated the Cascade and portions of the Green and the Napeequa for designation by the Department of Ecology (DOE). The proposal is modest, covering only the stretch of the Cascade within North Cascades National Park and Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, but would provide another level of recognition and protection for great wildlife habitat.

Thinking about what to say at DOE's mid-September hearing on this proposed designation, I was recalling spring-time sightings of Harlequin Ducks on the Cascade River. Harlequins spend most of their lives in marine waters feeding along rocky shorelines on shellfish, amphipods, even chitons. But to breed they fly inland to rapid rivers where you can see their agile swimming and diving after aquatic insects and small fish. This striking duck nests on the ground or in a low cavity along these rivers but needs slow-flowing waters and small tributaries too. That's where the females lead the young to grow and learn to forage before going down to the sea. ORW designation of the upper Cascade, including both mainstem and tributaries, is a great opportunity to add protection to just the kind of habitat the spectacular Harlequin needs. We hope to hear a positive decision from DOE by year's end.



Photo credit: Harlequin Duck@William Dix/Audubon Photography Awards

## Padilla Bay Christmas Bird Count 2023

This year is the 124<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), sponsored by the National Audubon Society and the nation's longest-running community science bird project. Each year between December 14 and January 5, volunteers across the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Pacific Islands count bird species and individuals in almost 2,500 count areas. Each area is a 15-mile diameter circle. Skagit Audubon's role in this large effort is organizing the Padilla Bay Christmas Bird Count, named for the location of the count circle's center on the March Point peninsula by Padilla Bay.



**The 2023 Padilla Bay Christmas Bird Count will take place Saturday, December 30<sup>th</sup>.** Because the CBC is such a long-running project its data makes an important contribution to avian science. Rather than a birding field trip, the CBC is a project to collect the most complete and accurate data possible on the birds within the count circle. We particularly need the help of experienced birders. For information about participating in this all-day, rain or shine survey birders should contact Tim Manns ([conservation@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:conservation@skagitaudubon.org) or 360.333.8985. Photo: Red-breasted Sapsucker by Mary Sinker

## SCHOLARSHIPS 2023 – by Denny Quirk, Scholarship Committee Chair



John Edison and I had the pleasure to represent the scholarship committee at the annual Scholarship Breakfast Celebration hosted in May by the Skagit Valley College Foundation at the Swinomish Casino and Lodge. This was the first time Skagit Audubon representatives have attended as Covid sidelined the event for several years. It was uplifting and heartwarming to meet our three scholarship recipients in person, to shake their hand, look them in the eye, to hear their personal stories, and to have them share their career and life goals. These students, studying and working right here in Skagit County, are committed to environmental conservation on a very personal level. They represent all that is positive and hopeful in our environmental future!

Their thank you letters share how much our scholarship means to them and give some insight to their individual achievements and goals. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I have!

Photo: Left to right – Dennis Newman, Maddy Carlson, Evan Anderson

**Dear Skagit Audubon Society Donors (from Evan Anderson),**

I am honored by your generosity in awarding me the Environmental Scholarship offered by your organization, and I deeply thank you for it. With your donation, I'm able to continue my pursuit in obtaining a higher education at Skagit Valley College.

I'm currently in the junior year of my Bachelor of Applied Science in Environmental Conservation degree that's offered by Skagit Valley College. I currently have a 3.0 GPA which I intend to improve upon by the time I graduate. On top of my academic career, I'm a part of the college's community via work-study and clubs, namely, the Environmental Conservation club and the Outdoors club. After my scheduled graduation in June of 2024, I intend to pursue a career in ecosystem management and restoration in order to properly maintain, and expand, Washington's natural resources.

Again, thank you for providing me with this aid to continue my education in the subject I'm most passionate about, environmental preservation. This truly is an incredible asset that I won't soon forget.

**To: Skagit Audubon Society Donors (from Dennis E. Newman II),**

Thank you very much for your kindness and generosity, awarding me a scholarship. This will help me out very much pursuing my goals and dream of working in the field of environmental conservation. To me, the world is a place I cherish and every day putting forth the effort to learn and succeed, will help create a better environment in the future for generations to come.

I am grateful beyond words for this scholarship and will do everything in my will to put the most effort and integrity into my schoolwork! I look forward to meeting everyone at the scholarship breakfast and cannot wait to shake hands with everyone who made this possible. It is a dream come true!

Thank you very much for this wonderful gift.

**Dear Skagit Audubon Society (from Maddy Carlson),**

I can't express how sincerely grateful I am that I was chosen as the recipient of the Environmental Scholarship. I am deeply honored to have been selected and very much appreciate your generosity and support. Your contribution means a great deal to me, and it will help me achieve my academic and career goals. With the scholarship, I will be able to continue to pursue my passion for the environment by continuing to study Environmental Conservation at Skagit Valley College.

I am proud to say that I have almost accomplished my first year of college with straight A's. The end of the spring quarter will mean that I am halfway to my Associate in Environmental Conservation, which when finished, will lead me right into the Environmental Conservation Bachelor's Program. With the degree, my goal is to be able to immerse myself in the community and connect with other people and organizations that are working to preserve and restore our natural environment for First Nations People and future generations. I am determined to continue to excel academically, and I am very grateful for your investment in my future.

Once again, thank you for getting me one step closer to my goal with your generosity and support! Your gift will make a significant impact on my life, and I will always be reminded of your kindness as I continue to study what I love.



## MEET THE PACIFIC WREN (*Troglodytes pacificus*) – by Jeff Sinker

The words “round little ball”, “high energy”, and “secretive” all accurately describe this tiny wren found in the undergrowth of dense evergreen and mixed forest habitats. Until 2010, Pacific Wrens were known as Winter Wrens, but scientists determined the western birds were different from birds in the East and in Europe, so the wrens were split into three species.

Pacific Wrens blend seamlessly into their dense forest habitat as they forage along upturned roots and decaying logs, under shrubs and ferns, or sifting through leaves in search of a wide variety of insects. Salmon carcasses along freshwater streams, rivers and creeks can bring several wrens together in one spot to feast on the insects that are drawn to the carcasses. These tiny birds live from sea level to 12,000 feet (some birds at higher elevations move locally to lower elevations when nesting season is completed). Males put all of their energy into their songs – and their whole body vibrates when they



sing – to defend territories and attract females. Pacific Wrens do not travel in mixed flocks with other small songbirds but are mostly solitary or found with a mate.

In addition to his song, a male builds several dome-shaped globular nests near streams, in the roots of upturned trees, in decaying logs, under creek banks, or in cavities. When a female enters his territory, he flaps his tiny wings, continues to sing, and takes her around to show off his construction skills. He uses a wide variety of materials including moss, grasses, bark, and twigs.

After the female selects a nest, she will help line the inside of it with feathers and animal hair. The size of the nest varies and sometimes can be as large as a football! The female lays 1-9 eggs and incubation takes 14-17 days followed by a nestling period of 15-17 days. Both parents care for the young. A successful pair can raise two broods during a breeding season.

Populations of Pacific Wrens appear to be stable. However, forest management practices that remove slash piles, downed trees, and upturned roots (in addition to logging) can have a negative impact on local populations because of the loss of critical habitat for nesting and foraging. Photo: Pacific Wren by Joe Halton. Learn more about Pacific Wrens at: [www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Pacific\\_Wren](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Pacific_Wren).

## GARDENING FOR BIRDS – by Mary Sinker

With cooler temperatures accompanied by regular rainfall in the coming months, fall is the perfect time for planting perennials, shrubs, and trees. Have you been thinking of adding native plants to your garden? There is a native plant for every garden situation and budget. Choices can seem to be overwhelming but adding even a couple of new native plants to your existing garden makes a positive impact for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife.

The Washington Native Plant Society (Salal Chapter for this area) has easy-to-use information to help everyone from beginning gardeners to experts add and care for native plants in their home gardens. Learn more here: <https://www.wnps.org/salal>

## LEAVING THE LEAVES – Benefits Birds, Gardens and Wildlife, by Mary Sinker

One of the most valuable things we can do for birds and wildlife, including pollinators, is to **Leave the Leaves** although this doesn't mean that they need to be left in place where they fall. Here are a few tips on what to do with all those leaves and the benefits of leaving the leaves:



Leaves left on the ground provide winter cover for all sorts of moths, snails, spiders, and dozens of arthropods. Birds forage through the leaves to find these important winter food sources.

Leaf litter is the home for the vast majority of moths and butterflies as eggs, caterpillars, chrysalis, and adult stages.

Mated queen bumble bees burrow only an inch or two into the ground to hibernate for winter. A layer of leaves provides additional protection against extreme cold weather.

Leaves provide valuable free organic matter and improve soil quality.

Leaves piled onto garden beds provide an additional layer of insulation for perennials and shrubs against bitter cold temperatures or garden soil upheaving from freeze and thaw cycles.

Leaves that accumulate in an undesired location, such as a pathway, patio, or driveway (or large amounts of leaves on top of a lawn), can be raked or blown onto garden beds or other out-of-the way areas.

Leaf piles are better for wildlife than shredding them with a mower because shredding may destroy eggs, caterpillars, and other overwintering insects.

Learn more at: [www.xerces.org/blog/leave-the-leaves](http://www.xerces.org/blog/leave-the-leaves)

## FUN FACTS – Red-breasted Nuthatch, by Mary Sinker



Collects resin globules from trunks of coniferous trees and places them around the outside and inside of entrance hole to cavity nest to deter predators. Question – does the male or female place the resin on the inside? Answer – the female!

Aggressive during nest building and will drive off birds as large as Downy Woodpeckers.

One of the few non-woodpeckers to excavate their own nesting cavity from wood (female nuthatches excavate the nest cavity).

Learn more: [www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Red-breasted Nuthatch](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Red-breasted_Nuthatch). Photo credit: Joe Halton

## FROM THE CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY

Mark your calendars for **October Big Day —14 Oct 2023!** Like Global Big Day, October Big Day is an opportunity to unite around our shared love of birds. Last October, nearly 35,000 people from 185 countries submitted 80,000 checklists with eBird, demonstrating the power of birds to bring people together.

Wherever you are on 14 October, take a few minutes to join in this global celebration. Participate from anywhere—even from home! By taking part in October Big Day, you're also celebrating Global Bird Weekend and World Migratory Bird Day. Be a part of the global team and help set a new record for October birding. How to participate:



**Get an eBird account:** eBird is a worldwide bird checklist program used by millions of birders. It's what allows us to compile everyone's contributions into a single massive October Big Day list—while at the same time gathering data to help scientists better understand birds. Sign up at [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) It's 100% free from start to finish.

**Watch birds on 14 Oct:** It's that simple. You don't need to be a bird expert or go out all day long, even 10 minutes of birding from home counts. October Big Day runs from midnight to midnight in your local time zone. You can report what you find from anywhere in the world.

**Enter what you see and hear in eBird:** You can enter your observations via the eBird website or download the free eBird mobile app to make submitting lists even easier. Please enter your checklists no later than 17 Oct to be included in the results announcement.

**Watch the results roll in:** During the day, follow along with bird reports from more than 180 countries in real-time on the October Big Day page.

No matter where you go birding on 14 October, have fun, enjoy the birds you find, and share your observations with eBird. Your checklists will help us better understand global bird populations. (Not affiliated with or sponsored by Skagit Audubon Society)

## FROM AUDUBON ALASKA

### The American Golden-Plover Southbound Migration Project

American Golden-Plovers make one of the longest migration journeys of any bird. Follow these birds equipped with 3.5-gram PinPoint GPS Argos tags (the world's smallest GPS Argos tags) from Alaska's Western Arctic through Canada's Boreal Forests, across the Atlantic, and on to South America. Learn about the experts, communities, and the importance of migratory bird habitats along the way.

<https://www.tulliksodyssey.org/?emci=2577e2a7-2036-ee11-a3f1-00224832eb73&emdi=0a140ed2-cd36-ee11-a3f1-00224832eb73&ceid=1621356>

**SKAGIT AUDUBON SOCIETY  
PO BOX 1101  
MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Skagit Audubon Society Membership Form**

Membership: \_\_\_\_ \$20/one year **OR** \_\_\_\_ \$40/two years ● \_\_\_\_ New **OR** \_\_\_\_ Renewal

Additionally, I wish to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to Skagit Audubon Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Please designate my donation to: \_\_\_\_ General \_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_ Scholarship Fund.

Payment: (1) Pay online with a credit card or PayPal (see [skagitaudubon.org](http://skagitaudubon.org) for details) **OR** (2) Mail this form & your check to: Skagit Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1101, Mt. Vernon WA 98273-1101

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*By providing your email address and those of any household members, you/they consent to SAS's use of electronic transmission, such as email and website postings, for notices about SAS business. You may revoke this consent at any time on written request to the Secretary of SAS.*

Membership includes those members of your household whose names & emails you provide to us:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*(If you have more than one additional member of your household who wishes to become a member of SAS, please provide their name(s) and email address(es) to [membership@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:membership@skagitaudubon.org))*

I want to be involved in (check all that apply): Education \_\_\_\_ Conservation \_\_\_\_ Field Trips \_\_\_\_ Hiking \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

(To join National Audubon Society, a separate membership, please visit: [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org))